



**CHURCH OF GOD**  
GENERAL CONFERENCE

# THE RESTITUTION HERALD

PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS OF THE **KINGDOM OF GOD** | ACTS 3:21

... heaven must receive [Jesus] until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

## Refreshed RESTITUTION HERALD

By Seth Ross

Welcome to the renewed RESTITUTION HERALD.

The RESTITUTION HERALD is being renewed, refreshed, and refocused. We are beginning this decade with a new format for the RESTITUTION HERALD and the Progress Journal by again making them separate publications. This is a return to the original format of the RESTITUTION HERALD, which was created to herald the good news of the future "*restitution of all things*" (KJV) as described in Acts 3:19-21.

19 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, 20 and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus. 21 Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. (NIV)

Whereas the Progress Journal will focus on church news and ministry efforts across the Church of God, journaling our collective progress, the RESTITUTION HERALD will focus on the core tenets of the Church of God. The first issue of the RESTITUTION HERALD in 1911 established this mission.

*"The Restitution Herald will teach the establishment of the Kingdom of God on the earth, with Christ as King of kings, and the immortalized saints as joint-heirs with Him in the government of the nations, the restoration of Israel as a nation; the literal resurrection of the dead; the immortalization of the right-*

*eous; the final destruction of the wicked, and life only through Christ. Also a thorough belief in repentance, and immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, as prerequisites of the forgiveness of sins and a HOLY LIFE as essential to salvation."*

(RESTITUTION HERALD, volume 1 number 1, 1911)

The first editor of the RESTITUTION HERALD, S.J. Lindsay wrote these words in the first issue:

*"It is the purpose of the management [to] give the brethren a good, clean, religious paper filled with the best that can be had on the fundamental principles of our faith. There is room within our body for just such a paper, and, on the outside, the world is crying for the truth. There are thousands of religious people the world over today that are groping in the dark, and we should be sending some good literature to them to open their eyes to the truth instead of filling up the pages with material that at best can edify but little those who read it. With an array of contributors such as we have already promised us, we may expect some good things"*

(RESTITUTION HERALD, volume 1 number 1, 1911)

It will be our goal to pursue these same ends. We will reserve general reports and church news to be published regularly in the Progress Journal. And, in

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## Refreshed RESTITUTION HERALD

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the same spirit of S.J. Lindsay, we solicit articles from across the Church of God that will promote and teach important truths. To those who would consider writing and submitting contributions, we share these words from 1911 which are just as relevant today:

### Notice to Contributors

*Be careful to write plainly.... Carefully prepared manuscript will save the editor and composer much valuable time. If your article is not published at once after it is sent in, do not get impatient. It will be published as soon as we can get to it, unless it is rejected, in which case you will be notified. In writing use no personalities and make no sarcastic allusions to the writings of others. These defects in an article will be deemed sufficient reason for rejection. Write in the sweet spirit of the Master, and all will be well. ... We are thankful for the good supply of excellent matter that has already been sent in."*

(RESTITUTION HERALD, volume 1 number 1, 1911)

And then there's this humorous editorial from 1921 which also has relevance today.

*"Brethren, we positively will not publish articles containing sarcasm, personalities, and abuse, so please save yourselves and us the annoyance of rejecting such. It is possible for one to have a brain full of argument, but a heart void of the Spirit of Christ."*

(RESTITUTION HERALD volume 11 number 10, 1921)

If you have interest in reviewing past RESTITUTION HERALDS, they are being posted at [www.coggc.org](http://www.coggc.org). Additionally, many valuable books from the past are being scanned and posted on our website in the Archives section. A great thanks to Bobby Lee Partain for his recent work in scanning original materials for sharing with the wider world.

## The Gospel By Rolla Hightower (1911)

When we belonged to an immortal soulist clan, we failed to appreciate the true meaning of the phrase which constitutes our subject; it did not seem to us to refer to anything definite, but we might have assented to the popular notion that it meant most anything that would contribute to happiness or better moral living. And we still have many friends in that religious panorama who take the same, or nearly the same, view as we did then. All of them, or nearly all, seem to be zealously affected, but their zeal is not in accordance with knowledge, although some of them seem to be very reasonable in a general way. They know that persistent effort is necessary to success in business life, but fail to apply it in their religious affairs, and hence, lose sight of the fact that the good tidings is qualified by the article (the) in such a way as to designate something distinct. Since God cannot contradict himself, and many of these stories purporting to be gospel stories are contradictory, we know it is necessary for us to prayerfully and studiously do some sifting or separating, never forgetting that the consequences for believing and teaching anything other than the divinely authorized gospel as embodied in the sacred writings are fatal. Gal. 1:8-9. If there is to be any spiritual unity among the members composing the body of Christ, they must all believe and teach the same things. 1 Cor. 1:10.

In the truth there is but one substantial hope (Eph. 4:4) and that hope was in Paul and also in his faithful followers, and we conjecture a like hope will animate those of us who are faithful when the cares of life and the riches of this world choke the seed that has fallen in shallow soil. There can be no reasonable doubt as to what this hope is, for Paul emphasizes it as the hope of eternal life in his letter to Titus, and in other passages it is mentioned as the "crown of life." Jas. 1:12. Rev. 2:10. In II Tim. 4:8 it is spoken of as the "crown of righteousness," and the time of its endowment as being at the appearing of the "Lord the righteous Judge." We cannot understand the full import of eternal life, it is of indescribable value, and is to be attained only by those who meet the scriptural demands: Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ: As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.

Rolla Hightower, Golden, Illinois  
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# Here Come the End Times Again

By Wally Winner

They have asked. They have texted. They have messaged. They have emailed. The general question is the same. Does this COVID-19 factor into end time events? Is the rapture imminent? Is the great tribulation around the corner? Are we looking at government economic control and the mark of the beast? Will all this cause the world to be more linked together and lead to a new world order (one world government)?

There is nothing like a once-in-a-century pandemic crisis to cause some anxiety and questions about prophetic events. Is this the start of the end or something else?

When you read passages from the Olivet Discourse, it makes you pause and wonder.

"When you hear about wars and riots, don't be afraid. These things must happen first. Then the end will come later."

Then Jesus said to them, "Nations will fight against other nations. Kingdoms will fight against other kingdoms. There will be great earthquakes, sicknesses, and other bad things in many places. In some places there will be no food for the people to eat. Terrible things will happen, and amazing things will come from heaven to warn people. (Luke 21:9-11 ERV)

The reports of wars have taken a back seat to the events of the virus. Some because it takes up most of every news report, and some because some of the conflict areas of world are dealing with the issues of the virus on their forces.

We have had some minor skirmishes over food and "essentials" (toilet paper?). Some people do want their social distancing space, but not any riots.

Earthquakes have steadily been on the increase over the last several years. There are many low-level earthquakes every day around the world. There are about 500,000 earthquakes a year. About 100,000 are actually felt. Only a few reach a 5.0 on the Richter Scale. It takes an earthquake of 7.5 or higher to send a tsunami hurling. A daily tracking can be found at <https://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/map/>.

We certainly are seeing sickness (plagues) in many places. We have a history of deadly diseases. Smallpox is estimated to claim from 300 to 500 million lives. Bubonic plague (black death) killed about one third of population in medieval Europe. The 1918 Spanish flu infected about one third of world's

population. The same flu strain caused the swine flu pandemic in 2009. Seasonal flu will kill about 500,000 a year around the world. Add tuberculosis (1.5 million), malaria (1 million), cholera (100,000), HIV/AIDS (25 million killed since it was identified in 1981), cancer (most deadly disease in the world), and we lose millions of people to disease every year. See <https://historylists.org/other/list-of-10-deadliest-diseases-in-history.html>

Famines, like disease, have had waves through history (<https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-deadliest-famines-ever.html>). Until 2017, famine had been in a decline worldwide. However, mostly because of African countries, it is on the rise again with about 20 million people at risk.

While we are looking at these events around us, not many are watching the sky. You might have missed the mile-wide asteroid that passed close to the earth on April 29<sup>th</sup>. In the last year we have had several smaller asteroids pass between the earth and moon (EarthSky News). The earth keeps bobbing and weaving, and they pass by. One of these days the earth will bob when it should have weaved, and we will have a real close view of an asteroid.

The passage here in Luke suggests that all these things will happen in rapid succession, or all at once. The latter seems more likely due to the information from other passages. Later in the chapter Luke says,

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." (Luke 21:25, 26)

We are seeing anxiety, frustration and impatience, but not "men's hearts failing them for fear". If the conversations on social media is any indication, there is a lot of levity during this difficult time. The time that Jesus is talking about will have most everybody in deep despair except the faithful saints.

At that time the hope appears.

"And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."  
(Luke 21:27, 28)

# The Joy of the LORD is Our Strength!

By Edward Bender

Did you know that the phrase *"The joy of the LORD"* is found only once in the Bible? The terms "with joy for the LORD" and "the joy of thy Lord" is each found twice in the Scriptures. However, the word "joy" is found 165 times in the Bible. How often do we teach or preach on this every important topic? Or, maybe it would be better to ask how often we experience or exercise this "joy in the Lord?"

## I. In Ezra and Nehemiah's day the Word of God had been lost and found again...

Notice while Ezra read from the word of God, the people stood. When the law of Moses was found and opened after the 70-year captivity of Judah by Babylon ended, they had returned to their homeland, the land of Israel. The book of Nehemiah details the joy the people had when the word of God was opened and read out loud to them. Listen what happened as Ezra read the word of God.

### A. Ezra Reads the Word of God

"1 And all the people gathered as one man at the square which was in front of the Water Gate, and they spoke unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses which the LORD had commanded to Israel. 2 Then Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly of men, women and all who could listen with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month." Nehemiah 8:1-2

[The was the first day of Tishri and the Feast of Trumpets; Leviticus 23:24. Remember, the trumpets are blowing in the streets!]

3 He read from it before the square which was in front of the Water Gate from early morning [light] until midday, in the presence of men and women, those who could understand; and all the people were attentive to the book of the law. 4 Ezra the scribe stood at a wooden podium which they had made for the purpose... 5 Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. 6 Then Ezra blessed the LORD the great God. And all the people answered, "Amen, Amen!" while lifting up their hands; then they bowed low and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. 7 ...the Levites, explained the law to the people while the people remained in their place. 8 They read from the book, from the law of God, explaining to give the sense so that they understood the reading." Nehemiah 8:3-8, NASB.

### B. TODAY IS HOLY!!!

Now, seeing the reaction of the people once they heard the word of God read aloud after decades of absence, to me is just amazing. When we hear the word of God, I would hope that we have some like expressions of joy and excitement!

"9 Then Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people were weeping when they heard the words of the law. 10 Then he said to them, "Go, eat of the fat, drink of the sweet, and send portions to him who has nothing prepared; for this day is holy to our LORD. Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." 11 So the Levites calmed all the people, saying, "Be still, for the day is holy; do not be grieved." 12 All the people went away to eat, to drink, to send portions and to celebrate a great festival, because they understood the words which had been made known to them." Nehemiah 8:9-12, NASB.

### C. They Restored the Feast of Booths-Tabernacles

From all of this the people had learned that there was a feast God commanded in the scriptures that they had not kept for these many decades. So, Ezra instructs them about the feast, and they prepare to celebrate that feast.

"13 Then on the second day the heads of fathers' households of all the people, the priests and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe that they might gain insight into the words of the law. 14 They found written in the law how the LORD had commanded through Moses that the sons of Israel should live in booths during the feast of the seventh month. 15 So they proclaimed and circulated a proclamation in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, "Go out to the hills, and bring olive branches and oil tree branches, myrtle branches, palm branches and branches of other leafy trees, to make booths, as it is written." Nehemiah 8:13-15, NASB

[This was the feast of tabernacles or booths and was celebrated on the fifteenth day of the seventh month of the Jewish year, Tishri. See Leviticus 23:33-36.]

16 So the people went out and brought them and made booths for themselves, each on his roof, and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim. 17 The entire assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in the booths. The sons of Israel had indeed not done so from the days of Joshua the son of Nun to that day. And there was great rejoicing. 18 He read from the book of the law of God daily, from the first day to the last day. And they celebrated the feast seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly according to the ordinance." Nehemiah 8:16-18, NASB

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# The Joy of the LORD is Our Strength!

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## II. Waiting Upon the Lord: "Stand Still and See the Salvation of Jehovah"

### A. Your Enemies are a "Great Multitude"

The Moabites, Ammonites and others attacked Jehoshaphat in battle. This was a very large army; the scriptures describe it as a "great multitude". It caused Jehoshaphat to become extremely fearful. So, he proclaimed a national fast to all the cities of Judah. Jehoshaphat stood in Jerusalem before the people of Judah and proclaimed the following.

"5 Then Jehoshaphat stood up in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem at the temple of the LORD in the front of the new courtyard 6 and said: "LORD, the God of our ancestors, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you. 7 Our God, did you not drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel and give it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend? 8 They have lived in it and have built in it a sanctuary for your Name, saying, 9 'If calamity comes upon us, whether the sword of judgment, or plague or famine, we will stand in your presence before this temple that bears your Name and will cry out to you in our distress, and you will hear us and save us.' 10 "But now here are men from Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, whose territory you would not allow Israel to invade when they came from Egypt; so they turned away from them and did not destroy them. 11 See how they are repaying us by coming to drive us out of the possession you gave us as an inheritance. 12 Our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you." 13 All the men of Judah, with their wives and children and little ones, stood there before the LORD." 2 Chronicles 20:5-13, NIV.

### B. Do YOU and I Believe This Promise? "I Will Never Desert You, Nor Will I Forsake You!"

When tragedy or trial comes our way, we MUST be reminded that the God of creation has promised to be with us. He never states he will remove the trial or tragedy, but that he will comfort us in that trial or tragedy.

"8 The LORD is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed." Deuteronomy 31:8, NASB. "5 Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you," 6 so that we confidently say, "The LORD is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?" Hebrews 13:5, NASB. "...and lo, I am with you all the days even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:20b, NASB.

### C. "Stand Still With the JOY FOR THE LORD"

"14 Then the Spirit of the LORD came... 15 He said: "Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all who live in Judah and

Jerusalem! This is what the LORD says to you: 'Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's.

[See why in 1 Samuel 17:47.]

16 Tomorrow march down against them. They will be climbing up by the Pass of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the gorge in the Desert of Jeruel. 17 You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you, Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the LORD will be with you." 18 Jehoshaphat bowed down with his face to the ground, and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem fell down in worship before the LORD. 19 Then some Levites from the Kohathites and Korahites stood up and praised the LORD, the God of Israel, with a very loud voice. 20 Early in the morning they left for the Desert of Tekoa. As they set out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, Judah and people of Jerusalem! Have faith in the LORD your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful." 2 Chronicles 20:14-20, NIV

### C. Have We Ever Given God Praise BEFORE the Blessing Is GIVEN?

"21 After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying: [BEFORE the battle was won] "Give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures forever." 22 As they began to sing and praise [notice that they PRAISED THE LORD BEFORE the defeat began!], [then the LORD set the ambushes] the LORD set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated. 23 The Ammonites and Moabites rose up against the men from Mount Seir to destroy and annihilate them. After they finished slaughtering the men from Seir, they helped to destroy one another. 24 When the men of Judah came to the place that overlooks the desert and looked toward the vast army, they saw only dead bodies lying on the ground; no one had escaped. 25 So Jehoshaphat and his men went to carry off their plunder, and they found among them a great amount of equipment and clothing and also articles of value—more than they could take away. There was so much plunder that it took three days to collect it. 26 On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Berakah, where they praised the LORD. This is why it is called the Valley of Berakah to this day. 27 Then, led by Jehoshaphat, all the men of Judah and Jerusalem returned joyfully to Jerusalem, for the LORD had given them cause to rejoice over their enemies. 28 They entered Jerusalem and went to the temple of the LORD with harps and lyres and trumpets. 29 The fear of God came on all the surrounding kingdoms when they heard how the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel. 30 And the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace, for his God had given him rest on every side." 2 Chronicles 20:21-30, NIV

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# The Joy of the LORD is Our Strength!

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There were multiple blessings after the praising and rejoicing took place. First, the fear of God came upon all of the people in the surrounding area, similar to what happened following the crossing of the Red Sea. Secondly, the kingdom of Judah was at peace! Once we praise and thank God for answered prayers and other blessings, we should have grown in the fear of the Lord as well as the peace of God that passes all understanding.

## III. Joy For the LORD at the Dedication of the House of God

### A. Then Judah Dedication of the Temple of God

"16 Then the people of Israel—the priests, the Levites and the rest of the exiles—celebrated the dedication of the house of God with joy. 17 For the dedication of this house of God they offered a hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four hundred male lambs and, as a sin offering for all Israel, twelve male goats, one for each of the tribes of Israel. 18 And they installed the priests in their divisions and the Levites in their groups for the service of God at Jerusalem, according to what is written in the Book of Moses." Ezra 6:16-18, NIV

Are we dedicating our "temple" to the Lord and His work? If not, we can choose to do so today!

"19 Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies." 2 Corinthians 7:19, 20, NIV

### B. Celebration of the Passover Lamb

"19 On the fourteenth day of the first month, the exiles celebrated the Passover. 20 The priests and Levites had purified themselves and were all ceremonially clean. The Levites slaughtered the Passover lamb for all the exiles, for their relatives the priests and for themselves. 21 So the Israelites who had returned from the exile ate it, together with all who had separated themselves from the unclean practices of their Gentile neighbors in order to seek the LORD, the God of Israel. 22 For seven days they celebrated with joy the Festival of Unleavened Bread, because the LORD had filled them with joy by changing the attitude of the king of Assyria so that he assisted them in the work on the house of God, the God of Israel." Ezra 6:19-22, NIV.

Like we must also celebrate the Passover lamb of God, Jesus Christ the Messiah.

"6 Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? 7 Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. 8 Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with

the old bread leavened with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." 1 Corinthians 5:6-8, NIV.

## IV. "The Joy of Your Master"

### A. Always Remember We Are Working For the "Master"

"19 Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. 20 The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, 'Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents.' 21 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' 22 'Also the one who had received the two talents came up and said, 'Master, you entrusted two talents to me. See, I have gained two more talents.' 23 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master...' 29 'For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance..." Matthew 25:19-29a, NIV.

### Conclusion:

"1 Praise the LORD. How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise him!... 1 Praise the LORD, Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of his faithful people." Psalm 147:1, 149:1, NIV.

"7 Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. 8 For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed 9 and, moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written: "Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing the praises of your name." 10 Again, it says, "Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people." 11 And again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles; let all the peoples extol him." 12 And again, Isaiah says, "The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; in him the Gentiles will hope." 13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:7-13, NIV.

We must not forget to thank and praise the LORD for all the blessings he gives us. However, may we also learn to thank and praise the LORD even before he sends his blessings upon us.

# Why I Am a Christian "Monotarian"

By J. Dan Gill

I might be a Trinitarian, if it was not for God. It is him with whom I am at odds if I embrace multiple persons as one deity. Again and again, I can hear him saying, "I am the LORD, and there is no one else" (Isa. 45:6). If I will not believe him, then why do I call him God? Either he is God alone, or he is not God at all. We must never compromise the biblical definition of God. But have we already done so in the form of multi-person monotheism? Without the understanding that only he is God, it is impossible to know him as he really is.

The beliefs of Christian Monotarians<sup>1</sup> stand in contrast to multi-person theologies. Christian Monotarians are strict monotheists. They hold to the original - biblical - monotheism of God's prophets and people of old. They believe that the Father of Israel, the Father of Jesus Christ, is the only one in the universe who is truly God (Isa. 64:4, 8; John 17:3);<sup>2</sup> that God's spirit is not another person of deity, but rather the Father himself at work in his presence and power (Matt.10:20). They believe in Jesus as the LORD's Christ: his Messiah - the one whom he has made Lord of all (Acts 2:36; Ps. 2:2 cf. Acts 4:26); that he is God's only begotten human son; that he came into existence by a miracle in a young virgin by the name of Mary (Luke 1:35); that Jesus is our redeemer, our savior - but not our God (Acts 5:31; 13:23); that to truly follow Christ, we must serve his God (John 20:17).

As a Christian Monotarian, I rejoice in the working of God by his spirit. I have found peace with God through his Messiah - his Christ (Rom. 5:1). He is the LORD's anointed (Ps. 2:2); his chosen king (Luke 1:32, 33); his miraculously begotten human son (Luke 1:35). Jesus, by relying on God, did not sin - yet he has borne our sins (Heb. 9:14). He trusted in God to the point of death; God raised him from the dead and seated him at his own right hand in heaven (Eph.1:20). Nevertheless, the Messiah is not my God. Without reservation, my God is the LORD alone! It is YHWH whose spirit it is! It is YHWH without whom there would be no Messiah! I trust in God - I trust in his Christ. Who shall condemn me?<sup>3</sup>

I embrace the LORD alone as God of the universe. I believe in an uncomplicated singularity

of God. I will accept no other gods and no other persons within deity. I do not serve other personalities or supposed manifestations of God. I unreservedly hold to the original monotheism that God himself gave to his people in the Bible. His first priority is my first priority: "He alone is God." His prime directive is the basis upon which I live my life: "I will serve only him as God." It is critically important to God that we know who he is. Because I love him, it is also critically important to me.

So they may know that you alone, whose name is the LORD, are the Most High over all the earth (Ps. 83:18).

## END NOTES

1. I adopt the phrase Christian Monotarian here as it seems helpful to expressing my faith in God as a single individual and in Jesus as the Messiah, the Christ of God - but not himself God. The term "Monotarian" can be drawn from the Scriptures and particularly Jesus' declaration in John 17:3 that the Father is τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν Θεόν. The first person I have known to use the term Christian Monotarian is my friend Pastor Mark A. Jones of Tennessee, <http://hgcn.org/our-pastors.html>. Sean P. Finnegan of New York has used the term "Christian Monotheist" with the same intent, [christianmonotheism.com](http://christianmonotheism.com).

2. This, of course, is not to disallow the use of the word "God" as an honorary title or appellation for certain people - Ps. 82:6, etc. See chapter 9 of *The One: In Defense of God* by J. Dan Gill for an exposition of the word when used in its honorific sense.

3. Christian Monotarians are biblically centered and embrace the Bible as the word of God. They believe in miracles, the virgin birth of Christ (Luke 1:34, 35), and that the man Christ Jesus was - by a miracle in Mary - literally God's only begotten human son (Mat. 1:20). Christian Monotarians believe that it was by depending on his Father that Jesus lived a sinless life (Heb. 4:15); did great miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38); spoke the word of God (John 12:49, 50) and ultimately gave his life as a perfect sacrifice to God for the rest of us human beings (Heb 9:14; Rom. 5:6-10). They believe that Jesus was buried and then bodily resurrected by God (Rom. 10:9), was/is glorified at the right hand of God (Acts 5:31); that he will come again (1 Thess.1:10) and raise from the dead those who trust in him (John 5:25-30; 1 Cor.15:20-23).

In all of this, Christian Monotarians hold that Jesus, by the plan and work of God, was truly one of us: That he was the second Adam (Rom. 5:14). Just as God created Adam and made him a human being, likewise, God created his son Jesus in Mary as a true human being. Christian Monotarians believe that to bring salvation to the rest of humanity, Jesus himself had to be really one of us (Rom. 5:17-19): Not God, not a "God, man" - not an angel or 'angel, man' - or any other kind of being. They believe that Jesus did not literally preexist his own conception in Mary and that language in the New Testament about his "preexisting" was intended to be understood as "types" (τύπος) of the man Christ Jesus. Metaphorically, he was "bread" (John 6:35), a "rock" (1 Cor. 10:4) etc. They believe that our hope in Christ and of our resurrection is that he, as God's begotten human son, is genuinely one of us (Acts 17:31).

\*reprinted from *The One: In Defense of God*, pp 98-99

## Where Is Enoch?

By John Cunningham

"In Heaven", a host of commentators and preachers would answer, and this answer would be practically universal in Christianity since virtually the beginning. But this belief is not actually based on the immortality of the soul. Enoch is said to have not died at all, but was taken bodily to heaven where he remains.

There are two passages dealing with Enoch, one in Genesis and one in Hebrews.

Genesis 5:21-24—Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah. After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. And Enoch walked with God and he was not, for God took him.

Hebrews 11:5—By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, and was not found because God had taken him; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

Before looking at these passages in detail, we should note one other text in Hebrews 11:13 which is important to our study. After summarizing all the righteous patriarchs from Abel to Abraham and Sarah, he says, "*These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*"

So straight away we have a puzzle. Enoch was taken to heaven and did not die, yet was among those who "all died in faith." Hebrews appears to contradict itself.

We first examine the Genesis passage and analyze what it actually says. First, we note what is said about how long Enoch lived. "*Enoch lived sixty-five years and begot Methuselah. After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years.*" Note how this pattern exactly conforms to the pattern of the other patriarchs. For example, "*Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years and begot Enoch. After he begot Enoch, Jared lived eight hundred years and had sons and daughters and he died*" (verses 18-20).

Compare the genealogy of all the other patriarchs, and they conform exactly to the pattern of Enoch. Clearly anyone who read this back then would not have concluded that Enoch was still alive somewhere else.

*"And Enoch walked with God three hundred years and he was not, for God took him."* The text in bold is very important in showing the meaning of this expression as it is used in several other places. Convinced that Joseph his son was dead when shown his blood-soaked coat, Jacob exclaimed "an evil beast has devoured him." He then accused his son "Me you have bereaved of my children; *Joseph is not, and Simeon is not* and you will take Benjamin (Gen 42:36) This clearly means Jacob thought the two brothers were dead. Remember, Simeon had been locked up in Egypt, and Jacob considered they were both dead. "My son shall not go down with you: for his *brother is dead.*" (Gen 42:38)

When Herod killed all the children under two in Bethlehem, the prophet Jeremiah is quoted saying that Rachel was weeping for her children "and would not be comforted, *because they are not.*" (Matt 2:16) This expression cannot fairly mean any more than the person concerned is dead.

It is abundantly clear that "he was not found" means *he was dead.*

Enoch walked with God but only for 365 years. Attempts to force "walking with God" into some kind of mystical "walking with God" now in heaven will not work. The text limits his life span to 365 years and no more.

The notion of Enoch going to heaven without dying is fraught with problems.

Firstly, the text does not claim that Enoch went to heaven. This is an assumption.

Secondly, according to scripture all men must die. Hebrews himself says so in Hebrews 11:13. "These all died in faith" including Enoch with all the righteous patriarchs from Abel onward. The apostle Paul says, "death reigned from Adam to Moses" (Rom. 5:14). Hebrews again, "It is appointed unto man once to die and after this the judgement" (Heb. 9:27).

Thirdly, scripture is quite clear that no one has ever gone to heaven except the Lord. "No one has ascended to heaven, but he who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man."

There is nothing in the passage about Enoch, which remotely teaches his removal to heaven. It is clear that this belief owes much to the Hebrews passage and to this we now turn. He says Enoch "did not see

*(Continued on page 9)*



## Where Is Enoch?

(Continued from page 8)

death,” but this expression does not mean “he did not die”. Christians from the very beginning have read this through Greek eyes and not Hebrew.

David Stern points out that the rabbis used four basic systems of interpretation, which are

1. *P'shat* (simple) the plain literal sense
2. *Remex* (hint) a meaning not plain and obvious in the text
3. *Drash or Midrash* (search) a way of unfolding the text.
4. *Sod* (secret) Mystical or hidden meaning.

See [The Jewish Study Bible](#) p. 1385 for more detailed description of these.

The writer to the Hebrews employs midrash in Hebrews 7 throughout as he explains the greatness of Jesus using the incident in Genesis 14 as a guide. First, the names and titles of Melchisedek. Then he explains the greatness of Melchisedek compared to Abraham and the significance of Abraham giving tithes to him proving that his priesthood is greater than the Levitical priesthood. Note particularly verse 3 “without father, without mother, without genealogy having neither beginning of days nor end of life but made like the Son of God remains a priest continually.” This statement is possible in a Midrash, not because they are literally true, but because his birth, death and parentage are simply not mentioned in scripture.

The statement that Enoch did not see death only means according to this method of interpretation, that Enoch's death is not mentioned anywhere in Genesis 5. All the other patriarchs are said to have died. Hebrews is not therefore contradicting itself when it declares “these all died in faith.”

Enoch may then be regarded as a “type” of the righteous believer who will be “translated” into the kingdom at the resurrection.

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To preserve and archive historical books, tracts, sermons, and documents from our early Church of God preachers and evangelists; whose writings may be old, but their message continues to be relevant, and God can use their words to speak to us today. To that end, we will mine the material in the archives and submit an article from the writings of our early church brethren, under the heading of "THEY STILL SPEAK."

## THEY STILL SPEAK

*"By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead" Hebrews 11:4*

## PRAYER

Elder F. L. Austin,

Editor of the RESTITUTION HERALD 1924

The RESTITUTION HERALD, Oregon, IL Vol. 14 No. 1, Oct 7, 1924, Pg. 9, 16.

There are those who call themselves Christian that are more concerned with the outer manifestations of the Christian life than with its inner experiences. Comparatively few take advantage of the sacred privilege of secret fellowship with God. Should this attitude continue, communion with the Father—except to the select few—will become one of the lost arts of the great Christian church. The world continually is growing more efficient in the art of communicating with one another. Time and space practically are annihilated, and we are in instantaneous communication with men in all parts of the world. To live twenty-four hours without the telegraph, telephone, or wireless telegraph would be a calamity to the world. Still a great many so-called Christians seem to get along without the family altar, private prayer chamber, thanksgiving at meals and the church prayer meeting, which are the offices of the telegraph, telephone and wireless telegraph, keeping us in constant communion with our Father which art in heaven, the source of all good and infinite love.

We are living in an age of great activity. The daily occupation seems to claim more time than ever, and the few hours left for relaxation must be generously divided with the passion for amusement; so between business on the one hand, and amusement on the other, private prayer is nearly crowded out of the home.

The Bible is full of prayers. Some were successful and others were not. The publican cried, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner"; the dying thief, "Lord, remember me"; David, "Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great." All these prayers, for example, were successful. Then there were those that apparently were not successful. Moses prayed to enter the Promised Land, but his request was refused. The prophet Habakkuk said. "Oh, Jehovah, how long shall I cry

and thou wilt not hear?" Paul repeatedly prayed that "a thorn in the flesh" might be removed. Christ implored God that he might be released from the cup.

Perhaps the one thing that tests our faith more than anything else is the fact that so many of our prayers appear to be unsuccessful. Seeing that God has not promised to give us all the things for which we ask, we should be prepared for refusals. Our relationship to God is quite similar to a child's relationship to a loving parent. Think for one moment what appalling results would follow if the child received a favorable reply to all of its prayers and clamoring. God withholds from us the things that are hurtful because he loves us.

Some of our prayers are successful in a way that we do not at the time detect. Christ requested to God that he might remove the cup from him. God refused to do this, but gave him strength to drink it. Paul prayed for removal of his physical infirmity. God denied him, but gave him grace sufficient for all his needs. How often have we gone to the mercy seat with our special request and felt that God did not hear us, but after the dawn had broken, we could see clearly the hand of God in the management of our affairs.

Again, there are times when God answers our prayers by saying no, because we ask amiss. Again, he often tells us to wait. He will answer our prayer when the proper time arrives. The secret of success is to continue with our prayers, if we feel that our request is in keeping with the will of God.

Christ taught that prayer is a power to be used in cooperation with other powers. He told his disciples to watch and pray, to work and pray. He made it plain that prayer is efficacious only within certain

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## Prayer

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limits. God will not do our work for us, and it is a good thing for all concerned, that everything cannot be accomplished by prayer.

If we pray and work, using prayer as a power working in conjunction with other powers rather than a substitute for work, and other God-given faculties, we shall go forward as individuals and churches, defying every power and hindrance set against us.

### FRANKLIN'S PLEA FOR PRAYER

The following is the speech of Benjamin Franklin before the convention for forming a constitution for the United States:

"In the beginning of the contest with Great Britain when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayers in this room for divine protection. Our prayers, sir, were heard, and they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a superintending providence in our favor. To that kind providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace on the means of establishing our future national felicity. And, have we now forgot this powerful friend, or do we imagine that we no longer need his assistance?"

I have lived for a long time (81 years); and the longer I live the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, that God governs in the affairs of man, and if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid? We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings, that except the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain that build it". I firmly believe this, and I also believe that without his concurring aid we shall proceed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel: we shall be divided by our little, partial, local interests; our prospects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a byword down to future ages. And, what is worse, mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing government by human wisdom, and leave it to chance, war and conquest. I therefore, beg leave to move that henceforth prayers, imploring the assistance of Heaven and its blessings on our deliberations, be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed to business; and that one or more of the clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that service."

## Trials

By J.W. Cooper

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Rom. 8:18. There is no greater example of suffering for the sake of the gospel, shown in the Bible (the Master excepted) than the apostle Paul. We today become discouraged at times when things don't go as we think they should, or when we are working for a certain end, and just as we think we are about to accomplish that for which we are seeking, something unforeseen happens, and away go our plans. Again, maybe someone has said something ugly about us or does something to offend us or hurt our feelings and the result is mental suffering or worry. If we could but pass through this, and "go on to perfection" what a grand thing it would be for us. For, after all, are the things with which we have to contend, or the trials and temptations that we meet worthy to be compared with what Paul endured? Indeed not.

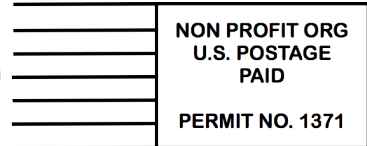
Turn to the second Corinthian letter, 11th chap. beginning at the 24th verse: Of the Jews five times he received forty stripes, save one. Thrice beaten with rods, stoned, suffered shipwreck, a day and night in the deep, in journeyings often, in perils of water, robbers, own countrymen, heathen, city, wilderness, sea, false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings, hunger, thirst, fastings, cold and nakedness. Beside all these he had the care of the churches. Yet, in the face of all this he says in the 30th verse: "If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities." He was glad that he could do these things for the sake of the gospel. So, when we come to consider the things that this godly man suffered, our trials begin to look smaller to us.

I would refer the reader again to the Roman letter, Rom. 8:38-39: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Here the apostle is showing how impossible it is for those that are faithful to be separated from Christ. May we that have taken upon ourselves the name of Christ when we become discouraged in the Christian warfare, read and think about the many wonderful examples of patience and suffering that are given in God's word, and may we profit by it. "For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth."

J.W. Cooper  
Ripley, IL  
(RESTITUTION HERALD, vol. 1 no. 1, Oct 12, 1911)

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# THE RESTITUTION HERALD

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... heaven must receive [Jesus] until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

## Pandemic Buzz Words: A Bible Perspective

By Paula Kirkpatrick

As people around the globe continue to face the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, many buzz-words have emerged in the non-stop media coverage. A buzz-word is described as a word or phrase that is fashionable at a particular time or in a particular context. Even though these buzz-words are popular and relevant now, Solomon reminds us in Ecclesiastes 1:9 *“that there is nothing new under the sun.”*

Consider these often-heard phrases of the past several months with a biblical perspective.

### Flattening the Curve

Flattening the curve is a public health strategy meant to slow the spread of the epidemic so that the peak number of people requiring care at a time is reduced, and the health care system is not overwhelmed. This action plan begins to work when people follow certain disciplines, such as washing their hands often, and cleaning commonly used public surfaces.

In our Christian walk, we often face obstacles and temptations in living the life God desires for us. These challenges can seem like mountains, (just like that tall curve we see in so many COVID-19 graphics) that stop us in our tracks and threaten to overwhelm us. But by practicing spiritual disciplines, those mountains flatten out and become a path of rolling hills that we navigate with God together. Reading and meditating on God’s Word is a good place to start. After all, Psalm 119:105 says, *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”* Prayer, be-

ing thankful, giving and serving others, help us grow and mature in Christ.

It all starts with intentionally seeking out God. James 4:8 says, *“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”* And we are right back to washing our hands, figuratively as well as physically!

### Social Distancing

Social distancing means keeping space between yourself and others outside of your home, staying at least 6 feet from other people.

The best example of one who practiced social distancing was our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus often withdrew from people and activity in his ministry travels to be with his heavenly Father, praying and communing with Him.

*“After He had sent the crowds away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray; and when it was evening, He was there alone.”* Matt. 14:23

*“But Jesus himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray.”* Luke 5:16

### Stay-at-Home Order

A stay-at-home order directs residents of a state to limit movements outside of their homes beyond essential needs.

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# Pandemic Buzz Words: A Bible Perspective

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Just as Jesus modeled “social distancing” to commune with his Father, he also instructed each of us to do the same. *“But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.”* Matt. 6:6

What better thing to do during a stay-at-home order, than to close our doors and pray to God?

## Self-Quarantine

To self-quarantine means to refrain from any contact with other individuals for a period of time during the outbreak of a contagious disease. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many people have also been advised to self-quarantine because they have been in contact with a person diagnosed with the coronavirus.

The apostle Paul spent an extended time in prison, both in Caesarea and in Rome. He was not quarantined because of a disease, but rather imprisoned because of charges brought by Romans opposed to his gospel message. Though not his choice, what wonderful blessings came from that time, including the biblical epistles Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, and Philipians.

*“Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.”* Phil 1:12-14

## Distance Learning

Distance learning is a form of education in which the main elements include physical separation of teachers and students during instruction and the use of various technologies to facilitate student-teacher and student-student communication. When school buildings were closed across the nation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers and students had to quickly adapt to a new model of instruction and learning.

Once we become a believer and follower of God, our distance learning ensues as well. As we yield and listen to God, the Holy Spirit instructs and guides us.

Jesus said, *“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”* John 14:26

## Testing for COVID-19

Two kinds of tests are available for COVID-19: viral tests and antibody tests. A viral test tells you if you have a current infection. An antibody test tells you if you had a previous infection. If we develop a cough, shortness of breath, fever, or other known symptoms of the coronavirus, we should seek medical attention. Similarly, if our lives show evidence of pursuing our own desires before God’s, we need to test our heart and its motives.

*“Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way.”* Psalm 139:23, 24

*“The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; Who can understand it? I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the results of his deeds.”* Jeremiah 17:9, 10

## Essential Workers

Essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic generally refer to health care providers and emergency personnel, law enforcement and public safety, school teachers, food production and grocery store employees, workers conducting COVID-19 research and testing, among many others. The world has learned a lesson during this crisis. Fame and fortune don’t constitute importance: rather dedicated service to humanity.

Consider the “food production workers” when Christ was born. Lowly shepherds, caring for their sheep, were the first people to hear the angels’ message that a Savior was born, the first to worship the newborn king, the first to share this glorious news. The poor, not the powerful, were entrusted with this life-changing experience and message.

Simply put: *“But many who are first will be last; and the last, first.”* Matt. 19:30

## PPE—Personal Protective Equipment

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is used every day by healthcare personnel to protect themselves, patients, and others when providing care for COVID-

(Continued on page 3)

# Pandemic Buzz Words: A Bible Perspective

(Continued from page 2)

19. PPE can consist of face shields, gloves, goggles and glasses, gowns, head covers, masks, respirators, and shoe covers.

As Christians, we are provided with God's "PPE" to stay strong against the powers and pull of the world.

*"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.*

*Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."* Ephesians 6:10-17

## Wearing Masks

As the Center for Disease Control continues to study the spread and effects of the novel coronavirus across the United States, it recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies) especially in areas of significant community-based transmission. As one store chain recently put it, "Your mask helps protect our employees. Our masks help to protect you. Please make this a common practice when you're in public places for the health and well-being of our communities."

Simply put, follow the Golden Rule! *"In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you."* Matt. 7:12

## Stimulus Checks

Under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, most Americans are eligible for a one-time stimulus check (also called Economic Impact Payment) of up to \$1,200, with married couples getting up to \$2,400. Families will get an additional \$500 per child. The US government is sending

out these payments to provide some financial relief while countless people are laid off or furloughed from their jobs.

It is hard not to be anxious about our livelihoods during these difficult days, but we can be assured God's promises are sure.

Jesus said, *"Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."* Matt. 6:26, 31, 32b, 33

A synonym for stimulus is encouragement, and the intention of the CARES Act checks is to provide hope and help for discouraged families across our nation.

Our ultimate encouragement and hope remain in our heavenly Father and his only Son, Jesus Christ. One final scripture passage sums it up well.

*"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds"* Heb. 10:23, 24

Be a light. Be an encouragement. Be an "answer to prayer" in another's life. May your love and good deeds bless others during these trying times. And rest assured. He IS faithful.

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# In Revelation, God is not the Lamb, and the Lamb is not God.

By Bill Schlegel

The book of Revelation is "the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him" (1:1). From the very first verse we are told that Jesus is not God. God is differentiated from Jesus. The God of Jesus Christ gave Jesus Christ this revelation.

In Revelation 1:5-6 Jesus Christ is "the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth." Jesus "loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father..."

The Father is Jesus Christ's God in the book of Revelation, just as other scriptures testify many times (e.g., John 20:17; Rom. 15:6; 2 Cor. 1:3; 11:31; Eph 1:3, 17; 1 Pet. 1:3). Jesus told the Sardis church that their works were not perfect in the site of his God (3:2).

Four times in one verse (3:12) Jesus referred to "my God". This is the resurrected, glorified Jesus Christ speaking who is at the right hand of God. That Jesus Christ has a God.

In other words, not only is Jesus Christ distinguished from the Father in the book of Revelation, he is also distinguished from God.

The book of Revelation clearly distinguishes between the Almighty God, "Him who sits on the throne" (Revelation 4) and "the Lamb standing, as though it had been slain" (Revelation 5). The two are never confused. The Lamb is not God (who sits on the throne), God is not the Lamb. The God of chapter 4 is worshiped because He is God who created everything. The Lamb of chapter 5 is worshipped not because he is God, but because he was slain and by his blood did ransom men for God (5:10).

We can all agree that "the Lamb, standing as though it had been slain" in the book of Revelation 5:6 is Jesus the Messiah, who was killed, but then raised from the dead. God, on the other hand, does not die, and is not raised from the dead.

Note how the Lamb is continually differentiated from God, who sits on the throne. That is, God is not the Lamb, and the Lamb is not God:

*"To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!"* (Rev. 5:13).

*"Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb"* (Rev. 6:16).

*"After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number...standing before the throne and*

*before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands"* (Rev. 7:9).

*"...crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"* (Rev. 7:10).

The same distinction between God, on the one hand, and the Lamb on the other, is made in Revelation 7:17; 14:4; 15:3; 21:22; 21:23; 22:1 and 22:3. In many other places in the book of Revelation, Jesus Christ and the symbols representing Jesus Christ are differentiated from God (e.g., Rev. 11:15; 12:5).

The last two references to God and the Lamb in the book of Revelation (Rev. 22:1 and 22:3) contain the phrase "the throne of God and of the Lamb". Some Trinitarians claim that this phrase shows that the Lamb is God. But this assumption is wrong for several reasons:

In these verses as well, God is distinguished from the Lamb. Whoever God is, He is not the Lamb. The Lamb is not God, and God is not the Lamb. The Lamb was slain and raised. God is not slain and raised.

This incorrect interpretation ignores all the other references in the book of Revelation which also differentiate between God and the Lamb, and which state that the Lamb has a God.

The Lamb shares the throne of God because God has granted this to the Lamb: "he shall rule...even as I myself have received power from my Father (Rev. 2:27; 3:21, cf. Matt. 28:18). As a parallel, the LORD God put both David and Solomon on His (God's) throne. "Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king in place of David his father" (1 Chron. 29:23). But neither David nor Solomon were God just because they were granted by God to rule as God's representatives on God's throne. As God's chosen, anointed kings, David and Solomon were granted to sit on God's throne. So is the risen Jesus Christ.

It is clear from the book of Revelation that Jesus Christ, the Lamb who was slain but who now lives, the firstborn from the dead, the beginning of God's creation, is not God.

Sometimes Trinitarians say that the deity of Christ was revealed to the apostles gradually or progressively. If that were the case, we should expect to find Jesus clearly presented as God in the book of Revelation, the last book of the New Testament canon. Yet that is not the case. Instead, the book of Revelation distinguishes between God and Jesus. Revelation tells us that God is not Jesus and Jesus is not God.



# When Statues Fall

## By Wally Winner

Violence, aggression, destruction, the toppling of statues, the altering of landmarks and icons! What is this world coming to when people are rioting in the streets and demanding that police departments around the country be defunded? Many government officials are in agreement with them!

Job was right when he said *"But mankind is born headed for trouble, just as sparks soar skyward."* (Job 5:7 ISV)

The First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States says, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or **abridging the freedom of speech**, or of the press; or the right of the **people peaceably** to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

We all have the right to assemble peacefully, to protest what is being done against us. However, when peaceful protest turns into violent protests, when they become not protests at all but riots, then things have crossed the line. That is when peaceful protests become catastrophic and ruinous! There is a big difference between justice and the spirit of anarchy and chaos.

Democracy is fine and works in a nation under God, where His values are still found. But what is right or wrong? If the absolute guide – the Bible – has been removed from society, there is no right or wrong then, except in amoral, blinded eyes.

These are the end times. Deception runs rampant. The world is turning for the worse while the masses seem to be content with what is happening! They are not only content with it but are in favor of it and are pushing for it! We are being lied to, being deceived, and the world is quickly becoming more and more like what the prophet Isaiah warned us about. "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" (Isa. 5:20)

If we defund the police, then what happens to society? Does it get any better? No, in fact just the opposite would be the truth! There would be complete anarchy, complete lawlessness, no control, gangs would run and rule the streets, just as we are now seeing take place in some neighborhoods.

The sum result of all of this will be more division, hatred, discontent and violence and to pit us one against another, to destroy us, to destroy our nation.

Then, to finally conquer and take control of the populace with a less generous authority.

This is the course and expectation of the scripture and especially as we approach the conclusion of this age. Great chaos is about to erupt in the world, far worse than we have seen so far.

### Matthew 24:12

*"And because **lawlessness** will abound, the love of many will grow cold."*

### 2 Thessalonians 2:7

*"For the mystery of **lawlessness** is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way."*

### 1 John 3:4

*"Whoever commits sin also commits **lawlessness**, and sin is **lawlessness**."*

### Matthew 13:41

*"The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit **lawlessness**"*

### 2 Corinthians 6:14

*"Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and **lawlessness**, or what fellowship has light with darkness?"*

### 1 Timothy 1:9

*"Realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous person, but for those who are **lawless** and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers"*

Lawlessness is unrighteous and unholy, and it has no place with light. This is where we are today. We have increasing lawlessness, increasing sin and darkness. The buzz word is "love". The irony is an unconditional love that is one-directional (you must accept what I do, but I will harass you until you conform). The truth is: the love of many is growing cold! These are all signs of the end times, signs of the closeness of Christ's return!

The clock is counting down; crunch time is coming, the day of reckoning approaches. For whom is the alarm sounding and the shofar blowing?

We will hear all sorts of lies and deceptions, some of which have no real bearing on our salvation, how-

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## When Statues Fall

*(Continued from page 5)*

ever many do, and will try and entice us astray. The followers of Christ need to be judicious in their conduct. The advice of Exodus is still good advice. "Don't do something just because everyone else is doing it. If you see a group of people doing wrong, don't join them. You must not let them persuade you to do wrong things—you must do what is right and fair." (Exodus 23:2 ERV)

In the kingdom of this world, there is sin, unrighteousness, unholiness, distress, disquiet, sorrow and

more. In the kingdom of God, there is peace, righteousness and joy. Jesus Christ is not about hatred or violence. He is about peace and love!

Let us all pray for peace in America. Let us pray for the victims and their loved ones. Let us pray for love to overcome evil. Let us pray for the light to outshine the darkness. Let us pray for those that are lost. Let us pray for their repentance and salvation through Jesus Christ! Let us pray for the return of the Prince of Peace! Maranatha!

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## A Restorationist Manifesto

By Sean Finnegan

The information age has opened up incredible opportunities to understand Christianity better. With unprecedented and unrestricted access to facts and opinions from disparate religious perspectives, sincere Bible students have been increasingly questioning the typical doctrinal packages offered by many Christian groups today. No longer can the church (Roman Catholic or Protestant) control what people think by limiting access to alternative viewpoints or execute those who disagree with tradition. We've returned to the sort of milieu that characterized Christianity for its first three centuries, where believers holding to competing ideologies coexisted and competed for adherents on the basis of persuasion rather than coercion.

In addition to information access, prominent philosopher Charles Taylor has labeled our cultural moment, "the Age of Authenticity." Many of us feel jaded in the aftermath of the repeated scandals of priests and pastors that have invalidated their claims to absolute authority. The great cry of Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536) and the humanists, "ad fontes" (to the sources), once again resonates in the hearts of many. People are returning to the Bible and early Christian history for guidance. We are entering an age of open and honest investigation of biblical truth like never before. Instead of defending Vatican II (1962-1965), Westminster (1646), or Nicea (325), the battle is increasingly focused on what the Bible says about this or that issue. We live in a time ripe for restorationism—recovering authentic New Testament Christianity and living it out today.

Although precursors existed like the Lollards (14th c.) and Waldensians (12th c.), the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century marked the largest wholesale reconsideration of Christian faith and practice in history. The reformers wanted to get back to the sources—the scriptures and the church fathers—even if that contradicted church tradition or endangered their lives. They wanted to peel away the layers of scholasticism and medieval theology to reform Christianity back to its original shape. However, even if they made great strides, they didn't get all the way back to New Testament Christianity. They discarded the mass, celibate priesthood, prayers to saints, transubstantiation, and papal infallibility, scraping away layer after layer of dust that had accumulated on top of the Bible. However, they settled for a fifth-century form of Christianity, essentially returning to Augustine of Hippo (354-430) rather than Paul of Tarsus (5-67). That's a 350-year gap! Why did Martin Luther (1483-1546), Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531), and John Calvin (1509-1564), along with their successors, stop where they did? They must have had their reasons, but today most of us are no longer in danger of getting burned at the stake, beheaded, or drowned for our beliefs. Today we have unprecedented access to the Bible both in translations and the original languages. Now, half a millennium later, we are poised to take the next step, leaving behind allegorical hermeneutics, Neo-Platonism, asceticism, and divisive councils to recover authentic Christian faith and practice. Simply put, our goal is to evaluate our beliefs and practices in light of scripture, interpreted within its original context and applied to our own situations today.

# The Tragically Under-Appreciated Book

## By Kent Ross

"Dusty and boring." What a terrible description of the Bible, but more than once that has been said of it. People, certainly many young people, and even many young adults just have a difficult time appreciating the value of the Bible. However, it is not just young people and young adults, but, if the facts were known, probably most church people don't spend very much time in the Bible.

They know they should, and sometimes, even wrestle with a measure of guilt about not reading it often, but it is so hard to get into it. At our church, at the first of the year, we were challenged to involve ourselves in a Bible reading program that would put us in the Bible every day. Few make that effort. It just seems too much in light of our busy schedules, when almost everything else seems more attractive and takes a higher, or more pressing, priority in our schedules.

Recently I read a 60 year-old book by Walter Russell Bowie called *The Bible* (1940), and it made me realize how little we, and how little I, love and appreciate and get into the Bible. Reading his book renewed my desire to make this a high priority for myself, and it made me realize it needs to be a high priority for all that bear the name of Christ.

Not just something we should do, reading the Bible is a must for me, and a must for those who want to know Him and His Plan for men.

### 1. Why Bother to Read the Bible?

First, the Bible should be read because it is God's communication with mankind. God did not create mankind, and then abandon them. Though Adam and Eve and all of us since them have disappointed God, He continues to seek to offer us a way back to Him. He had the book written by men to help us to comprehend and understand how we ought to live.

But the Bible, while still the best-selling book of all time, is increasingly less read than at any other time in recent decades. Lip service is given to its value, but there is little actual reading of the Book itself. "It's too hard!" "It's boring." "I can't understand it." Those are all comments that I've heard as a pastor and Sunday School teacher.

Many young people, like their parents, are hoping you don't have to know much about the Bible in order to be right with God. Consequently, they have a vague hope that somehow, because they have said "Yes" to Jesus and been baptized and that is enough. But there is so much more to learn and to know; to discover about the God of the Bible.

Bowie, in his book, says, "In the Bible truth is not argued out, but acted out." It is not just a book of ethical and philosophical essays, but it is stories of men and women, just like us, that struggle with life. They make big mistakes; they show magnificent character. They are cruel, and they are kind. They worship God, and yet also lie and murder. They are cowardly in the face of opposition, but

they are also courageous when faced with persecution. The Bible is realism ... too real for some. There is no more "real" book to be found anywhere.

### 2. You'll Discover That It's a Book That Knows You!

"The Bible is great because of the nobility of its themes. It tells of many men and women, and through their composite faces we see mankind — struggling, groping, sinning and yet aspiring, lifting their eyes toward God, and at length beholding God come amazingly more near to them than they had ever dared to dream," Bowie writes.

When we are willing to be honest about who we are, we see ourselves mirrored in the book that knows us. Knows us better than we admit to ourselves.

We read the stories of King David. There is an embarrassment about this man after God's own heart, when we see him looking at a naked woman and lusting after her. He not only looks, but plots and commits adultery with her. He shows no regret over his actions, and only responds when she finds herself pregnant. Then the story deteriorates with his lying, and finally murder. How can this be?

Yet, Jimmy Carter, who became president of the United States, and made no secret of his faith, admitted he looked lustfully and had committed adultery in his heart. That is what Jesus said when He expanded on the teaching ... that even looking lustfully resulted in adulterous thoughts and guilt. We want to deny that this applies to good Christian people, but deep down in our hearts we realize that this story has all too strong an application to times in our lives.

We see similar tendencies in Peter, who showed himself to be violent and impulsive, cutting off the ear of the servant of the high priest. We would never do that, and yet who among us has not had anger and hatred swell up within our hearts and minds in a moment of hurt. Perhaps we have not murdered, but the possibility exists within most hearts to act far too much like a Peter.

Jezebel, treacherous and vile, but also Ruth, loving and loyal. The Bible is filled with stories of men and women who live lives that are just like our lives. We lie, we cheat, and we fail God.

The Bible knows me. It knows my weaknesses. God speaking through His book points out all too clearly how I fail to live up to His desire for me. However, the Bible does not leave me in despair, but instead points me to hope and life.

### 3. It Tells Me a Love Story Between God and Me!

In the beginning, God initiated creation. He created the worlds and the systems that sustain us. He created life, both animal and vegetable. Ultimately, He created mankind. He placed them within a perfect garden. It was to this garden that He came to be with them, His special

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# We Are the Church: The Christian Believer and the Coronavirus

## By Edward Bender

So, we are in the middle of a Coronavirus outbreak. How do we traverse the obstacles in our way? First and foremost, we must remember that "WE" ARE "THE CHURCH"!

"19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, 20 built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. 21 In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; 22 in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God." Ephesians 2:19-22, NRSV.

So, what does that mean? "WE" must act like "THE CHURCH" even when times are tough, and it isn't easy to "BE THE CHURCH"!

Remembering, that

"14 You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. 15 No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." Matt 5:14-16, NRSV.

"WE" ARE "THE CHURCH"!!! Yes, we are providing online services, emails, phone calls and texts and that is necessary and essential, however, that is not the only thing "WE" AS "THE CHURCH" must be ACTIVELY DOING! Yes, "YOU" ARE "THE CHURCH"!! The building where we worship is NOT "the church." "WE" ARE "THE CHURCH"!!!

I believe that we should obey the authorities as much as possible.

"1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment." Romans 13:1. 2, NRSV.

Also, keeping in mind that,

"29 We must obey God rather than any human authority." Acts 5:29, NRSV.

**I. We Must Look at Paul & Silas' Example: No Fear, Be Positive...**

Even though they were in prison, they prayed, praised and sang hymns to the God of creation.

"25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. 26 Suddenly there was an earthquake, so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken [*we may feel like our foundation is shaking*], and immediately all

the doors [*the door of prayer is always open*] were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. 27 When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. 28 But Paul shouted in a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." Acts 16:25-28, NRSV.

Christians and non-Christians are enduring this trial. However, how we react to it shows we are of the light! "WE" ARE "THE CHURCH"!

"12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed." 1 Peter 4:12, 13, NRSV.

"1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. 2 He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. [*Are we allowing God to prune us today?*] 3 You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:1-5, NRSV.

"2 My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance [*patience*]; 4 and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing." James 1:2-4, NRSV.

**II. Not by Bread Only...**

One does not conquer trial by his own efforts, but by the power and Spirit of God!

"4 But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4, NRSV.

Again, if we take credit for the spiritual strength that God gives us, we are taking credit for something we do not have of ourselves. We need HIS STRENGTH, COMFORT and UPLIFTMENT so that "WE" can be "THE CHURCH" to OTHERS!

**III. Don't Forget the Widows and Orphans...**

Let us be sure that we do not forget those who are truly isolated!

(Continued on page 9)

## We Are the Church (cont.)

*(Continued from page 8)*

“27 Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.”  
James 1:27, NRSV.

They are the ones that walked the faith before us and we **MUST NOT FORGET THEIR EXAMPLES AND SACRIFICES**. Remember, **THEY ARE THE CHURCH ALSO!**

Many of our elderly in the faith do not have access to modern technology, so we need to make a special effort to call them on the phone, personally visit them, keep the proper distance, and lift them up by prayer and Bible reading. **DO NOT FORGET THE ELDERLY. THEY ARE THE CHURCH ALSO!!**

### **IV. We Are Still Disciples; the Great Commission Is Still ACTIVE!!**

“19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”  
Matthew 28:19, 20, NRSV.

“**WE THE CHURCH**” should still be growing! Are we still witnessing? “**THE EARLY CHURCH**” grew the best under persecution. We have that same opportunity in today’s climate.

“In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: 2 proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. 3 For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, 4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. 5 As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.”  
2 Timothy 4:1-5, NRSV.

### **Conclusion:**

Never forget that “**WE**” ARE “**THE CHURCH**”, no matter the condition we are living in. It actually may be easier to witness now than when things are “normal.”

## The Under-Appreciated Book (cont.)

creation. Somehow, mankind betrayed their Creator. Rather than enjoy the fellowship and love God wanted to have with them, they chose poorly and left their Father.

Time after time, God reached out to mankind to encourage them to come back and love Him and live with Him, but mankind refused. He wanted to go His own way. Hosea, one of God’s prophets, married a prostitute. She was not loyal to her husband, and she exemplified the disloyalty of mankind toward God. Down through the centuries, men and women refused to listen to the prophets He sent to call them back to Him.

Finally, He even sent His very own Son to call them back. They refused Jesus and wouldn’t listen to him ... at least hardly anyone did. At the end, he was alone on the cross. But finally a seed was planted within a few, and with the Holy Spirit of God to nourish that seed, it began to produce a few people who loved the Lord and sought to enter into that fellowship He always wanted.

As we read the Bible, we see how much it portrays our world. God is still calling out to mankind through His Word, the Bible, and now through His word, Jesus. Incredibly ... maybe not so incredibly, mankind still rejects Him. Even in the church, people are not looking at the Bible for answers. “It’s too hard.” “It’s too confusing.” “I can’t understand it.” They are still saying “No” to Him.

### **4. More Than Ever, People Are Saying “No” to Him, But . . .**

Can it be changed? Maybe, but it will not happen easily, and it will not happen for many people. It is true that the book is too hard, too complicated for some to understand. It is above them and beyond them. It is not really, but if it is never read, then it is. If there is no attempt to read and understand it, we will never come to know Him.

Anyone who wants to can come to love the Bible, and come to appreciate God’s plan and His love for them. It’s not easy, and so many, most, will not even try. They just turn back to television, or recreational activities, and hope that studying and learning to love the God, the Word isn’t all that important. But it is.

Years ago, my mother sat in her rocking chair many hours with her big Bible open on her lap. Sitting on the floor, we wondered what she was so engrossed with. We were reading our books of sports heroes, comic books, Jack and Jill. We were too young to appreciate what she was doing. But we saw it, and it made an impression and today the book lies open on my lap while children sit by with children’s activities. I hope that they too catch the vision that this book, the Bible, is the most important book of learning that there is. God still looks to love us and teach us so we can walk with Him and live with Him when the kingdom of God comes ... which may be soon, and very soon.

### **Purpose of the Church of God General Conference Heritage Council and Archives Project:**

To preserve and archive historical books, tracts, sermons, and documents from our early Church of God preachers and evangelists; whose writings may be old, but their message continues to be relevant, and God can use their words to speak to us today. To that end, we will mine the material in the archives and submit an article from the writings of our early church brethren, under the heading of "THEY STILL SPEAK."

## **THEY STILL SPEAK**

*'By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead' Hebrews 11:4*

The following articles from the 1945 Edition of the RESTITUTION HERALD were attempts by the writers to faithfully obey the clarion call of Hebrews 10:23-25 which invites believers to:

*"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near."*

## **Seek and Ye Shall Find**

By Sydney E. Magaw

Jesus promised, "Seek, and ye shall find" (Matt. 7:7). Lack of Bible knowledge evidences lack of Bible seeking. None has sought in vain. "If any man will do his (God's) will, he shall know the doctrine" (John 7:17). Jesus reproachfully asked the Jews, "Why do you not understand my speech?" (John 8:43). "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally" (James 1:5).

Daniel and his three companions were "ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers" in "all matters of wisdom and understanding" (Dan. 1:20), because they cherished that wisdom which is "from above" (James 3:15). Timothy, likewise, was "wise unto salvation" (2 Tim. 3:15), because "from a child" he had given "attendance to reading, to exhortation, and to doctrine" (1 Tim. 4:13).

"Seek and ye shall find." Seek especially "among the sheaves" (Ruth 2:15) – in the Word itself, among the Lord's people, in prayer – and it may be that the LORD will let fall some of the handfuls of purpose for [you]" (v. 16).

Christians are not seeking deeply into the Word and will of God. Like the world, Christians are seeking pleasure, unaware that *with the world* those who are unfaithful "will run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD but will not find it" (Amos 8:12). "Seek the LORD while He may be found; call ye upon Him while He is near" (Isa. 55:6).

Fellow members of the Church of God, we are too content to lean on the reputation for Bible knowledge possessed by our leaders of long ago.

Benjamin Wilson is dead. Wiley Jones and S. A. Chaplin are dead. Wince, Woodward, and Reed are dead. With due respect to tears that are scarcely dried, we are constrained to mention too, Corbaley, Lindsay, Anderson, and Conner. Are we seeking as they sought? They studied. They prayed. They preached week after week, year after year, until their race was won! Their knowledge, stilled, is challenging. What [Who] do we know? What [Who] do we seek?

"It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honor of kings is to search out a matter" (Prov. 25:22). God conceals His gems. Nuggets of gold are waiting in mountain streams to be sifted from the sand. Veins of silver are precious ore, secluded in almost inaccessible places. Diamonds are concealed in Africa's dense interior. Only few men have courage and determination to seek God's hidden gems and precious ores. So with gems of truth: they are concealed in the Bible, waiting to be found, and it is the honor of a king to search for them. Seldom do I use a new text in my preaching. Seldom do you use a new text in your prayer—or article. Let us be seeking; let us be exploring for new and precious ore.

The Bible is truth's treasure chest of gems. Within its pages are few funny stories, no lewd jokes, and no fool's gold. Indeed, texts that may seem humorous become astonishingly precious when closely studied. This is true of Isaiah 4, foretelling a day in which "seven women shall take hold of one man." Always, there is a snicker when that text is read, "Seven women 'chasing' one man"! Ha! Ha!

*(Continued on page 11)*

## Seek and Ye Shall Find

(Continued from page 10)

Actually, Isaiah 4 is a beautiful prophecy about *"the man Christ Jesus"* (1 Tim. 2:5). It tells of His whole-hearted blessing upon the despised, but repentant, "daughters of Zion" (v. 5). "Seven women"—all women who in the day of Christ see their need of Him—"shall take hold of the one man" the only man who could be called "the branch of the LORD (vs. 2), *"beautiful and glorious"*! In that day when the despised of Zion shall turn to the LORD "in Jerusalem," there "shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from heat, and for a place of refuge and for a cover from storm and from rain" (v. 6). Isaiah 32 similarly tells of "a man" who shall be "as a hiding place from the wind ... a covert from the tempest ... as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Yes, the "one man" of Isaiah 4 is Jesus!

We, advocates of the restitution and millennial kingdom, have snickered at a prophecy that translators and publishers have dared to entitle: "Blessings of Christ's kingdom." Either we have been blind, or we have not been seeking. "Seek, and ye shall find" Jesus where you least expected him. Seek in the books of Moses, in *all* the Prophets, and in the secret closet of prayer.

**S.E. Magaw** (1904-1950) pastored in the Church of God over 20 years. He also served as the editor of the RESTITUTION HERALD, instructor at Oregon Bible College, and executive secretary of the Church of God General Conference. He and his wife were killed in an auto accident in 1950.

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We are scanning our collection to make it available to the world, and we are seeking material to add to the collection and fill in the gaps.

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## The Torchbearers

By M. W. Lyon

Appalling darkness pervades the days in which we are living. No true Bible student needs to be told that. It is one of the signs of the end of the age, to which we have been calling attention for decades.

But another fact may not be so keenly perceived. We are the torchbearers! Matthew 25:1 is rendered by Weymouth, *"Then will the Kingdom of heaven be found to be like ten bridesmaids who took their torches and went out to meet the bridegroom."* To us has been committed the torch of truth. The greater the darkness, the greater our responsibility — and opportunity. Of all the millions in this great land of ours, we alone of the Church of God carry the torch which can light the way for many.

Others may herald the messages of a personal God, and of Jesus Christ as the Savior, of prayer and of the Christian duties of repentance and righteousness. Some are even proclaiming the second coming of Christ and the establishment of the kingdom on the earth.

But ours is the responsibility of a unique and neglected message. It is this that identifies us as a people. We are the torchbearers for it. If we do not hold it high, how great will be the darkness! In this message given to us are several elements of truth.

One of these is belief in the oneness of God. Of all the large, well-known denominations in this country, there is not one that does not teach that God is a trinity. *"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord"* (Deut. 6:4); this is light that we must bear to men.

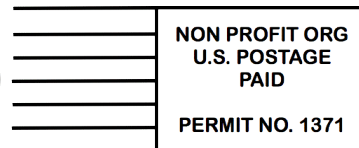
Another of our most characteristic messages is that of belief in the mortality of man. This teaching is being spread abroad to some extent by others, but it is one of the most emphatic truths the Church of God has always maintained and still needs to be taught. Hold up your light!

The sleep of the dead is a doctrine that is still not too popular. As long as people will not see that *"the dead know not anything"* (Eccl. 9:5), they cannot explain how Christ could die for our sins or find any place for the resurrection. Yet the belief in the immortality of the soul is long-entrenched and dies hard. It requires belief also in eternal torment for the wicked, for if the souls of men are immortal, they can never be destroyed. But there are now many who, clinging to belief in the immortality of the soul, rebel at the idea of eternal misery and reject it, not perceiving the inconsistency of believing one and not the other. Those who do believe in hell as a place of torment are blinded to the truths of God's justice and love and cannot reconcile it with a future judgment day. How much is the torch of truth needed to enlighten those who cannot see that hell is the grave, and not a place of suffering or even of consciousness!

**M.W. Lyon** (1899-1956) pastored in the Church of God for many years. He traveled extensively visiting churches in every state.

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ABC Korean Extension  
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## OTHER SITES TO EXPLORE

- [scatteredbrethren.org](http://scatteredbrethren.org) (Robin Todd)
- [focusonthekingdom.org](http://focusonthekingdom.org) (Anthony Buzzard)
- [restitutio.org](http://restitutio.org) (Sean Finnegan)
- [21stcr.org](http://21stcr.org) (Dan Gill)
- [trinities.org](http://trinities.org) (Dr. Dale Tuggy)
- [thegodofjesus.com](http://thegodofjesus.com) (Kegan Chandler)
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CHURCH OF GOD  
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# THE RESTITUTION HERALD

PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS OF THE **KINGDOM OF GOD** | ACTS 3:21

... heaven must receive [Jesus] until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

## Warnings Against Complacency

By Jeff Fletcher

God oversees events at particular times in particular ways, and what we call coincidences are actually divine providence. 2020 has had many things that together feel apocalyptic. God is preparing to unveil some new epoch of history.

The peace treaty in Israel coupled with the death of Judge Ginsburg, a Jewish woman on the eve of the Sabbath, at the start of the Jewish new year has the feel of something significant, not simply coincidental. Is this a wake-up call from God for us to reflect and ask where do we need to change our direction to a more God-focused, God-centered, God-directed life?

On the night of Judge Ginsburg's death, I had a vivid dream: there was blood in the streets. Am I one of the old men of whom the prophet Joel said in the last days would "dream dreams"? Alternatively, is this my subconscious fear rising up in my sleep? I believe that earthshaking events are on the horizon and we need to be very serious in prayer and seeking God with all our hearts.

More people are also wondering if these events are a harbinger of the end of the age. I recently had a conversation with two different people in the nursing home where I serve as chaplain. One was an 80-ish year-old Methodist and the other is a Buddhist. They both asked if I thought what was happening was a sign of the end of the world. People who do not normally think or talk about Bible prophecy are asking

questions. Whatever God is doing, it is getting some people's attention.

For a while now, many Christians have been complacent about spiritual matters. We should heed the lessons of Israel and not be complacent. Jeremiah warned Israel for over 20 years. Noah preached righteousness for 100 years. We have to keep on proclaiming the hope of Christ and calling people to repentance. Whether this is THE END or simply the END of western civilization as we know it, something is ending.

The battle for filling the Supreme Court seat could be the thing that pushes us to the edge and leads to civil war. A strong US is all that is protecting Israel (humanly speaking). Bible prophecy shows Israel in the last days with none to help her accept her King when Christ makes his return.

Stay strong, brothers and sisters, the church and the world needs strong spiritual leadership right now.

### NO TIME FOR COMPLACENCY

The greatest single-game sports collapse of all time was in football's 1992 AFC playoff game. The Houston Oilers were up 35-3 over Buffalo. That game appeared to be over until Buffalo came roaring back and won 41-35. Afterward, Oilers cornerback Cris Dishman said: "It was the biggest choke in history. ...

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## Warnings Against Complacency (cont.)

*(Continued from page 1)*

When we had them down, we should have cut their throats, but we let them breathe and gave them new life."

Baseball great Yoga Berra famously said of baseball: "I ain't over till it's over."

Dick Motta, former coach of the Washington Bullets basketball team famously said "The opera ain't over 'till the fat lady sings."

One should never get complacent. This lesson is important for sports teams, but it is a LOT more important when it comes to our spiritual lives. Many Christians start their Christian lives full of joy in serving God, but over time get complacent. They spend less time reading their Bible, in prayer, sharing their faith. Instead of thinking, "I get to go to church today", they start saying, and "I've got to go to church today". After a while it's "should I go to church today?"

God knows how dangerous it is for His people to become complacent so he gives us warnings in the Bible. Let us learn from Israel's mistakes, so that we do not become complacent.

### I Corinthians 10

*1 For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. 2 They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. 3 They all ate the same spiritual food 4 and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. 5 Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.*

*6 Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. 7 Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry." 8 We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died. 9 We should not test Christ, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes. 10 And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.*

*11 These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come. 12 So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! 13 No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it."*

God cared for all of their needs, covered them with His spirit and His presence. God "baptized" them by taking them through the waters out of slavery on the journey to the Promised Land and fed them, but most of them did not make it to the Promised Land.

Paul uses history to show Christians the many dangers and temptations that got Israel into trouble: idolatry, sexual immorality, testing God, failing to trust God and pushing the boundaries of our behavior to see if God will rescue.

Israel did all of these things and God was very patient with them, but they had to be disciplined. They missed their reward. "These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come."

God wants us to pay attention to keep us from making those same mistakes "So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!"

In January I went ice fishing in Minnesota with my sons and their church. This was an important lesson. Make sure that the ice is thick enough to walk on before you take a step. Check your footing. When you are walking on ice, you do not want to become complacent. You need to stay alert (especially if you are driving on ice).

The history of Israel in the wilderness is a cautionary tale reminding us of the potential hazards of being complacent in our faith.

Complacency is defined as "a feeling of smug or uncritical satisfaction with oneself or one's achievements." The Hebrew word *batach* means confidence, security, carelessness or complacency.

Isaiah 32 warns:

*9 You women who are so complacent,  
rise up and listen to me;  
you daughters who feel secure,  
hear what I have to say!  
10 In little more than a year  
you who feel secure will tremble;  
the grape harvest will fail,  
and the harvest of fruit will not come.  
11 Tremble, you complacent women;  
shudder, you daughters who feel secure!  
Strip off your fine clothes  
and wrap yourselves in rags.*

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Warnings Against Complacency (cont.)

*(Continued from page 2)*

Ignorance breeds complacency. Prov. 1:32 warns: "For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them."

Prosperity can breed complacency. Dt. 8:14 warns: "then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."

Complacency can be born of pride. We think that we do not need God. Isaiah 64:7 warns: "There is no one who calls on your name, who arouses himself to take hold of you." Some are so complacent that they cannot be bothered to ask God for help.

### Daniel 9

*11 All Israel has transgressed your law and turned away, refusing to obey you. Therefore the curses and sworn judgments written in the Law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against you. 12 You have fulfilled the words spoken against us and against our rulers by bringing on us great disaster. Under the whole heaven nothing has ever been done like what has been done to Jerusalem. 13 Just as it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come on us, yet we have not sought the favor of the Lord our God by turning from our sins and giving attention to your truth.*

Some are so complacent that even during difficult times they are unwilling to change their actions or look to God for guidance.

This is Daniel writing to Israel 550 years before Christ. What would Daniel say to Christians in America today? We are 60 years into the sexual revolution that began with the pill, increased divorce rates, increased numbers of children born to single parents, over 60 million "legal" abortions, national legalization of same sex marriage, gender moving from biology to social construct, now a movement to legalize sex between adults and "consenting" same-sex minor children.

2 Corinthians 13:5 warns: "Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves!"

Proverbs 1:32 cautions: "For the waywardness of the naive will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them."

How do we overcome complacency?

Jeff Herring writes, "The problem comes when we drift from contentment into complacency. Let me

give you an example of the results of complacency, and then how to overcome it.

Clay Shiver, former center for the NFL Dallas Cowboys, speak about complacency. When he got to the NFL, Shiver was the only starter on the offense who was not an All-Pro player. The team also had won three out of the last four Super Bowls.

The year he started, the Cowboys posted a record of 6 wins and 10 losses. Shiver said he thought the reason for such a bad season was that the team had gotten complacent; had lost its hunger. He remembered being in the huddle where two All-Pro Super Bowl champions talked about how they could not wait until the season was over so they could go on a fancy trip. They lost the next five games. That is a great example of complacency.

You have to keep your eyes on the goal and never give up. Hebrews 12 exhorts us not to give up too soon or become complacent when we think we have got the race won.

We must not become complacent, overconfident or lazy about our faith. This is a race and we do not stop running the race until we reach the finish line, which is the end of our life, or when Jesus Christ returns; not before. Do not become complacent. When you see someone who has stopped being passionate about God, do not ever think "that could never happen to me". It can happen to any of us.

Jesus loves us so much he died for us. How sad it would be if we became complacent about so great a sacrifice. Imagine a whole church of NOT COMPLACENT Christians who are ant-like in our willingness to keep going and never give up our faith, our love our service for God.

Wake up! Pay attention! If your faith is weakening, do not give up! Turn to God again, repent! Do not be complacent. Heed the warning: if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you do not fall!

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# The Mystery of the Copper Scroll

## By Wally Winner

"Peace for our time" said Neville Chamberlain, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom in a September 1938 speech. Chamberlain promised that the Czechoslovakian problem was settled. He had Adolf Hitler's signature on a paper. He then stated, "We regard the agreement signed last night and the Anglo-German Naval Agreement as symbolic of the desire of our two peoples never to go to war with one another again." Less than a year later Germany declares war on France and the United Kingdom.

After a signing ceremony of a peace treaty, interestingly called the Abraham Accord, between Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain at the White House on September 15th, the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu said a few words about the historic day.

"This day is a pivot of history. It heralds a new dawn of peace. For thousands of years the Jewish people have prayed for peace. For decades the Jewish state has prayed for peace. And this is why today we're filled with such profound gratitude."

It is hoped that the policy of getting other Arab countries to acknowledge Israel's right to exist will put the pressure on the Palestinians to come to the peace table. Previous administrations tried to settle with the Palestinians first, but always ran into road blocks at the last minute.

But the words and hope of Netanyahu sounded a lot like the proclamation of Chamberlain. A signed document is only as good as the parties signing it want to honor it. This one may have a short life span, too.

For many Bible students a number of verses come to mind.

1 Thess. 5:3: "When people say, 'Everything is safe and sound!' destruction will suddenly strike them. It will be as sudden as labor pains come to a pregnant woman. They won't be able to escape." (GW)

Ezekiel 38:8: "After a long time you will be called to service. In the years to come, you will attack a land that has been rebuilt after a war. Its people have been gathered from many nations and brought to the mountains of Israel, mountains that have been ruined for a long time. These people were brought there from the nations, and all of them live there safely." (GW)

Ezekiel 38:11: "You will say, 'I'll attack a land with unwalled villages. I will attack peaceful people who live safely. All of them live without walls, locks, or gates.'" (GW)

Possible future conflicts included the Gog and Magog invasion, the nations of Psalm 83, the destruction of Damascus, Armageddon. These scriptures are among others describing future military action against Israel. Maybe some of these references are to the same event or to a continuous chain of conflicts.

However, for Israel right now, it is on to the next thing on their "bucket list". They wanted to become a nation – done. They wanted to have a united Jerusalem – done. They wanted Jerusalem be recognized as their capital – done.

The next item on their agenda is a temple and the return to their sacrificial worship system. Many Christians see a rebuilt temple as part of the last days' program. They see this possibility from several scriptures. The primary ones are:

2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4: "Don't let anyone deceive you about this in any way. That day cannot come unless a revolt takes place first, and the man of sin, the man of destruction, is revealed." He opposes every so-called god or anything that is worshiped and places himself above them, sitting in God's temple and claiming to be God." (GW)

Rev 11:1-2: "Then I was given a stick like a measuring stick. I was told, 'Stand up and measure the temple of God and the altar. Count those who worship there. But do not measure the temple courtyard. Leave that out, because it is given to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for 42 months.'" (GW)

Matthew 24:15: "The prophet Daniel said that the disgusting thing that will cause destruction will stand in the holy place." (GW)

Now, a temple or sacrificial system does not have to be built for the Christian. Jesus has already accomplished that sacrifice. It is for people to accept His sacrifice as part of their salvation process.

However, any future temple would not be built for the Christian. It would be for the nation of Israel. A temple is part of their past identity. A temple would

*(Continued on page 5)*

## The Mystery of the Copper Scroll (cont.)

*(Continued from page 4)*

be a symbol of their full journey to the glory they once had.

The nation has been preparing for a temple by manufacturing temple ware, gathering needed ceremonial items and educating those who would serve. There is a rumor that they have a prefabricated temple ready at the first opportunity. Obviously, there still remains several obstacles.

When temple talk comes up, the temple treasures become a topic. Daniel chapter one and chapter five indicate some of the temple treasures made the journey to Babylon. Cyrus returned 5,400 of the temple's gold and silver. Impressive, yes, but perhaps the bulk of the temple treasures never left the Holy Land.

This brings us to the Copper Scroll. The Copper Scroll is a 2,000-year-old metal document listing over sixty locations for vast amounts of buried gold, silver, coins, and utensils from the Jerusalem temple.

First, an abbreviated journey to the finding of this treasure map.

A Bedouin goatherd nicknamed Muhammad the Wolf led his flock around the cliffs lining the north-west edge of the Dead Sea in 1946 or 1947—no one knows for certain. Muhammad wandered around there with his livestock among the boulders. Being bored, he hurled a stone into a cave to startle a stray goat and heard some pottery shatter.

Returning with a couple of other people, he came back to the cave thinking maybe there was gold or silver to be found. He was disappointed when all he found was some oddly shaped clay vessels with bowl-shaped lids. Opening one of the jars, he discovered three ancient leather scrolls, intact and wrapped in linen.

The scrolls were taken back to their camp and hung from a tent pole. They were considering how they could use the old strips of leather. Muhammad's uncle thought maybe he could market them in Bethlehem.

The scrolls were passed along from one trader to another until Khalil Esclander Shahin was asked to sell them on commission. By chance, Cando owned a general store and cobbler shop near the Church of

the Nativity. Archbishop Mar Samuel, head of the Syrian Orthodox Monastery of St. Mark and a former librarian at St. Catherine's Monastery at Mt. Sinai, bought the scrolls. The archbishop had experience with ancient scripts. The Bedouin returned to the desert sixty dollars richer.

Seeking another pay day, Muhammad the Wolf's relative returned to the cave and came back with four additional scrolls. Again, Cando acquired one of the scrolls. The other three scrolls were sold to an antiquities dealer in Bethlehem, Faith Salahi.

With the birth of the present-day Israel on the horizon, and conflict already beginning, in November 1947, Professor Eleazar Lipa Sukenik, from Hebrew University, received a call from an Armenian friend, acting as a middle man for Salahi. He indicated he had some material that might be of interest to Sukenik.

They met at a barbed-wire fence. The Armenian displayed a sample fragment of leather. Sukenik had heard rumors of leather with ancient writing being offered on the black market. He immediately realized the significance of what he was viewing. Sukenick scribed in his diary: "I suddenly had the feeling that I was privileged by destiny to gaze upon a Hebrew scroll which had not been read for more than 2,000 years."

Sukenik purchased Salahi's three manuscripts for the Hebrew University: The War Scroll, the Thanksgiving Psalms, and a second copy of the Isaiah Scroll. Sukenik got word that the rest of the scroll archive was in the hands of Mar Samuel. The archbishop didn't want to negotiate with a Jew and thought the sum of \$2400 was too low for what he possessed. He was thinking in the range of a half of a million dollars. He thought the United States might be the best place to market them. He was able to smuggle them out of Israel and to a Syrian Orthodox Church in New Jersey. During this time, Sukenik died, believing all hope of acquiring the scrolls for the Jewish nation was gone.

Mar Samuel could not find a buyer, so he placed an advertisement in the Wall Street Journal: "Biblical manuscripts dating back to at least 200 B.C. are for sale. This would be an ideal gift to an educational or religious institution by an individual or group." Consequence had the Israeli archaeologist and army General Yigal Yadin in New York giving a lecture the

*(Continued on page 6)*

## The Mystery of the Copper Scroll (cont.)

(Continued from page 5)

day the ad appeared. Another twist was Yadin was the son of Sukenik.

Using an intermediary, he purchased the Dead Sea Scrolls for Israel paying \$250,000. They were flown back to Israel on three separate airplanes.

The scrolls were the oldest known copies of the Hebrew Bible by a thousand years. Every biblical book except for Esther was found. The transcripts were remarkably similar to the present-day texts, displaying the authenticity of the Bible.

Between 1948 and 1956 archaeologists and Bedouins explored every cave they could locate. Found in some eleven caves were nearly 900 parchment scrolls and fallen from a shelf, behind a pile of dirt was a unique find – a green, brittle copper scroll.

This scroll was housed in a museum in Amman, Jordan while experts determined the best way to open this corroded metal scroll. No one wanted to be the responsible party of accidentally destroying what was an important artifact. Just looking at it while it lay in found state, intriguing words like dig, cubits and gold could be read.

It took some time to develop a system to cut the scroll open, then lay it flat and assemble a group of translators. What they found was a real treasure map to locations of hidden temple artifacts among the Essenes' ruins near the Dead Sea. It listed around 4,500 talents of precious metal or about 168 tons of treasure. It listed dimensions, construction and instructions and formal wear for temple service. Among the recorders of this information on the scroll were prophets Jeremiah and Haggai.

Jim Barfield, a former firefighter and arson investigator from Oklahoma with no formal training in archaeology, became captivated with the Copper Scroll. He wanted to follow the scroll's instructions to validate that there were treasures hidden among the ruins. He made several trips from the United States to Israel trying to gain a discovery access around the Dead Sea. It is political minefield. They take a dim view of maverick tourists wandering around with a metal detector. He needed an influential ally.

On his twelfth trip to Israel in June of 2014, Barfield found that ally in the person of Moshe Feiglin, an Israeli legislator and Orthodox Jew. Feiglin had visited the Temple Mount on a regular basis and was routinely arrested. Feiglin was keenly interested in the world's most sacred religious territory.

With Feiglin and his diplomatic immunity, Barfield was able to accomplish part of mission – to run a metal detector across the ruins at Qumran. The results were startling. The analyzed scans determined there were huge deposits of gold and silver buried in a cross pattern layout. It was described as a buried Fort Knox.

Since that time, UNESCO (United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) has tried to limit Jewish history in territory of Israel. Additionally, there are international complications of excavating at Qumran.

This not necessarily bad news. Israel is not prepared for all of these temple treasures now. Besides, where is the most important temple artifact – the ark of the covenant? Or, does somebody already know?

Partial resources:

- *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Very Short Introduction* by Timothy Lim
- *Dead Sea Scrolls: Their History and Myths Revealed* by John DeSalvo
- Interview of Jim Barfield on the Prophecy Watch TV program
- *The Copper Scroll Project*, by Shelley Neese
- *The Copper Scroll*, 2006 Christian apocalyptic novel by Joel Rosenberg

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# Jesus, The Son of God

## By Harold Doan\*

In addition to the facts that Jesus was a man and suffered as men suffer, and ran the whole course of human life, yet without sin, Jesus was also the Son of God. He is called "Son of God" forty times in the New Testament. As the Son of God, He is Savior and our King. It is very important that we Christians understand and believe in this fact of Jesus' nature also, for it is the secret of salvation. Our imagination and loyalty are first seized by Jesus the Son of Man, for we can best first understand Him thus, but if our belief that Jesus was the best example and friend of man does not carry us onward to belief that He is Son of God and our personal Savior, we have experienced only half the truth.

The New Testament presents many proofs of Jesus' divine nature. You would be amazed at the number of people who do not believe this fact. There are few men foolish enough to deny the existence of Christ, and even few, who deny His greatness, but there are many who believe in Him only as the Son of Man, not knowing Him or wanting to know Him as the Son of God. Yet belief on the "only begotten Son" is necessary to eternal life (Jn 3:16).

Before Jesus was born, the angel Gabriel made some prophecies about Jesus that leave no doubt that he believed Jesus, to be born miraculously, would be called "the Son of God." To Joseph, Gabriel said: "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" (Matt. 1:23). This name of Jesus points out part of His character: Emmanuel — God with us. Not only was Jesus the Son of Man, a perfect man among men, but, as the divinely conceived Son of God, He was the living Word, a manifestation of God among us.

You have heard: Like father; like son. Well, this is especially true of the heavenly Father and His Son Jesus. Jesus Himself said, "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also" (John 8:19). The angel's message and Jesus' fulfillment of it showed Him to be the Son of God. He was born of a virgin; a miracle never repeated, and was in His life the very manifestation of God.

Jesus' miracles proved His sonship to God, for they have never been duplicated - not even by modern science. Jesus did not do what modern science is doing, nor is science doing what Jesus did. No man but Jesus ever has stilled a storm with a word, healed men born blind, deaf, and dumb, and lame. No other man with a word heals a lunatic or quiets a

maniac, or miraculously multiplies five loaves and two fish into a meal for five thousand people, and then has twelve basketfuls of leftovers. But Jesus did. He was the Son of God. As such, He enjoyed unlimited power from God.

One reason for the miracles seemed to be to prove and emphasize that fact. One result of Jesus' stilling the storm was the exciting of wonder and amazement in the minds of the disciples who exclaimed, "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him" (Mark 4:41). These miracles still perform their purpose, for they have agitated volumes of printed defense and denials and have caused many thoughtful persons to ponder seriously this man Jesus, asking, "Was He, or was He not, the Son of God?"

The results of another miracle, the healing of the lame man let down through the ceiling, had similar results. When it was done, people said, "We never saw it in this fashion" (Mark 2:12). The fact that Jesus' works never have been duplicated proves His sonship for those of us who read and believe God's Word, and the miracles pose the question in the minds of those who do not believe, "What manner of man is this Jesus?" John said, "Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30-31).

What does it mean to me, and what does it mean to you, if Jesus is proved to be the Son of God? Is it not enough for Him to be simply the Son of Man, a great example, friend, and mediator? No, it is not enough, for we need salvation; we need new life; we need a king. Only the Son of God can fill these needs. Because Jesus is the Son of God, we have a solid rock on which to build. We have a Savior to take away our sins. We have an immortal king to reign now in our lives and to reign tomorrow in all the world.

Jesus, Son of God, is the foundation stone of the church and all Christian experience. When Peter confessed of Jesus, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus said, "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." Christ builds the true church, and the foundation stone is belief in the truth that He is the Son of God. (Matt. 16:16-18.)

*(Continued on page 11)*

### **Purpose of the Church of God General Conference Heritage Council and Archives Project:**

To preserve and archive historical books, tracts, sermons, and documents from our early Church of God preachers and evangelists; whose writings may be old, but their message continues to be relevant, and God can use their words to speak to us today. To that end, we will mine the material in the archives and submit an article from the writings of our early church brethren, under the heading of "THEY STILL SPEAK."

## **THEY STILL SPEAK**

*'By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead.'* Hebrews 11:4

The following articles from the RESTITUTION HERALD were attempts by the writers to faithfully obey the clarion call of Hebrews 10:23-25 which invites believers to:

*"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near."*

## **The Serene Life**

by Anna Robertson Brown, Ph. D.

### **PRETENSE, WORRY, DISCONTENT, SELF-SEEKING**

*These Four Things Hinder True Christian Living.  
Let's Do Away with Them.*

LIFE IS LARGE. We cannot possibly grasp the whole of it in the few years that we have to live. What is vital? What is essential? What may we profitably let go? Let us ask ourselves these questions today.

To begin with, what may we let go? Who shall say? By what standard shall we measure? By what authority decide? Each of us must answer that question for himself. In looking about for an answer, I find only one that satisfies me. It is this: We may let go all things which we cannot carry into the eternal life. To me this is a deep truth, and a positive one. Surely it is not worthwhile for us to cumber our lives with the things which we can grasp at best for but a little time, when we may lay hold of things that shall be ours for ten thousand times ten thousand years.

**We may drop pretense.** Eternity is not good for shams. In its clear light the false selves that we have wrought about us like a garment will shrivel and fall away. Whatever we are not, that let us cease striving to seem to be. If we can rid ourselves of all untruth of word, manner, mode of life and thinking, we shall rid our lives of much rubbish, restlessness and fear. Let us hide nothing, and we shall not be afraid of being found out. Let us put on nothing, and we shall never cringe. Let us assume nothing, and we shall not be mortified. Let us do and say nothing untrue, and we shall not fear to have the deepest springs of our lives sought out, nor our

most secret motive analyzed. Nothing gives such upright dignity of men as the consciousness, "I am what I pretend to be. About me there is no make-believe."

**We may drop worry.** The eternal life is serene. It is not careworn, nor knows it any foreboding of future ill. Can we not take to ourselves its large spirit of serenity and cheer? For only the serene soul is strong. Every moment of worry weakens the soul for its daily combat. Worry is an infirmity; there is no virtue in it. Worry is spiritual near-sightedness; a fumbling way of looking at little things, and of magnifying their value. True spiritual vision sweeps the universe and sees things in their right proportion. The finest landscape of Corot viewed asquint or out of focus would appear distorted and untrue. Let us hang life on the line, as painters say, and look at it honestly.

Seen in their true relations, there is no experience of life over which one has a right to worry. Ruskin says, "God gives us always strength enough, and sense enough for everything he wants us to do."

**We may let go of discontent.** In all the eternal years there is no word of murmur from any restless heart. In its vast silences how trivial would sound the complaining of our harassed days! In its great songs of praise how our frettings would be overborne!

In life I find two things that make for discontent. One is lack of harmony with one's environment. The

*(Continued on page 9)*



## The Serene Life (cont.)

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other is dissatisfaction with one's present opportunities. Of these, the first may be overcome; the second may be put out of one's life. A congenial environment is not one of the essentials of life: present opportunities, if rightly used, are as great as the soul need ask. Which of us can sit down at the close of a day and say, "Today I have done all that was in my power to do for humanity and righteousness"? Ah, no! We look for large things and forget that which is close at hand! To take life "as God gives it, not as we want it", and then make the best of it, is the hard lesson that life puts before the human soul to learn.

One's environment may be very disagreeable. It may bring constant hurts of heart, mortification, tears, angry rebellion, and wounded pride—but there is a reason for that environment. To become strong, the soul must fight something. A great part of the strength of life consists in the degree in which we get into harmony with our appointed environment. So long as we are at war with our surroundings, so long will much of the force of our lives be spent uselessly, aimlessly. A good way to get into harmony with one's environment is to try to understand it first, and then to begin to adapt ourselves to it, so far as possible.

Let us say, "God put me among these scenes, these people, these opportunities, these duties. He is neither absentminded nor incompetent. This is exactly the place He means me to be in, the place I am capable of filling: there is no mistake. My life is in its proper setting."

**We may let go of self-seeking.** In the eternal life there is no greed. One hears of neither "mine" nor "thine". All things are for all. As the waters fled away from Tantalus, so do the good things of life flee from the grasping and selfish spirit. The richest experiences of life never come to those who try to win them selfishly. If they do gain their desires, they find them as ashes to the taste. But all blessings are in the way of him who, forgetful of self, tries to be helpful to the world, and who spends his life in loving deeds.

Pretense, worry, discontent, and self-seeking—these are the things that we may let go.

THE RESTITUTION HERALD, Vol. 19 No. 16. (Jan. 14, 1930, pg. 251). [published in the National Berean Department Report in THE RESTITUTION HERALD by Dorothy W. Lyon, Editor].

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## A Present-Day Message

By C.E. Randall

Some people spend a goodly portion of their time in worrying about tomorrow and next week and in so doing make their lives more or less unprofitable and in many cases miserable. It is also possible to spend one's Christian life in the same manner, always thinking and studying about the future and what Christ is going to do with certain classes of people during given periods of time, neglecting the present and overlooking the marvelous work Christ is doing today. It is true that hope is produced by a knowledge of the future, but in bringing this hope to man, we must also build him a strong foundation upon which this hope can rest. Such a foundation comes from what may be termed, "A Present-Day Message," that is, a message that reveals Christ in His work of today.

In every generation that is past when man had sunk to a low level in sin and God sent a special messenger or group to such, He gave them a message peculiar to, and adapted for, the people of their day and time. It was in substance then a present-day message. Noah was called to deliver a message of warning and repentance to the antediluvians, and it concerned them and them alone. There isn't anything that would indicate that it pertained to the Sodomites or any other group of people that lived thereafter, other than in antitype.

Likewise, was Moses. His message was one of deliverance for those needing deliverance, even the children of Israel. And the succeeding men that came as God's spokesmen delivered messages that concerned the people with whom they were working. Even the Christ came to His own people and His message was outstanding in its then present-day character. He went about healing the sick and in various ways alleviating their sufferings and saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of God is at hand."

It is human nature to want to peer into the future and view its many mysteries. This longing was shared by the prophets and righteous men of ages past, "For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye shall see and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them" (Matt. 13:17). Their work did not concern future generations, but had to do with the needs of their fellow men.

Our task today centers around the men and women now living, easing their pains and bearing a present-day message of salvation. When we can rise to the demands of the hour and supply the needs of suffering humanity and fill the void in the life of each individual with the Christ, then and only then will we be giving "meat in due season". There is sweet satisfaction in pondering over the joys of coming glory in the ages that are to follow, but how much more excellent is the life that finds happiness and enjoyment in living and doing for Christ and humanity TODAY!

THE RESTITUTION HERALD, Vol. 19 No. 22. (Feb. 25, 1930, pg. 344).

## The Book of Psalms: Prayer and Praise

### By Lyman Booth

I will now note a few items peculiar to this book. First, the book is located in the middle of the Bible, and the eighth verse of the eighteenth Psalm is the middle verse of the Bible. Second, the fourth verse of the thirty-seventh contains one of the most inspiring promises in the entire Bible. Third, the eighth, fifteenth, twenty-first and thirty-first verses of the one hundred seventh Psalm are alike, and read as follows, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." Fourth, the one hundred nineteenth contains one hundred seventy-six verses and is divided into twenty-two sections of eight verses each. Each section is prefixed with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Fifth, each of the twenty-six verses of the Psalm one hundred thirty-six ends with these words, "for his mercy endureth forever." Sixth, there are five chapters which close with the doxology: the fourth, seventy-second, eighty-ninth, one hundred sixth and the one hundred fiftieth. Seventh, the book begins with a beatitude, so also does the Sermon on the Mount. Eighth, while the twenty-third is a favorite with many, there are others peculiarly suited to the different moods of our feelings.

When everything looks dark and gloomy, we should read the twenty-seventh; when danger is lurking nigh, the ninety-first; when discouraged, the thirty-fourth or the eighty-sixth. When joy is present, the ninety-sixth, the one hundredth or the one hundred fiftieth; when feeling the need of forgiveness, the fifty-first; when rejoicing in the thought of being forgiven, the thirty-second; when feeling thankful, the ninety-eighth, one hundred third or one hundred fourth; if caught in a case of the "blues", the one hundred thirtieth. When we wish to get a glimpse of God's mighty power, the sixty-eighth. If we wish to see a picture of Christ's glory, the twenty-fourth, or if we need the communion and fellowship of Christ in time of grief, the twenty-second; when approaching "the valley of the shadow of death," the twenty-third. The Psalms must have been a favorite book with our Lord and His apostles, for nearly two-thirds of their quotations from the Old Testament were from this book. And since the twenty-third chapter is a favorite with so many, I now present a few thoughts on it.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." This provides nourishment for one in the fold. "He leadeth me beside the still waters." Would you get the shepherd's meaning? It is this: sheep are timid and greatly fear a current of water because they are so easily carried downstream on account of their wool. In Palestine, the streams are few and the country hilly, and the waters flow swiftly. Should a

sheep fall in, it would be carried downstream, dashed against a rock and, if not killed, might be severely bruised before it could be rescued by means of the shepherd's crook, which is sometimes used for that purpose as well as for guiding the sheep. In that country there are no wells and cisterns to supply water for the herdsman's flocks, but sheep much prefer "living water," water from streams. For this reason, the shepherds prepare drinking places along the streams by making small pools a short distance from the stream and then digging a little ditch through which the water is permitted to overflow and pass back to the stream in another ditch. This is the delicate meaning of the expression, "still waters" (Hebrew, waters of quietness). In some places they have watering troughs. The shepherd will lead his sheep thither, then he makes a certain sound, and they lie down and are quiet till he fills the troughs. He then makes another sound, and they rise and go to the troughs to drink. Should any be lame and unable to get to the troughs, the shepherd will dip up a cup full and carry it to the lame one to drink.

The sheep never make a mistake as to their keeper's voice. They follow him wherever he leads the way, but will flee from a stranger. Thus, we see how they are led beside "still waters" and are made "to lie down in green pastures." "He restoreth my soul" (Heb., the life, one's self). The shepherd knows all the perilous places, and the sheep do not, therefore he is ever on the watch. In many places, gardens and vineyards were near, and if the sheep were caught in them, they were forfeited to the owner of the land. In that case the shepherd must pay a ransom to the owner of the land before the sheep can be restored to the fold. "He restoreth my soul," brings me back to his fold and rescues me from fatal and forbidden places.

There are many narrow places in the mountains of Lebanon, with a leaping stream on one side and high rocks on the other. Those paths are often rough and stony and dangerous. but in passing over them the shepherd leads the way, removing all obstacles. Surely, we can see the beauty of the expression, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." It matters not what dangers surround them, if the shepherd is near, they are content. If a wolf should get into their midst, they instantly become wild with fright. When the shepherd calls with a cry similar to that of a wolf, they will rush to him in a solid mass. This enables him to better defend them from the wolf.

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## The Book of Psalms (cont.)

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"I will fear no evil: for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." The shepherd carries a crook for defending his sheep. When he gives a certain call, the sheep all hurry to him. Likewise, we should heed our Shepherd's call when in danger, and when we hear it, we should not stray into other gardens and vineyards. At night when the shepherd puts the sheep into the fold, he will open the gate or door only wide enough for one sheep to pass through at a time. He is thereby enabled to count them and to examine each one as it enters. If he finds any that is injured, he will immediately give it proper care and attention before it or any other will be permitted to enter. He is always provided with a horn of olive oil and cedar tar to anoint the bruised knees and torn sides. He bathes the head and face of the weary ones with oil and dips the cup overflowing from the water provided for that purpose and then lets the weary one pass into the fold where it can lie down in quiet rest, safe from the ravenous beasts without.

"Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Oh, what a beautiful picture of the loving care and watchfulness of our heavenly Father! Surely no one but a good shepherd like the sweet singer of Israel could paint such a splendid word picture, and have it contain so much in so few words.

The Psalms still live in songs and hymns, especially those which sing of Jesus and His glory. Even the apostle Paul recommended them to the Ephesians as follows, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord: giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5 :19-20).

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## Jesus, the Son of God (cont.)

*(Continued from page 7)*

Any Christian life or church or Christian organization which is founded and built on any foundation but the solid rock, which is Christ the Son of God, will fall when storms come. They will come on us all; those who are well-founded on Christ will stand; those who are founded on some socially diluted imitation of Christ will fall. When Jesus, the Son of God, is given a secondary place in a church or in life, and a creed or program or social affairs or the pastor is given first place, beware of the storms.

When the divinity of Christ is taken out of Christianity, as it is by some self-righteous people, hope goes with Him. The modern church has trimmed its sails, denied everything from the inspiration of the Bible to the divinity of Christ, and cast its lot with the essential goodness of man. Now, when man is failing to show any essential goodness, these poor churches do not know where they stand. When they say this is the millennium, because war is over and man can strike, and we can all have running water, and then man immediately begins to prepare for another war, this make-believe Christianity begins to look childish, and pessimism and atheism set in. Let us pray that our foundation is Christ.

In Jesus, the Son of God, we have a Savior from sins. Had Jesus been only another man, a great teacher, His death on the cross would not have meant anything, being only the passing of another martyr for a cause. But, because Jesus was born of a virgin as God's own begotten Son, because He had no sin and no taint of sin, He could take our sins and pay the penalty on them. Jesus was able to pay the penalty because He personally was without sin, being born outside the stigma of the Adamic race. He is Savior because He is the Son of God. As the Son of God, Jesus is Messiah, Master, and Lord, the One to whom all power and authority have been given, the One who reigns now in the lives of men and who will one day reign eternally over all the earth.

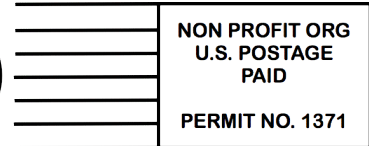
More than this, Jesus the Son of God is the rock of our salvation, the foundation stone of our Christianity, our Savior from sins, the giver of eternal life, the ruler of our lives, and the coming King of all the earth and the kingdom of God.

When we know Him thus, we can go onward to understanding of God and to holy living, knowing we are on solid rock, and have a living Savior to deliver us from sin and its consequences.

*\*Harold Doan served as the Executive Secretary of the Church of God General Conference 1954-1968.*

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# THE RESTITUTION HERALD

PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS OF THE **KINGDOM OF GOD** | ACTS 3:21

CHURCH OF GOD  
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... heaven must receive [Jesus] until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

## Jesus: We Know Who He Is!

By Dennis Sharp

Christmas! That special season is fast approaching again. In normal times (COVID notwithstanding) we anticipate our churches busy with preparations for special events: messages, cantatas, children's plays, community outreach, and decorations. I love Christmas and all of these events that make the season special. The commercialism, as well as those who are determined to take Christ out of Christmas, will not get me down. Like many Christians, I simply will not allow that. For us, this is spiritual and our primary focus on the birth of our Savior trumps the physical and material aspects that are so visible.

How do we achieve and keep what is spiritual as our first priority? It starts, of course, by maintaining a God-centered life throughout the year. At Christmas it's inevitable this will be elevated due to the focus on the fulfillment of God's plan and the virgin birth, but it's more than that. The true foundation of always keeping Christ first in our lives is to know him. It has been the mission of the Church of God from its very beginning to have a clear understanding of Jesus. We know who he is!

In a recent discussion of God and Jesus, I received the following comment, "God is not controversial. Jesus is controversial." That comment immediately hit home with me, and I completely agree with it. It is a clear biblical teaching and widely accepted by Christians that God is our heavenly Father. We are taught to pray, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name" (Matt. 6:9). It is also clear is that he is

our creator. Thirty-two times in thirty-one verses in Genesis 1, God is mentioned by name. Isaiah chapter 44 also clearly teaches that God, the only God, created all things. He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Ex. 3:6), and He reveals himself (Amos 4:13) in the history of His chosen people, the nation of Israel. It is only when Jesus is brought into the equation that orthodox Christianity creates unnecessary confusion and mystery. The result is that a clear and simple teaching of who Jesus is becomes convoluted and impossible to navigate.

There is an abundance of scripture that demonstrates these clear and simple teachings, but given the brevity of this article we will focus on four key passages. We can honor our Savior this Christmas season and bring our lives closer to him through our understanding of these verses.

First, and my personal favorite, is Luke 1:35. When the angel informs Mary that she is with child, Mary wonders how this can be since she is a virgin. The angel's reply is of great value, not just to Mary, but to all people, as it defines Jesus. *"The angel answered, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. For this reason, the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."* The angel informs us that the Holy Spirit, which this passage immediately defines as the power of God, has favored Mary with a spiritual conception and "for this reason" the resulting child "born" to

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## Jesus: We Know Who He Is! (cont.)

*(Continued from page 1)*

her will be the Son of God. "Born", which clearly means origin, begotten, or come into existence. "Son of God" or "only begotten Son of God" (John 3:16), is an equivalent phrase to "King of Israel" or Messiah (see Psalm 2:6-7). Further evidence that the writers are speaking of a human child is given by the frequency that Jesus refers to himself by his favorite title: "the Son of Man" (Dan. 7:13). *"For the Jew, the concept of Messiah is understood in purely human terms."*<sup>1</sup>

Our second clear biblical teaching on who Jesus is comes from the genealogies in Matthew 1 and Luke 3. Matthew, who is writing to Jews, traces Jesus' lineage back to Abraham and tells us that Jesus is "the son of David, the son of Abraham." Jesus is a descendant of both Abraham and David. He did not exist prior to his birth, so perfectly described in Luke 1:35, other than in the mind, plan, and word of God (see John 1:14). The writer of Hebrews (Heb. 1:1-2) places Jesus in the last days, not in eternity. Tracing Jesus' lineage back to Abraham connects him to the promise of the land and future kingdom (Gen. 17:4-8). The lineage to David is messianic, connecting him to the throne he will inherit in the coming kingdom (II Sam. 7:14-16, Luke 1:32). We have a human Jesus, a Savior, to whom we can relate and identify with in our struggles (Heb. 4:15).

Our third key passage that defines who Jesus is comes from a direct answer Peter gives to a direct question asked by Jesus (Matthew 16:15-16). Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" Peter replies, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus then acknowledges Peter's correct answer, and that it was a spiritual revelation from the heavenly Father. Jesus is the Messiah of Israel, the Messiah promised in the scriptures of the Old Testament or Hebrew Bible (Gen. 12:1-3, 49:8-10; II Sam. 7:12-16). When the Samaritan woman tells Jesus that she knows Messiah is coming (John 4:25-26), her expectation was likely based on her understanding of Deut. 18:15-18. Jesus affirms her statement and declares that he is indeed that Messiah!

Our final defining passage, referenced above, is Deut. 18:15-18. Here we have the words of God as recorded by Moses. *"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."* These words are very clear that the promised Messiah will be a prophet like Moses (a human being) that will come from among the Hebrew people. So clearly understood is this teaching

that it is referenced multiple time by the New Testament writers. It is referenced by Peter in Acts 3:32, by Stephen in his speech before the Sanhedrin in Acts 7:37, by the people at the feeding of the 5000 in John 6:14, and by the Jews that Jesus was teaching in the temple courts in John 7:40. All of these people are affirming their belief in a human Messiah, the Son of Man and Son of God, the King of Israel, who Paul is still calling a man even after his ascension to the right hand of God (I Tim. 2:5). When God says, "I will put my words in his mouth," this demonstrates that Jesus will be God's unique, authorized agent. Jesus said in John 8:28, *"I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me."*

A natural result of knowing Jesus is to recognize the responsibility we have to share Jesus with family, friends, and those within our sphere of influence. Whether we are discussing God the Father or Jesus, His only begotten Son, it is most effectively done in a spirit of love and unity. Note the answer Jesus gives when the teacher of the law asks him which of all the commandments is the most important. Jesus responds with the great truth of Deuteronomy 6:4, the Shema, *"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one."* In regards to Jesus' answer, Marvin R. Wilson writes, "With 613 individual statutes of the Torah from which to choose, Jesus cited the Shema, including the command to love God; but he also extended the definition of the 'first' and 'great' commandment to include love for one's neighbor (Lev. 19:18)."<sup>2</sup> We are at our best as witnesses for the gospel when our love of the truth embraces our love of God and each other.

Our clear understanding of the truth Jesus taught is the bond that unites us. This is especially true of the Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith. Our distinct and long-held beliefs are the reason for the special relationships we have within and among our churches and people, both past and present.

Jesus – we know who he is and it's that knowledge that allows us to keep Christmas a true spiritual celebration!

1. Marvin R. Wilson, Our Father Abraham – Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith, (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1989), p. 327
2. Wilson, p. 124.

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# Blended Ministry: Modeling the Ministry of Jesus

By J. Dan Gill

The work of ministry is challenging. By its definition it involves helping people. It often requires personal sacrifices on the part of the minister - sacrifices that others might not understand nor be able to appreciate. This is true of all kinds of ministry.

It is important to people who minister that their efforts are effective. They should always believe that their work in the Lord is well-directed, and that they are doing those things that are most needful. The weaknesses and difficulties we face as human beings are diverse. This often leaves the minister feeling torn – caring for competing needs. At that point it may be tempting to prioritize what is needful to people in such a way that we seek to help them in some regards but neglect other essential things.

Two areas of need that are often set in balance against one another are helping those struggling with this life's difficulties versus the need to minister in what is often referred to as "doctrinal" matters. The struggle between these two areas of concern are at stake whether we are ministering to individuals, families, or entire congregations.

## The Perfect Blended Ministry of Jesus

The ministry of Jesus could be viewed as encompassing these two overriding concerns:

- (1) The need of people for help with the immediate struggles that we have in this age. That includes everything from personal relationships to matters of health, emotional well-being and a host of other problems that we experience in this life.
- (2) The second is the need for a true understanding of the God who created us, His will for us and the great plans He has for us as His creation.

Sometimes we find ourselves looking at these two areas of need as somewhat independent matters. In doing so, we may then focus on one and excuse ourselves from concerns about the other. We may decide that one is important, but the other – not so much. However, those are not scriptural ways of thinking about ministering.

Jesus had a blended ministry. From the beginning, he brought help to people by teaching them wisdom for their lives – how to conduct themselves – how to manage their relationships. He brought healing. At the same time, he clearly taught people the great truths about God, himself, who he is, and matters concerning the will of God and His eternal plans for us.

Imagine if Jesus had only ministered to people on one side of our human concerns. Happily, he never flagged behind in teaching and ministering in all aspects of our circumstances. If we today are to minister in ways that are effective to our fellow man and pleasing in the sight of God, we cannot allow ourselves to become focused on "only" one set of concerns or another. While we as ministers may have varied talents, gifts and preparations, we must ask ourselves carefully if all the needs of a people are being met. In some measure, we must all have a blended ministry as Jesus did.

## What Should an Effective Healthy Ministry Be Like?

While ministering in a world of hurting people, do we have time for speaking "doctrinal" truths? The circumstances of people with whom we have to do are often difficult, sometimes dire. We see the struggles of those around us, and we may focus our energies and resources on counseling and helping to alleviate the hardships of our fellow human beings. In that light, "doctrinal" teachings are sometimes felt to represent a diversion from what is so immediately needful. Likewise, we recognize that rather than healing relationships, "doctrinal" matters are sometimes the cause of division between people.

On the other hand, doctrine and its great importance to God are spoken of throughout the New Testament. With Jesus, it is critical to him that people recognize that his doctrine is not his own but has been given to him by God (John 7:16-17). That is a cornerstone of belief for the disciples of Jesus throughout their ministries. Paul instructs his co-worker Titus that a good minister of Jesus Christ *"must have a firm grasp of the word... so that he may be able both to preach with sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict it"* (Titus 1:9). Paul goes on to write to him, *"You must teach what is right according to sound doctrine"* (Titus 2:1). The apostle writes to his protégé Timothy that true doctrine is always reflective of *"sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (1 Timothy 6:3).

How can we resolve the dilemma of ministering to those in need, versus the necessity of speaking sound "doctrine"? To resolve that dilemma requires that we clear some fog from our view of these important matters.

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Blended Ministry (cont.)

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### Clearing Away False Distinctions

Our efforts as pastors, teachers, and as ministers in other capacities have sometimes been made less effective because we have accepted some misunderstandings about what our ministries should look like.

#### 1. Doctrine Versus Christian Living

We are sometimes concerned that what people so desperately need to hear is not “doctrine,” but Christian living. However, that concern is framed by a common misunderstanding. It is not true that teaching “doctrine” is something different from teaching successful Christian living. In fact, the Scriptures make no such distinction. The teaching of right and wise Christian living is itself “doctrine.” Note these words by Matthew:

*And it came to pass when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine (Matt. 7:28).*

But what was the substance of this “doctrinal” teaching? Jesus had just preached the “Sermon on the Mount.” That teaching is widely recognized as being among the most meaningful and enlightening about life in all of human history. We see here, that teaching Christian living is teaching “doctrine.” In fact when we find the word “doctrine” in our New Testaments, it is most often being used in translation of the Greek word “didache,” (διδάχη) which most essentially means “teaching” in terms of substance or act. The word “doctrine” is simply translated “teaching” in many versions.

According to the scriptures, there is only one true “doctrine” – one true set of teachings. That one doctrine includes all the wisdom of God for “*everything we need for life and godliness*” (2 Peter 1:3). That same doctrine includes every true word regarding God Himself, His Messiah, death, resurrection, the kingdom of God and the age to come. These are part of the same “one teaching” and were all included in the blended ministry of Jesus.

If we are to have right Christian living, it means most essentially that we are to live like Christ. If we are to be true disciples of his, that means that we must trust in and “do” his words. But – all of his words. We must follow those of his teachings that address practical daily life, relate to our most important human relationships and our relationship to God Himself, kingdom life, and the age to come.

Jesus taught it all and practiced it all. If we are to be like him, we must also teach and practice all aspects of that same doctrine. It is that teaching which originated with God, was given to Jesus, taught to his disciples and then to us. Holding to and obeying that message is to be true and faithful disciples of Jesus Christ (John 8:31-32).

If we are to have ministries which are modeled on that of Jesus, we will all be teachers of true “doctrine.” And, with that we will teach our fellows to live like Christ, think like him, and value all of the things that he valued: Those things pertaining both to this life and to the life to come.

#### 2. The Gospel Versus the Social Gospel

A divinity school with which I am familiar gradually moved from the wider teachings of Jesus to a persistent school-wide focus on what was coming to be popularized as “The Social Gospel.” However, this distinction between “the gospel” and a “social gospel” is misleading to believers and not helpful to ministers.

This “social gospel” was created – not by Jesus – but by later people. Those people largely separated the teachings of Jesus into two categories:

- (1) those which deal with ethics, love, and care for our fellow man, and
- (2) everything else Jesus taught. However, this approach divides his words, carefully changes our focus from much of what was critical to him, and ultimately gives us what is effectively a different “Jesus.”

Jesus was pleasing to God – not just because he taught us about loving our fellow human beings. He fulfilled the will of God because he taught all of the things that are important for us: Things like the kingdom of God, repentance, resurrection and final judgement. He taught the great significance of faith in the Father as “the only true God,” and himself as “the Messiah.” He tells us that it is that faith which is “eternal life” (John 3:16; 17:3). And, are not those things the foundation of our faith as much - even more so - than the things being focused on in the “Social Gospel”? Even the healings and miracles Jesus did showed us more than just God’s love and care for our fellow man. They were foremost “signs” that pointed to the greater, more eternal truths about the kingdom of God and the life to come.

(Continued on page 5)



## Blended Ministry (cont.)

*(Continued from page 4)*

Just as the Bible never speaks of “doctrine” versus “Christian living,” neither does it speak of the “gospel” in contrast with a “social gospel.” These approaches are actually unscriptural. They inappropriately change our understanding, affect our faith and ultimately cause us to be less effective in ministry. Will we be “half” followers of Jesus? Will we hold to half of his heart – half of his teachings?

It simply is not possible to be like Jesus while seizing on part of his message. That, while at the same time minimizing or even disregarding other aspects of it. It is not possible for me as a pastor or minister in other capacities to model my ministry after Jesus while saying that I focus on “Christian living” and not doctrine – or, that I am primarily about the “social gospel,” but not so much about the entire gospel that Jesus loved and taught.

### How to Have a Successful Blended Ministry

One of the most effective things we can do in pursuit of balance in our concerns and ministering is to simply rely on the words that Jesus brought to us in “his” blended ministry. For example, if we read his teachings in the Sermon on the Mount, we find him speaking profound things regarding how we ought to conduct ourselves in this life and how we should love and care for our fellow man. However, we also find him consistently speaking just as profoundly about the coming kingdom of God and the life of the age to come. In fact, the Sermon on the Mount is a “kingdom message.” In that message he tells us how we should seek God’s kingdom above the things of this present age (Matt. 6:33). He affirms that *“the meek shall inherit the earth,”* *“the pure in heart will see God”* and that life in God’s kingdom is for such as are *“persecuted for righteousness sake”* in this life (Matt. 5:5, 8, 10).

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus also speaks of judgement to come and that we must...

*“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. But the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it”* (Matt. 7:13, 14).

*“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven”* (Matt. 7:21).

To have a wonderful, effective ministry at any level, we need only to read “all” of the words of Jesus and

convey his “whole” message to those with whom we have to do. Do not the people in our lives have a right to hear that? If we are ministers in the name of Jesus Christ, do we not have an obligation to share all of his words with our friends? Acts of love and kindness, together with wisdom in all that we do, are critical to pleasing God in our lives. However, those are not acceptable substitutes for sharing with our fellows the eternal truths about the far more significant life to come. We must convey to them who the God of the kingdom is and that Christ is the king of God’s kingdom. We must tell them of our hope of resurrection in Christ and about all of the wonderful things Jesus taught people in that day.

It is right to recognize that no one of us can be all things to all people. That is why God set different roles for various ones in his congregation. It is why he has given gifts among us that complement one another. And, it is why we all need each other. On the other hand, there is a role that each of us must play in helping our fellow human beings. Where we can, we must help them to negotiate this present life. Even more so, however, we must help them to find soundness of doctrine and fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ regarding the life to come. None of us are called to literally be Jesus. However, we are all called to be like him. We must emulate his love for us and God – and care deeply for the things he cared for. Let us all determine that while we are in this life, we will exhibit his love toward people in “blended ministries” while we wait for his return.

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To preserve and archive historical books, tracts, sermons, and documents from our early Church of God preachers and evangelists; whose writings may be old, but their message continues to be relevant, and God can use their words to speak to us today. To that end, we will mine the material in the archives and submit an article from the writings of our early church brethren, under the heading of "THEY STILL SPEAK."

## **THEY STILL SPEAK**

*'By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead.'* Hebrews 11:4

The following articles from the RESTITUTION HERALD were attempts by the writers to faithfully obey the clarion call of Hebrews 10:23-25 which invites believers to:

*"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near."*

## **The Prince of Peace** Edited by Grace Marsh

### **The Children's Page**

Many, many, many years ago there lived a man who was very wise and good. His name was Isaiah, and he was a prophet to the people of Judah.

You see, after King Solomon died, there came trouble to the people of his nation. It finally grew so bad that ten of the tribes of his kingdom chose a man to please themselves and called themselves the kingdom of Israel. The two tribes who were left were true to King Solomon's son and they were called Judah.

Years later, when one of King Solomon's ever-so-many great-grandsons was king over Judah, the Lord sent Isaiah the prophet to the king to say: "Behold a virgin shall... bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

At another time Isaiah wrote, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulders: (this meant that the baby boy would be a king) and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

Just think how many names this baby was to have! I am sure you know who this baby was that Isaiah wrote about. Yes, it was Jesus. When you get older, you will read many other things about him that Isaiah wrote. I love to read the book that is called by his name.

These things were all written on long rolls and kept for the people to read and study. You see they had

no printed books then, and so the word of God must be written on these long strips of parchment and rolled up.

As the people read and studied what Isaiah had written, they were so glad to know that a king was coming who would help them in their trouble! Fathers and mothers told their children about him, and when the children grew up and married they told their children. And so, as the years passed and the trouble in the world became greater, many people prayed that the Prince of Peace should come soon.

Years afterward, a young woman of the family of David was living in a little town called Nazareth. She had read of this king who was coming to Judah and every day she prayed that he might come soon.

One evening, as the sun was sinking, she went to the roof of her home, and, turning toward the south so that she could look toward Jerusalem, she knelt and prayed. Just as she always had, she prayed that the Prince of Peace might come soon. She prayed for a long time, and when she had finished, she saw that she was not alone.

An angel stood before her and he said, "Hail, . . . the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women."

She was quite frightened, wondering why the Lord should send an angel to her. But the angel went on speaking: "Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God." And then he told her a wonderful thing. He said that a baby boy was to come to her, who

*(Continued on page 7)*

## The Prince of Peace (cont.)

*(Continued from page 6)*

would be called Jesus. And he added, "He shall be called the Son of the highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and... of his kingdom there shall be no end."

Mary was still puzzled, and she said to the angel, "How is it that I shall have a baby to care for, when I have no husband?" And the angel answered, "The baby which shall come to thee is to be the Son of God."

When Mary heard that, she no longer hesitated. She had always tried to do her best to please her heavenly Father, and now that he had chosen her as the mother of his own Son, she was very glad, for she knew He was pleased.

Bowing very low before the angel she said, "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." She meant that she was very glad to do anything for the Lord.

Then the angel left her. For a long time, Mary knelt there in the twilight, thinking of the angel's words. She prayed earnestly for help to care for this wonderful baby when he should come, and gave thanks to God that He had found her good enough to serve Him in this fine way.

Several months later, the emperor sent out a command that everybody in all that part of the world should be taxed. That made it necessary for all the grown-up people to go to the city that had been the home of the greatest man of their family and pay a certain sum of money, and write their names in the record of that city.

Since the angel had appeared to Mary, she had been married to a man named Joseph, and since he, too, was of the family of David, he and Mary went together to the little town of Bethlehem where David used to live when he was a boy. It was a long journey for them, and Mary was very tired when they reached the gate of the town.

Joseph left her with friends, while he went to the inn and asked for a room. The inn-keeper told him there were no rooms left. Then I think Joseph must have tried to find a room in one of the houses, but every one told him the same thing— that the rooms were all full. Joseph was worried, for he knew that if Mary slept out on the hills that night, the frosty air would make her ill, so he went back to the inn. The inn-keeper said, "There is only one place I can give you, and that is the stable."

Joseph thought, "It will be warm there at least," and so he took Mary in and made her as comfortable as he could.

And there in the night, the baby boy she had been waiting for came to her. She wrapped him in a long white cloth such as the mothers in that country use for little babies, and because there was no cradle, she lay him on the clean, fresh hay in the manger.

Outside the city there were shepherds, watching their sheep, just as David had in the long ago. One would stand guard over the flock for a while, and the others sleep. Then one of the sleeping shepherds was awakened, and the other went to sleep.

Suddenly there was a clear, rosy light shining 'round them. In fear the watching shepherd wakened his sleeping comrades. They couched there trembling, wondering what it all meant. And then they all saw an angel dressed in shining white standing before them, and he said, "Fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

Then there appeared a great crowd of angels, and they all sang together, "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth, peace, good will toward men."

The shepherds watched the angels ascend into heaven and then one of them said, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this child of which the Lord has told us."

And leaving the dogs to care for the sheep, they went into the city. They soon found the baby, just as they had been told. They knelt before him and praised God for sending a Savior to the world, and as they went back to their sheep, they told everyone they saw of the glad news the angel had brought them. They slept no more that night, I think, but gave thanks to God for sending this Prince of Peace.

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#### THE RESTITUTION HERALD teaches:

1. the establishment of the Kingdom of God on the earth, with Christ as King of kings, and the immortalized saints as joint-heirs with Him in the government of the nations,
2. the restoration of Israel as a nation,
3. the literal resurrection of the dead,
4. the immortalization of the righteous,
5. the final destruction of the wicked,
6. and life only through Christ.

#### Also a thorough belief in:

1. repentance,
2. immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, as prerequisites of the forgiveness of sins,
3. and a holy life as essential to salvation.

*We believe and teach the "restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:21)*