



Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning

Shall we be disciples of Jesus together? Or would you rather just participate in a Religious System?

[Contend for the Faith](#) - Professing Evangelical Christians are effectively becoming [Unitarian-Universalists](#).

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:23

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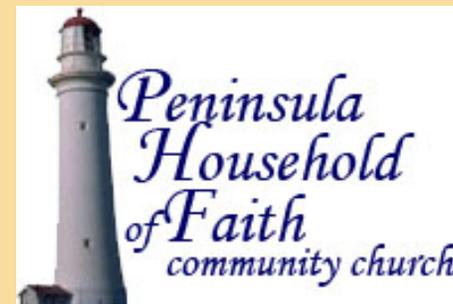
["Community"](#) - *Salvation of the World?* - **No... a ["Tower of Babel"](#) counterfeit.**

Kay Arthur/Josh McDowell to Share Platform with Contemplative

Source: [Lighthouse Trails](#)

1/27/07

I do not know these brethren and they don't know me, but I have heard good things about them. I pray our Lord would bless their fellowship in Jesus' name.



[Peninsula Household of Faith Community Church](#)

www.phfcc.org

[Rojas Family](#)

Mark Driscoll Recommends Contemplative Authors/Participates at Emergent Event_

Source: [Lighthouse Trails](#)

"Emerging church leader Mark Driscoll, who claims to have distanced himself from the emergent movement (which has a premise immersed in mysticism/contemplative) recommends his readers turn to contemplatives like Gary Thomas (who tells people in his book Sacred Pathways to repeat a word of 20 minutes) and Richard Foster (Celebration of Discipline). Some Christian leaders have defended Driscoll's supposed turn away from emergent. And yet, Driscoll is a scheduled speaker at the upcoming National Pastors Convention, which is a significant promoter for contemplative and emerging spiritualities."

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[The Good News](#)

Welcome to a site devoted to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It's my desire that the Lord would use these pages to proclaim His Gospel, to invite people to put their trust in Him, to build [His Ekklesia](#), and to warn of false gospels, false messiahs, and counterfeit religious systems.

Media Spotlight Articles

Now available in pdf form from [their site](#):

[SIX ROMAN CATHOLIC DOCTRINES THAT NULLIFY SALVATION BY GRACE](#) - (476 kb)

[DELIVERANCE - Demonization and the Christian](#) - (230 kb)

[ALL ECUMENICAL ROADS LEAD TO ROME](#) - (831 kb)

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Kingdom of God

Who Jesus is

World System

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[RENOVARÉ - Taking Leave of One's Senses -
\(296 kb\)](#)

[C.S. LEWIS - The Man and His Myths - \(74 kb\)](#)

[FOUR TEMPERAMENTS - Astrology and
Personality Testing - \(115 kb\)](#)

[FINDING GOD IN THE LORD OF THE RINGS -
\(753 kb\)](#)

[THE PURPOSE DRIVEN PROGRAM - A growing
PHENOMENON in the Churches - \(3.5 mbs\)](#)

[APOSTOLIC REFORMATION - A New Move or an
Old Deception? - \(100 kb\)](#)

[THE ALPHA COURSE - Chapter and Verse on
Alpha's Jesus - \(360 kb\)](#)

[ALLEGIANCE: To Whom Do We Pledge? - \(2.3
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Misapplying the Old Testament

This is a general problem among those who profess to be Bible Believing Christians: **Taking Old Testament scriptures** that were written to Israel at a specific time for a specific purpose, and then **trying to apply them** directly to followers of Jesus in the **New Testament Church**.

This ends up causing many problems that distract from a pure devotion to Jesus Christ. These problems end up turning a New Testament relationship with Jesus into a religious system of food and drink and rituals and holy days. And as referred to above, it also causes Christians to pursue Nationalistic Patriotic Idolatry.

[Applying the Old Testament to the New Testament Church](#)

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[Procinwarn.com](#) [Blog](#)



*** If we love people, we will warn people. ***

What's New

WARNING: Congress 2007 Christian Conference

Posted on procinwarn.com 1/9/07

Source: [Lighthouse Trails](#)

"On February 1st - 3rd, Vision New England will be presenting the [Congress 2007 conference](#). Speakers will include: contemplative meditation promoters [Tony Campolo](#), Jack Hayford, and Bill Hybels and emerging church leader, Don Miller ([Blue Like Jazz](#)). The [theme for this year's event](#) is a take off of Rick Warren's motto, "Whatever it Takes." It is disappointing to see Joni Eareckson Tada on the speaker list"

[See the rest of the article](#)

[The Bible Versions Debate](#)

By Dusty Peterson, Published in Media Spotlight

President Ford's Memorial at the National Cathedral

1/2/2007

Posted 1/2/2007 Updated 1/15/07

A believer in the Lord Jesus might have many mixed feelings and observations and analyses as he watched the ceremonies and listened to the speeches and pondered the context and history and gathered rulers and personalities as the United States honored the 38th President, Gerald R. Ford, July 14, 1913 - December 26, 2006.

Freemasonry, Warren Commission, Nixon pardon

Santa Fe International Corporation, Kuwait, Iraq

CIA, Yale, Order of the Skull & Bones, Kennedy Assassination, Watergate, Amway, Episcopal Church Denomination, Helsinki Accords

At the service today, the name of Jesus Christ was prominent (which surprised me) in the proceedings led by Episcopal clergy and included military participants and celebrity eulogizers.

John (Jack) Ford read Isaiah 40:28-31. Susan Ford Bales read James 1:19-25. Father Certain, (The Reverend Dr. Robert G. Certain, *Rector, St. Margaret's Episcopal Church & School, Palm Desert, California*) read John 14:1-6a. [but not 14:6b!]

Some attendees:

Family - Wife, Betty Ford, children, Michael, John, Steven, Susan; grand children and great-grand children;

Former Presidents and wives - President George W. Bush and Laura Bush, President Bill Clinton and Senator Hillary Clinton, President George H. W. Bush and Barbara Bush, Nancy Reagan, President Jimmy Carter and Rosalynn

Carter

Tributes given by:

- * George H. W. Bush, *Forty-First President*
- * Dr. Henry A. Kissinger
- * Thomas J. Brokaw
- * George W. Bush, *Forty-Third President*

Honorary Pall Bearers: Martin Allen, James A. Baker, III, Robert Barrett, James Cannon, Kenneth Chenault, Richard B. Cheney, William Coleman, Richard DeVos, Robert Dole, Richard Ford, Alan Greenspan, Robert Hartmann, Carla Hills, Henry Kissinger, Jack Marsh, Paul O'Neill, Donald H. Rumsfeld, Brent Scowcroft, Sanford Weill, Frank Zarb

Ceremonies at Palm Desert, California, U.S. Capitol Rotunda, National Cathedral, Presidential Library in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Other attendees: Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld

There were no Evangelical Celebrities to be found which stood out to me compared to many events over the last fifteen years.

President Ford's Career:

University of Michigan, B.A., 1935 Yale University School of Law, LL.B., 1941 United States Navy, 1942 - 1946 United States House of Representatives, 1949 - 1973 Vice President of the United States, 1973 - 1974 President of the United States, 1974 - 1977

Quotes of President Ford about Freemasonry:

Remarks at an Unveiling Ceremony at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial, Alexandria, Virginia.
February 17th, 1975

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=5485>

"When I took my obligation as a master mason--incidentally, with my three younger brothers--I recalled the value my own father attached to that order. But I had no idea that I would ever be added to the company of the Father of our Country and 12 other members of the order who also served as Presidents of the United States."

"Masonic principles--internal, not external--and our order's vision of duty to country and acceptance of God as a Supreme Being and guiding light have sustained me during my years of Government service. Today especially, the guidelines by which I strive to become an upright man in Masonry give me great personal strength."

"Masonic precepts can help America retain our inspiring aspirations while adapting to a new age. It is apparent to me that the Supreme Architect has set out the duties each"



Symbol on the Memorial Service [Program](#)

[Crusaders' cross](#)

"Also known as the **Jerusalem cross**. This cross was the symbol of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem, which existed for almost two hundred years after the First Crusade. The four smaller crosses are said to symbolize either the four books of the Gospel or the four directions in which the Word of Christ spread from Jerusalem. Alternately, all five crosses can symbolize the five wounds of Christ during the Passion. This symbol is also used in the flag of Georgia."

From Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cross>

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Contemplative, Emergent, Interspirituality

[From Lighthouse Trails](#)

Posted 1/1/2007

"In 2006, many of us witnessed the escalation of contemplative spirituality within Christendom like never before. One leader after the next either openly promoted contemplative or remained eerily quiet about the issue all together. A major Christian publishing house released a book on yoga, trusted Christian leaders participated in a Fox Home Entertainment DVD on contemplative prayer, online Christian bookstores became nesting grounds for authors who teach panentheism and interspirituality, and Purpose Driven has made it into over 400,000 churches with Rick Warren being a proponent of both contemplative and the emerging church."

"We know that many of you have paid dear prices for standing for biblical truth. The editors and the authors of Lighthouse Trails Publishing and Lighthouse Trails Research thank you for being an inspiration to other believers and a witness to those who still live in darkness. It is our desire to be a service to the body of Christ, and we hope we can do that in 2007 in humility, love and courage."

"God bless you as you contend for the precious faith. May the Lord watch over you and keep you safe."

- [Son of PTL Jim Bakker Says Gay Marriage OK; Resonates With Contemplative Spirituality](#)
 - [Lighthouse Trails Research Top Stories of 2006](#)
 - [Christian or "Christ Follower"?](#)
 - [VIDEO: The New Age - A Pathway to Paradise?](#)
 - [How to Know When the Emerging Church Shows Signs of Emerging in Your Church](#)
 - [An End of the Year Greeting from Brian Flynn](#)
 - [Rick Warren and Another Possible Presidential Candidate Meet Together](#)
 - [Event in Iran Says Holocaust Never Happened](#)
 - [In 2006, Which Christian Colleges Are Turning to Contemplative?](#)
 - [Christian Leaders Still Promoting "Purpose Driven Life"](#)
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About "End of the Spear"

"Dare to Make Contact"

Posted 12/28/06 updated 12/30/06

An amazing story about five martyred missionaries and the producers hired a gay activist, Chad Allen, to play the lead role. "Why?", I've continued to ask. The fact that a gay activist was cast is troubling enough. But I'm considering now if there isn't a broader agenda in mind.

The movie was released in January and I posted commentary from my friend, Bob Haines about the situation in February: [Movie about Martyred Christian Missionaries stars a homosexual](#). Though I had long been inspired by these missionaries,

husbands and wives, I did not intend to see the movie. I have been profoundly disappointed in recent years with the lack of discernment and gullibility of Christians and how easily they have been manipulated by media hype when it came to movies that are superficially labeled "Christian". However, another friend gave the dvd to me as a gift and I watched the movie.

I actually liked the movie and all the actors portraying missionaries and Waodani. I loved the scenery. But there is much more going on here that must be considered.

"End of the Spear" was produced by Every Tribe Entertainment whose web site is subtitled, "Truth Beyond Imagination" Their "about us" information includes the following:

We are storytellers. Every Tribe Entertainment creates films that address globally relevant issues in order to incite a positive impact on the world.

We believe the most powerful stories are those that raise the most meaningful questions. This sets the stage for social discourse that explores potential solutions through varying perspectives. Our films are designed to entertain and stimulate our audiences. We craft hopeful stories - from the world - for the world.

Every Tribe Entertainment was founded in 2003, and released its first motion picture, End of the Spear, in January 2006. The film debuted in the top 10 theatrical grossing films during its opening weekend, and to date has grossed over \$20 million in home video sales and rentals.

Building on the success of our first release, Every Tribe Entertainment's focus is to produce captivating and thought-provoking cinematic experiences that appeal to a broad international audience.

"End of the Spear" is very touching and heart-warming and even inspiring, if you concentrate on the fact that real brothers and sisters-in-Christ lived through these events. And yet, there was not a single mention of the name of Jesus who these missionaries died for!

The movie attempts to portray the ministry and deaths of Nate Saint, Jim Elliot, Peter Fleming, Ed McCully, and Roger Youderian and how Elizabeth Elliot and Nate's sister, Rachel, continued to minister to the Auca/Waodani tribe.

The movie begins with the voice of the character, Steve Saint, son of the pilot, Nate, in narration saying:

Some people say we live in a world of irreconcilable differences. They're saying true peace, lasting peace can't be obtained because we haven't found a way yet to change the human heart. I took a journey once with a warrior named Mincayani down a remote river deep in the Amazon basin of Ecuador. The events of that journey will challenge what a lot of people say.

Why did Every Tribe Entertainment produce this movie? They say they want to "...address globally relevant issues in order to incite a positive impact on the world." They say they, "...believe the most powerful stories are those that raise the most meaningful questions. This sets the stage for social discourse that explores potential solutions through varying perspectives."

They want to create, "... thought-provoking cinematic experiences that appeal to a broad international audience." So they choose a powerful example of Hebrews 11 type martyrs from the heritage of the Evangelicals, they cast a gay activist in the lead role and they tell us in the opening narration that they want to challenge the idea that we can't have lasting peace because we can't change the human heart.

Is the Gospel of Jesus Christ portrayed as the only hope? The Gospel is no where to be found in the movie. The closest it comes is when the Nate Saint character is comforting his son. The young Steve Saint asks if his Dad will defend himself with his gun if the Waodani attack. The father says he can't shoot the Wadoani. "They're not ready for heaven. We are." The implication is there, for anyone who is willing to interpret it so, that the missionaries are going to make the Waodani ready for heaven. But anyone who wants to interpret otherwise can. The theme of the entire movie can be interpreted by one with a global peace vision as being one of helping to bring peace by understanding and avoiding phobias because of misunderstanding.

The missionaries are portrayed as referring to God by the Waodani name, Waengongi. The message that the tribes people learn is that Waengongi doesn't want them to spear their fellow Waodani. Did the missionaries never tell the Waodani about Jesus in Israel who died on the cross for our sins? Did they really let the tribes people think that God was the same as their god, Waengongi?

Is this movie simply about human compassion, courage, "redemption", forgiveness, and a hope for global peace? What does it profit a person if he gains all of this but loses his soul? And there is only one name under heaven by which a man must be saved: Jesus. (see Acts 4:12)

The following is what the Every Tribe Entertainment site says to promote the dvd release of End of the Spear:

Debuting on DVD June 13 from Fox Home Entertainment, End Of The Spear takes viewers deep into the heart of darkness to discover that faith and forgiveness can transcend the senseless acts of violence that stand in the way of cultural understanding.

"End of the Spear"... does this refer to the end of violence, a global hope of peace? Heaven on Earth? A Tower of Babel vision? "Cultural understanding"? Social engineering? Myth-making?

"Dare to Make Contact"... with who? Any people we are phobic about?

As believers in the Lord Jesus, our calling is not to be zealous about movies but to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to whoever will listen.

Every Tribe Entertainment CEO from their site:

"Mart Green, CEO

Mart is a producer of *End of the Spear*. Before starting Every Tribe Entertainment he built Mardel Christian and Educational Supply, a growing chain of 23 stores in 6 states. Mart's family built Hobby Lobby, which now has 381 stores in 30 states. Mart combines his passion for stories with his experience in building well run, customer oriented companies."

Mart Green's father is billionaire, David Green. Founder of Hobby Lobby. Hobby Lobby has made use of Bill Gothard's Character First training program.

Every Tribe Entertainment's next project is a movie titled, "Blink" about a Muslim princess who is assisted by an American who is, "... struck by an incredible gift - the ability to see multiple potential futures. This mysterious skill helps them avoid capture once, then twice."

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

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[West African Mission Update - December 2006](#)

Posted 12/28/06

~ News From Patti ~

Dear Brethren,

I have recently returned from a trip to Nigeria. Steve left two days after I returned, and has since also returned home here in Sierra Leone. Altogether it took about 38 days.

During all this time I have not had a chance to correspond with anyone outside of our vicinity, except a few phone calls. The trip itself was of the Lord.

The week before I left, I had come down ill which concerned me. I did not know if I could travel as sick as I was. But the Lord had other plans. It seemed evident that I was not getting over the illness, and that I was going to Nigeria.

[More](#)

~ News From Steve ~

The three weeks spent in Nigeria were overall very encouraging. Many of the brethren are faithfully continuing to preach the gospel and raise up disciples in various places. It was a joy to meet with numerous brethren that I had not previously known who have been blessed by the efforts of Titus, Yinnkah, Kunle, Moses, Tony, Oliver, Solomon, Dr. George, and brother Samuel.

The Lord is evidently using these brethren to carry on the work for His honor and glory and unto the spiritual profit of many.

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Rick Warren on Meet the Press

12/24/06 updated 12/28/06

Unify the World's Religions to join with the Global Political and Economic Systems to solve the world's problems

Pragmatism

[Video](#)

[Transcript](#)

Faith in America: Can Religion unite the country for the greater good? Tim Russert, Jon Meachem: American Gospel

Many religions civil peace: freemarket economy for religions, let the best ideas win.

Can religion be a force for unity?

Warren is sick of being known by what we're against, he wants Christians to be known by what we're for.

Roosevelt prayer on D-Day, our republic, our religion, our civilization, unholy forces of our enemy. Almighty God, Amen

Aspen Institute speaking, Warren.

Lincoln second inaugural address Christian?

Ben Franklin: public religion – utility to maintain morality.

Deism in founding fathers

It's time for the church to be known for love and not legalism. Warren.

Right and left think they've lost. Extremism. Both sides all in this together.

A culture of civility.

Liberals moderates conservatives: five global goliaths. Could coalesce around these.

Third leg of the stool: government, business, the church

Faith sector, public sector, economic sector

Business: management skills, most churches poorly managed.

Global reach of the church. Universal distribution. Doesn't need to be Christian. Imam. Only truly global organization. Buddhists, Hindus. Local credibility: priest, pastor, imam, or rabbi, credibility. proselytizing

Secularists very small, unite the faiths. I don't care what your motivation to do good is as long as you do good.

Athiest movement - manifesto

You're not going to take religion out of their lives. You can manage it, you can marshall it. Rick is one of the great marshallers.

Religion of humility. “We don’t have a monopoly on truth” we have to watch the proselytization. Sense of history, excesses in the name of religion.

Founding fathers managing and marshalling not opposing religions.

Atheists: killed more in the 20th century... [faith is the hope implied]

Compassionate conservatism and Compassionate liberalism. The compassionate part is the Jesus part.

American values instead of religious values, while recognizing the spiritual element.

Americans: given much, expect much, responsibility

Psalm 72 ???

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On Wearing a Head Covering

*The following are from two emails we received from Barbara Wilderbuer.
Posted 12/24/06*

Women, for the most part, stopped wearing head coverings in Christian churches in the mid 20th century. Around the same time abortion was legalized, prayer in school was restricted, the five fundamentals of faith was being scooted out the doors of trusted theological seminaries, interest in the cults and even the occult, self-expression, rebellion to parents, mothers of small children joining the work force, psychotherapies and relativism, and on and on it goes---

Today we are told head coverings are a cultural thing of the past, not necessary to women in the church today. It is amazing to me that women who obey the Biblical command to wear a head covering are labeled "legalistic", "uninformed", and perhaps not even saved-- in much need of "grace".

I wear a hat or scarf to church or public worship gatherings of Christians. I have been labeled these and more for 27 years. Still I would not trade the sweet fellowship with Christ I have for the acceptance of others for all the riches in the world!

I do have a question for those who argue the "cultural" point of a problem with the women in the church at Corinth, however: Are the women of *that* day any different from the women of today? If we are *still doing* the same things they did back then, the principles of head coverings, submission to the authority of our husbands, and quiet learning that pleases the Father would still apply.

The truth about "cultural" head coverings is sadly miscommunicated. Greek women covered the whole head, only allowing the eyes to be seen. Jewish women covered the hair, allowing the entire face to be seen. *How* to wear a head covering is the cultural issue, *not* whether it is Biblical to wear one.

And finally, to be legalistic about wearing a head covering is a simple one: The "only this kind and nothing else will do" mentality is legalism. To make it a salvation issue would also be legalism. There have been rare occasion that the church bulletin held over the top of my hair had to do when I prayed in church because I ran out the door without my scarf. God doesn't care what we use, just so long as we obey and cover the head. It is a symbol of faithful obedience for three reasons that are not cultural: the order of creation as it was Eve that was deceived, not to offend the angels present at the assembly, and submission to our husbands. These are not cultural reasons.

Thank you.

My wearing a head covering used to be a very sensitive issue for me. I resented it. I felt like Paul was not being fair. I did not want to accept it as from my Lord Jesus. God's Word. Unchanging. Perfect. I listened to all the reasons not to. It's been a difficult journey. Such a simple instruction--yet at the same time a VERY BIG DEAL. Why? Pride, I'm quite sure. I can only suggest that my flesh hates to submit and obey. I was born to rebel and if it were written just the opposite then I believe that women would be wearing hats and scarves like crazy, stating reasons just the same---"the command was cultural to that time period. It doesn't apply to our day." And so I can only shrug my shoulders and believe with simple trust that God has his purposes for why up is up, down is down, and if he tells us to stomp around Jericho seven times and shout to the glory of the Lord even though it does not make good military sense then He has a reason for it and it is not our place to question Him but rather to obey Him. It truly is a narrow way that He beckons us to travel and I pray His merciful loving kindness will continue to extend unmerited toward me until the day of His glorious return for His bride, The Church. Wowsie, wow!! Oh how I look forward to that day!!!

God bless you both! And shalom.

We are called to simply speak the truth. We are called to be motivated by love.

Without the truth we are no different from pagans. Without love we are just Pharisees.

The world and many professing Christians would like to silence the truth in the name of "love".

Our own flesh is used to discredit our message.

Jesus will help us.

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"But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; **for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.**" 1 Samuel 16:7

What do Jesse Jackson, Gloria Steinem, Robert Schuller, and James Dobson all have in common?

The False Gospel of Self Esteem!

Jesse Jackson led young people in the affirmation chant, "I AM - Somebody!"

Gloria Steinem, the Feminist leader, wrote the book, *Revolution From Within - A Book of Self Esteem*.

Robert Schuller wrote the book, *Self Esteem: The New Reformation*

James Dobson has promoted Self Esteem for many years including with the following quote from his book, *What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew about Women*:

"In fact, low self-esteem is a threat to the entire human family, affecting children, adolescents, the elderly, all socioeconomic levels of society, and each race and ethnic culture."

Quoted in the Bobgan's book, *James Dobson's Gospel of Self-Esteem & Psychology*

[The False Gospel of Self Esteem](#)

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

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["Building Your Mate's Self-Esteem"](#)

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From TBC Today 12/8/06

Global Summit on AIDS and the Church

on the Saddleback campus

MAN SAYS: "[Beginning November 30], the Global Summit on AIDS and the Church [was] held on the Saddleback campus. It is not a church service, but an international summit for pastors and world leaders. Leaders from churches, denominations, health, NGOs, Christian organizations, governments, businesses, and entertainment will meet together to discuss how they can work with churches to end AIDS. Participants will hear messages from Laura Bush, Sen. Bill Frist, Sen. Sam Brownback, Bill Gates, Bono, the doctor who discovered AIDS transmission heterosexually, **Franklin Graham, the President of World Vision, the President of World Relief, the President of Compassion**, and about 30 other speakers who are concerned about AIDS. [Pro-homosexual, pro-abortion] **Sen. Obama** is one speaker at a conference which includes Republicans and Democrats, Christians and non-Christians, pastors, business leaders, and all kinds of races from around the world. Yet the vitriol and unChristlike slander was over the top." (**Rick Warren**, Purpose Driven network, November 25, 2006)

GOD SAYS: "Be ye not **unequally yoked** together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" (2 Corinthians 6:14-15)

[TBC: More recently, Warren and Saddleback released a follow up statement: "We do not expect all participants in the Summit discussion to agree with all of our Evangelical beliefs. However, the HIV/AIDS pandemic cannot be fought by Evangelicals alone. It will take the cooperation of all government, business, NGOs and the church. That is the purpose of this Summit -- to marshal the policy of the government; the finances of business; the expertise of the health organizations; and the compassion, volunteerism and reach of the church in order to care for the sick and save lives."

Saving of lives is certainly paramount, but saving of souls is greater yet. We have seen enough examples that demonstrate **whenever evangelicals join hands with the world, the real "good news" will be set aside.** That is part of the demands of the world.]

From TBC Today 12/8/06

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[Messianic Solver of World Problems](#)

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..." *Acts 16:31*

"Be ye therefore perfect , even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." *Matthew 5:48*

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love..." *Ephesians 1:3-4*

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*Over the years I have gone from being interested in and being supportive of the **Hebrew Roots** movements and **Messianic congregations** to, recently, realizing that nearly all of it is corrupt and unbiblical.*

I've realized that Galatians and Romans and Hebrews were written to give us understanding that protects us from agendas like the "Hebrew Roots" movements.

How shall we explain from scripture the unbiblical nature of Messianic Congregations and Hebrew

[How shall we edify one another as we discuss?](#)

Please visit [this portion](#) of my discussion board as I am trying to answer this question.

As the editor of this site and your fellow believer in Jesus, please hold me accountable to these truths in everything on this site and in our personal relationships.

You can [register](#) and take part in the discussion board or you can [email me](#).

Jim

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Foursquare Church Promoting Emerging/Contemplative Leaders

11/18/06

On the Lighthouse Trails site

[*Landmark Education vs. a link on Apologetics Index*](#)

Landmark Education vs. Apologetics Index and Google and a French TV Station

11/16/06

On the Religion News Blog site

Men in their 20s & 30s

11/15/06 Updated 12/4/06

Young men are conditioned, by the World in general and by the Evangelical Subculture in particular, to see the Christian life as a **career ladder** in the Church to climb for ever increasing power and prestige.

1. Pew Sitter
2. Sunday School Teacher
3. Home Fellowship Leader
4. Deacon
5. Elder
6. Professional Clergyman
7. Megachurch Pastor
8. Denominational Empire Pope
9. Celebrity Author & Speaker
10. Counselor to Presidents and the Super Rich
11. Messianic Solver of World Problems

I know. I was one of these young men. I pray our Lord Jesus will help me to whatever degree I'm still driven by selfish ambition at the age of 53.

Most young men just pursue items 1, 2, 3, and 5. Variations are when young men pursue the musician obsession for the same reasons.

Have you noticed that many young men actually appear to be "running for elder"... as if it were a political office? Well, in many churches it is a political office.

And yet, it is Biblical for a brother to desire to serve as an overseer/elder/bishop:

"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." 1 Timothy 3:1

If being an elder is truly seen as an opportunity to participate, to serve, to edify, to set an example, and to help shepherd the flock, then we rejoice that brothers are motivated by love to do so.

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[US university president poses with 'suicide bomber'](#)

Jerusalem Post 11/5/06

Nathan & Julissa Cedarland [Serving In Mexico](#)



A Call To Repentance

Dave Hunt

See the [November 2006 Newsletter](#) on The Berean Call site.

This is an important message about the many ways professing Christians and the Evangelical subculture have become corrupt and deceived.

This message includes serious warnings about the following:

President Bush and Condoleezza Rice, D. James Kennedy, R.C. Sproul, Bob Finley, Christian Aid Mission, Mennonite Central Committee, World Vision (WV), Timothy George, Jack Hayford, Duane Litfin, Brian McLaren, David Neff, Ron Sider, Jim Wallis, Rick Warren, Thomas Wang, John Stott, Billy Graham, John Ankerberg, James Dobson, Renovaré Spiritual Formation Bible, J.I. Packer, Zondervan, Rupert Murdoch, Rick Warren, The Roman Catholic Church, Richard Land, the Southern Baptists' Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, Pat Robertson, Jack Van Impe, Bishop Fulton Sheen, Chuck Colson, Paul Crouch, TBN, Benny Hinn, Jerry Falwell, Robert Schuller, the Chrysostom Society, Richard Foster, Calvin Miller, Karen Mains, Eugene Peterson

[November 2006 Newsletter](#)

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What if your friends were thinking of sending their child, by himself, to be a witness to the [temple prostitutes](#)?

What if they were considering turning their children over to the temple for several hours a day to be taught by them... all in the interest of witnessing to them and the other children?

What if they told the temple prostitutes, "Please... teach our children your Selfism philosophies, your sorcery and divination, your visions of Tower of Babel - global unity - heaven on earth!"

"Celebration of Discipline - 27 Years of Influence!"

From the Lighthouse Trails site *10/29/06*

Richard Foster has been promoting unbiblical mysticism beliefs and techniques for many years and has helped to spawn the Emergent Church and Contemplative Spirituality movements that have swept Evangelicalism. Consider the following from the Lighthouse Trails blog article:

"Those that Foster quotes favorably in *Celebration of Discipline*:

[Thomas Merton](#)

[Morton Kelsey](#)

[Madame Guyon](#)

[Evelyn Underhill](#)

Elizabeth O' Connor

[Thomas Kelly](#)

[Fyodor Dostoevski](#)

[Soren Kierkegaard](#)

George Fox

Agnes Sanford

[Brother Lawrence](#)

[Dallas Willard](#) "

"Those Who Quote, Promote and Endorse Richard Foster:

[Focus on the Family](#)

[Chuck Swindoll](#)

[Christianity Today](#)

[YWAM](#)

[C.S. Lewis Institute](#)

[Intervarsity Christian Fellowship](#)

[Youth Specialties](#)

[More on *Celebration of Discipline*](#) "

Is it looking to be the next Calvary Chapel non-denominational denomination?

[See Comments](#) by
Senator Barack Obama
and CFR's Walter Russell Mead
about Evangelicals and Politics

[Broken Fragments](#)

Thoughts on Song of Songs

A New Booklet by Steve Phillips

[Teen Mania Introduces Kids to Contemplative-Promoting Speaker](#)

At the Lighthouse Trails Blog 10/26/06

Must we patronize a brothel to witness to prostitutes?

Of course not!

We are called to proclaim Jesus to prostitutes while remaining separated from their immorality.

If they are temple prostitutes, we are called to remain separated from their idolatry.

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What does it take to build the Megachurch of the Anti-Christ?

What does it take to build ANY Megachurch?

As followers of Jesus...

We are called to take the hit

The cheap shot
The misrepresentation
The propaganda

[Who's Driving the Purpose Driven Church?](#)

[Pray for the Berean Call](#)

[Music - The Counterfeit](#)

[Our First Visit to a Brethren Assembly](#)

[Synthesizing the Evangelicals](#)

[Extreme Calvary Chapel](#)

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[*Extreme Calvary Chapel*](#)

Synthesizing the Evangelicals

10/19/06

Comments by Senator Barack Obama:

"We need to take faith seriously not simply to block the religious right but to engage all persons of faith in the larger project of American renewal"

"Some of this is already beginning to happen. Megachurch pastors like **Rick Warren** and **T. D. Jakes** are wielding their enormous influence to confront AIDS, Third World debt relief, and the genocide in Darfur. Self-described "progressive evangelicals" like **Jim Wallis** and **Tony Campolo** are lifting up the biblical injunction to help the poor as a means of mobilizing Christians against budget cuts to social programs and growing inequality. And across the country, individual churches like my own are sponsoring day-care programs, building senior centers, and helping ex-offenders reclaim their lives."

Time Magazine October 23, 2006

Book Excerpt: "My Spiritual Journey"

"In an exclusive excerpt from his new memoir, the rising star discovers how faith can open doors to understanding"

Comments by Walter Russell Mead of the Council on Foreign Relations in Foreign Affairs magazine in the September/October 2006 issue. Mr. Mead speaks of why he is actually hopeful about merging the Evangelicals with a global agenda:

"As evangelicals have recently returned to a position of power in U.S. politics, they have supported similar causes and given new energy and support to U.S. humanitarian efforts. Under President Bush, with the strong support of Michael Gerson (an evangelical who was Bush's senior policy adviser and speechwriter), U.S. aid to Africa has risen by 67 percent, including \$15 billion in new spending for programs to combat HIV and AIDS. African politicians, such as Nigeria's Olusegun Obasanjo and Uganda's Yoweri Museveni, have stressed their own evangelical credentials to build support in Washington, much as China's Sun Yat-sen and Madame Chiang Kai-shek once did. Thanks to evangelical pressure, efforts to suppress human trafficking and the sexual enslavement of women and children have become a much higher priority in U.S. policy, and the country has led the fight to end Sudan's wars. **Rick Warren**, pastor of an evangelical megachurch in Southern California and the author of *The Purpose Driven Life* (the single best-selling volume in the history of U.S. publishing), has mobilized his 22,000 congregants to help combat AIDS worldwide (by hosting a conference on the subject and training volunteers) and to form relationships with churches in Rwanda."

Earlier in this same article Mr. Mead observes about the traditional view of Evangelicals:

"This [apocalyptic vision of Evangelicals] is not particularly hospitable to the idea of **gradual progress toward a secular utopia driven by technological advances and the cooperation of intelligent people of all religious traditions.**"

[Novus Ordo Seclorum](#)

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Our First Visit to a Brethren Assembly

10/14/06

For years I have wanted to visit a meeting of a "Plymouth Brethren" assembly. On September 3rd, 2006 we had the privilege of meeting with the saints at Carter Road Bible Chapel in Princeton, New Jersey. They meet in a beautiful white building built in 1898 and occupied by various churches since then. This Brethren Assembly has been meeting at this location since 1973 but was originally formed in the 1920s in Trenton.

We met two of the three elders that morning and I very much respect the fact that they were both in their 70's or 80's. They were very kind and eager to welcome us. They were energetic leaders who led from among their brothers and sisters.

At 9:30 AM was the "Breaking of Bread" in the main meeting room of the Chapel. There was no one up front. Everyone was sitting in the pews. We were all silent for a time and then someone selected a hymn which we opened to in the hymn book and sang a cappella. There were several hymns sung and a brother stood up in the congregation and read a scripture and another brother stood up and prayed. Then one of the brothers went forward to the front and distributed the bread and the cups to other brothers who distributed them to the congregation. Most of the sisters wore head coverings of various styles during the meetings.

At about 10:30 we went through a hallway to a fellowship hall and enjoyed talking to various members of the congregation.

The "Family Bible Hour" began about 11:00 AM. We gathered in the main Chapel meeting room again. A brother in his 30's led the singing of hymns from up front, accompanied by a lady playing an organ. We took part in a responsive reading out of the back of the hymnals which spoke of Jesus' death for us on the Cross. The main speaker that morning was a visitor who was coming from twenty years on the mission field in the Phillipines and on his way to a new position with Christian Missions in Many Lands (CMML). He was in his 50's and taught from Luke 16 about Lazarus and the Rich Man. He started out by quoting from Rick Warren and the Purpose Driven Life, which I do not recommend. It was my privilege to meet this Brother in Christ and I am grateful for his dedication to the Gospel.

I loved visiting Carter Road Bible Chapel and assembling with these precious fellow believers in Jesus Christ. My wife enjoyed speaking to the wife of one of the elders and several other ladies. A young woman who had graduated from Princeton befriended my daughter. My daughter also enjoyed talking to a young woman who was visiting from the mission field in Hong Kong.

A significant portion of the congregation was from India or at least ethnic Indian, including several young families. I enjoyed getting to know a brother who was planning to visit his family in the south of India soon. He was telling me how most of his relatives are Roman Catholic, which I found interesting.

The meeting of the Christians at Carter Road Bible Chapel was such a blessing for its simplicity and its depth and its

unaffected sincerity. It had many of the qualities I appreciate about our home assembly. Do pray that our Lord Jesus would continue to bless this beloved congregation.



Believershome.com



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["Christian Schools Introducing Teens to Mysticism Proponent"](#)

*At the Lighthouse Trails site
10/11/06*

Please
Pray for
the Brothers and Sisters who minister via

The Berean Call

10/9/06 modified 10/10/06

(Strikethroughs and rewording based on email discussion with a Berean Call customer service representative.)

Please pray for Dave Hunt and Tom McMahon, who lead the organization and for the staff that serves the Assembly of Christians around the world.

Pray for Dave and his wife, Ruth, and for their adult daughter, Janna, who is going through treatments for cancer.

Brother Dave Hunt has probably had at least as much of an impact on my Christian life as any other person.

I don't know Dave personally and I've only met him once briefly when he spoke at a local church. And yet the Lord used Dave Hunt's ministry, since about 1980, through newsletters, books, videos, and audio tapes to rescue me first from "motivational training" and "human potential" deceptions, and then later from "Christian activism" and the "Coalition On Revival". It was through Dave's ministry that I learned the importance of following the Lord Jesus, alone, and not "gurus"; and about comparing EVERYTHING to God's Word as the standard of Truth.

It was a blessing when Brother Dave took the time to discuss Jesus Christ with a flight attendant on one of his frequent trips. It happened to be my sister!

The Berean Call's administrative assistant led one of our closest friends to the Lord many years ago.

Please pray about the following concerns I have about the Berean Call and their current ministry.

1. That their legitimate support for Israel and the Jewish people and their opposition to Islam will not seduce them into a political activism mode that distracts from the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It was Dave that helped ME to see the corrupt nature of idolatrous political pursuits!
2. That they will rethink their yoking with apparent endorsement of Tim LaHaye who is listed as an endorser in at least one of their books, *What Love Is This?*. It concerns me that in the name of opposing Calvinism (I agree that militant Calvinists must be confronted) they would yoke with endorse Tim LaHaye and therefore overlook his own deceptions which are at least as serious as militant Calvinism. Tim LaHaye helped to popularize psychology and disguised astrology through his "Four Temperaments" book series. Tim LaHaye was very much involved in the seduction of American Christianity into political activism and morality crusades through his Moral Majority of California and his Coalition of Traditional Family Values. His wife, Beverly, continues to seduce professing Christians into the "culture wars" through Concerned Women for America. Recently, Tim LaHaye endorsed Mel Gibson's movie, *Passion of the Christ*.
3. That they will rethink their yoking with Calvary Chapels. Or they will rethink their approach when speaking to Calvary Chapel congregations. For the most part I believe that most Calvary Chapel clergymen preach the real Jesus and the true Gospel, for which I rejoice. But their leadership structure with a one-man "Pastor/Teacher" who exerts a Moses-like authoritarian control over each congregation is not a Biblical, healthy example to set for the rest of the Body of Christ. I have personally heard Dave Hunt advocate the leadership of an assembly by multiple elders. Calvary Chapels do not have true elders. They are ruled by one man who has an advisory

board who are called, "elders". Part of the reason that Evangelicalism is so deceived is BECAUSE of people who follow their leaders as gurus because their leaders are allowed to have unbiblical authority over their brethren!

[The Berean Call](#)

[Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism](#)

[Four Temperaments, Astrology & Personality Testing](#)

by Martin and Deidre Bobgan
On the Psychoheresy web site

[Quotes about Mel Gibson's Movie](#)

[Calvary Chapel Critique](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

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[The Rulers and Murder](#)

"Outspoken Putin critic shot dead in Moscow"
MyWay News 10/7/06

[Machiavelli and How Rulers Think](#)

[The True Nature of the World System](#)

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Music - The Counterfeit

In Worship, Discipleship, & Fellowship

10/4/06 updated 10/7/06

How much does the New Testament say about music? Not much, and yet look how obsessed we Evangelicals have become with music in our understanding and practice of worship, being disciples, and assembling ourselves together.

Our assembly meetings have been turned into "church service" productions that are dominated by musical performances. This deceives professing Christians into searching for a church where they "feel" like they have been a part of "worship" which requires them to be surrounded by an adequate number of emotional people with their eyes closed and raising their hands, and getting "into" the music.

Well meaning brothers who are musicians have been misled to confuse devotion to their music with serious discipleship.

Young leaders have been conditioned to think that a really right-on church or home fellowship is one with really talented musicians.

The Christian Music industry is a parachurch subculture. It is auxiliary to the Church. It is outside the church and has a life of its own. It is a pied-piper system that usurps the role of the assembly and becomes the bulk of a young person's Christian life.

From that first summer I believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, my favorite thing is to sing songs to the Lord with other believers. I have always greatly appreciated friends who play the guitar or the piano or the congas who have a heart to serve and minister and participate. As a new believer, moving from place to place because of the Navy, there were times I didn't know people yet, and there were record albums from the Christian Bookstore that I played in my apartment and I sang to the Lord and I was ministered encouragement and hope and trust.

Looking back, I would have benefited more from learning earlier than I did what it means to be a disciple of Jesus and an Acts 17:11 Berean. The Evangelical subculture I was in placed too much emphasis on music as if it were at the center of being a Christian and being the Church.

When we sing songs to the Lord together, sometimes I close my eyes; sometimes I raise my hands; I most definitely get emotional from time to time. While these things are part of worship or the effect of worship, they are by no means central to worship. Neither are they central to being a serious disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[What I Recommend](#)

[Dove Awards on TBN](#)

[Being a Disciple of Jesus](#)

[The Evangelical Subculture](#)

[Music in the Assembly](#)

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[About this Book](#)

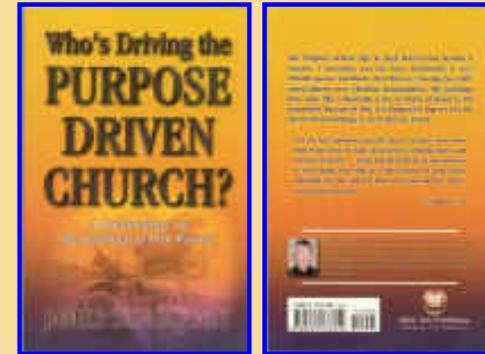
[James Sundquist](#) is founder of Rock Salt Publishing and is very devoted to contending for the faith. Pray for this brother that he, and each of us, would speak the truth motivated by love. I have greatly appreciated the encouragement of getting to know James as an internet co-worker in Christ.

[RICK WARREN'S GLOBAL P.E.A.C.E. PLAN vs. SCRIPTURAL TEACHINGS ON PEACE](#)

(PDF file 177 kb)

BY JAMES SUNDQUIST

Who's Driving the PURPOSE DRIVEN CHURCH?
A Documentary on the Teachings of Rick Warren
By James Sundquist



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[See Discussion about King James Version and other Bible Translations](#)

Comments about Quakerism 9/28/06

My beloved friend whom I greatly respect, [Carl Mease](#), sent me the following comments about Quakerism:

"I noticed your comments on Quakerism from your trip. [My wife] was raised a Quaker, her dad still being a Friends pastor, and I was saved in the Friends Church. There are two distinctly different denominations, with the same name, only because they have the same roots. The only written distinction is that some are called Evangelical Friends. The other group, which is basically Unitarian, is commonly called the Eastern Quakers because they are mostly in Penna. and the Eastern states. Interestingly enough, it is my understanding the original split came over whether to have a pastoral system. Even more interesting is that the group (I believe originally called the Hicksites) that wanted to maintain the leading of the Spirit in worship without a pastor leader/coordinator; devolved into the Unitarian types today. The group that wanted a pastoral system is the present Evangelical Friends. The pastor in the Evangelical group actually does not have power or superior authority as in many groups. The name Society of Friends merely comes from that time in England when it was illegal to start a church, but you could have a religious society, much like the Wesleys were first involved in."

"Quite frankly, the Friends in Kansas that I was a part of would look like the local Nazarene or Wesleyan church as far as plan of salvation and maintaining the Christlike walk.

"Yet they are different in church government, and still maintain with the Salvation Army - no water baptism and what most would call the communion service. These things seem to have been a reaction to the Roman Cath church of the 1600's which said both were necessary for salvation. A defense of these and other early Quaker belief are found in Barclay's "Apology, by Robert Barclay in the late 1600's. It is still in print, and I may have a copy if you want to look at it.

"The early Quakers were far from Unitarianism, e.g. William Penn's writings which include "No Cross, No Crown".

"I have had some personal experiences with the Eastern Quakers which put them into the anything goes (except the message of the Lord), and of course their statements and writings also expose them as Unitarians. As the denominations go it appears that Mid-America Yearly Meeting and NW Yearly Meeting are alright. Friends United Meeting may be the middle ground folks, who have some of each group within their Yearly Meeting. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting is the outspoken of the 'Eastern' Friends. (Yearly Meeting is comparable to a denominational convention, as it is the time all the meetings (churches) of the same persuasion get together for business etc.). The American Friends Service "Committee is a function of the Unitarian types."

Carl"

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Quakerism

The Religious Society of Friends

9/20/06 updated 9/23/06

While in Princeton recently, we visited the Stony Brook Quaker Meeting House built in 1760 and still in use.

Consider the following quotes from a Quaker pamphlet available at the meeting house:

"The Light Within, which is the central Quaker idea, is no abstract phrase. It is an experience."

"... it is clear on the basis of the Quaker faith, that scripture cannot be thought of as the one source of truth and revelation, the one and only word of God. It takes its place rather as a pattern of spiritual literature, rich with the experience of saintly human lives and raised by unmistakable inspiration to an incomparable religious value."

From "[An Interpretation of Quakerism](#)" by Rufus M. Jones, 1930

Read about [Rufus M. Jones](#) and [Mysticism](#) at Wikipedia.

In what ways has Quakerism influenced modern Evangelicalism? Are their convictions Biblical?

In Quakerism, I'm having a hard time finding the preaching of the Gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ, alone.

At it's most basic, how is Quakerism really that different from Unitarian Universalism?

Richard Foster is a Quaker. He is the founder of Renovare and author of many books, including *Celebration of Discipline*.

The late John Wimber, a founder of the Vineyard Movement, began his religious life as a Quaker.

George Fox University associates itself with Quakerism but has a fairly sound Evangelical [Statement of Faith](#).

[Thy Word is Truth](#)

[Christians are becoming Unitarian-Universalists](#)

[The Emergent Church Movement](#)

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[The Hegelian Dialectic](#)

9/17/06

Satan is Working Both Sides

The Roman Catholic Empire vs. the Islamic Empire

The enemy desires to polarize people, including professing Christians, to seduce them to choose sides.

Either side they choose will deceive them and control them.

And then Hegelian synthesis...

We are Ambassadors for Jesus Christ!

Do not be deceived.

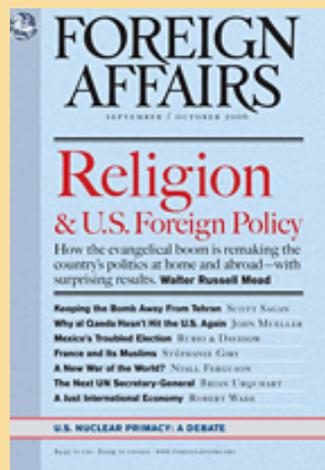
[Islam, the Pope, and the World Religion](#)

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"This [apocalyptic vision of Evangelicals] is not particularly hospitable to the idea of **gradual progress toward a secular utopia driven by technological advances and the cooperation of intelligent people of all religious traditions.**"

Novus Ordo Seclorum

Read [the article](#) about Evangelicals from the perspective of the Council on Foreign Relations' magazine



Consider buying your own copy of this September/October 2006 issue at your local bookstore

"Summary: Religion has always been a major force in U.S. politics, but the recent surge in the number and the power of evangelicals is recasting the country's political scene -- with dramatic implications for foreign policy. This should not be cause for panic: evangelicals are passionately devoted to justice and improving the world, and eager to reach out across sectarian lines."

"Walter Russell Mead is Henry A. Kissinger Senior Fellow for U.S. Foreign Policy at the Council on Foreign Relations.

Further reading for this article can be found at www.foreignaffairs.org/mead_reading."

This article is a very important glimpse into how the elite are viewing current trends in the Evangelical subculture and how these trends can be used to help build the new order.

But what does the Bible say?

9/13/06 updated 9/17/06

[Trilateral Commission & CFR Membership](#)

[The Evangelical Subculture](#)

[Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

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Trip Back East - September 2006

9/13/06

- * Carter Road Bible Chapel
- * Princeton Cemetery
- * Princeton Battlefield
- * Quaker Meeting House
- * Washington Crossing

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Professing Evangelical Christians are effectively becoming [Unitarian-Universalists](#).

How?

ONE MAJOR AVENUE IS VIA THE
[The Emergent Church Movement](#)

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[EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW with UNCLE SAM in chains](#)

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"Some are beginning to see the extremely **negative consequences of living every day as if it were our last, as if Christ were coming at any moment**. If we are consistent with that view, then it can easily lead to doing very little to change our world, and to do little if any long-range planning. And those who do no long-range planning can never lead."

[Who would say such a thing?](#)

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Ekklesia: To the Roots of Biblical House Church Life

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Chicken Little on the Road to Damascus

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My Wife's Head Covering

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"Awana Club Now Featuring Book by Youth Specialties Speaker"

Because of the Angels

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[Chuck Smith's System](#)
[Rejects Rick Warren's](#)
["Purpose Driven" Movement](#)

[Rather My Children be Illiterate...](#)

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[There are great dangers](#)
[in turning your children over to government schools](#)

[Are you a part of the](#)
[Assemblies of God?](#)

Who would name an organization after [himself?](#)

[Bob Dylan, Do You Love Jesus?](#)

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Pay No Attention

To Anything I Say

Ron Boehme

YWAM, Reverend, Politician

"A Proven Leader Who will [RESTORE THE DREAM](#)" ???

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The God who has created everything has revealed Himself by:

- **What He has created**

The Universe is a visual aid that illustrates and demonstrates the awesomeness of our God.

"In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth." Genesis 1:1

"Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" Romans 1:19-20

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork". Psalm 19:1

- **The history of the Jewish people**

There are no people in history like the Jewish people.

"And he [God] brought him [Abraham] forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness." Genesis 15:5-6

"And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?" Genesis 18:17-18

"For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." Deuteronomy 7:6

"To the chief Musician on Neg'-i-noth, A Psalm or Song. God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him." Psalm 67

- **Becoming one of us and walking among us for 33 years and allowing us to nail Him to a cross**

In the beginning **God** created the heaven and the earth. Genesis 1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**. The same was in the beginning with God. **All things were made by him**; and without him was not any thing made that was made. John 1:1-4

And **the Word was made flesh**, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. John 1:14

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. Luke 2:7

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. Luke 2:40

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man. Luke 2:52

And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. Luke 4:17-21

For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Luke 19:10

Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. Luke 24:7

- **His death and resurrection**

- **The unique collection of 66 books called the Bible**
- **The Holy Spirit's testimony to our hearts**

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The God who has created everything has revealed Himself by:

- What He has created
 - The history of the Jewish people
 - Becoming one of us and walking among us for 33 years and allowing us to nail Him to a cross
 - His death and resurrection
 - The unique collection of 66 books called the Bible
 - The Holy Spirit's testimony to our hearts
-



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Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Romans 12:10-13

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About Love

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

1 Corinthians 13

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Contact Information - Email address: jimbaum@procinwarn.com **Web address:** <http://procinwarn.com>

Jim Baumgaertel - [Introduction](#)

About the Logo/Banner: The left side is a photo of a lamp that shows a vine and branches and fruit: [John 15:5](#). We, the Church, are the branches abiding in the Vine, Christ Jesus. My son took the photo of the lamp in the home of my mother-in-law and step father-in-law. The lamp was made by my mother-in-law's late brother-in-law.



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About This Site

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May 2006

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
Romans 6:23



Welcome to a site devoted to the Gospel of [Jesus Christ](#). It's my desire that the Lord would use these pages to proclaim His Gospel, to invite people to put their trust in Him, to build His Ekklesia, and to warn of false gospels, false messiahs, and counterfeit religious systems.

Our calling, as followers of Jesus, is to **proclaim** the Truth to whoever will listen and leave the results in God's hands.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is an **invitation**, not a debate.

If we love people we will **warn** them about that which draws them away from a pure devotion to Jesus Christ.

If you are an agnostic or atheist, nominal church-goer, or follower of any of the world's religions, I invite you to [surrender your life](#) to Jesus Christ and I encourage you to consider some of the articles in my section called, "[New Life in Jesus Christ](#)".

If you are a born-again follower of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but have never taken the time to re-evaluate the [Evangelical sub-culture](#), I encourage you to consider articles in the sections, "[Counterfeit Christianity](#)" and "[New Testament Fellowship](#)".

Relationship, not Religion

The Word, not Traditions

This website was first posted in May of 1998. Much of the material on this site is based on a [presentation](#) I was giving to groups and individuals from about thirteen years ago until about six years ago. (May 2001)

*"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But **speaking the truth in love**, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ..." Ephesians 4:14-15*

[See information about the current and two previous discussion boards.](#)

Pay No Attention

To Anything I Say

You have nothing to fear from me. I have no constituency; no following. Even my closest friends don't take me seriously! I have no power, so there's no need to pay any attention to what I say. Unless, of course... I say something that happens to be Biblical. Then I encourage you to agree and respond to it, not because I said it, but because it's Biblical! The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.

At a time when the whole world is being united in a "Tower of Babel" vision of Global Unity based on a false peace and a disregard for the truth, it is tragic indeed that many of our most respected Evangelical celebrities are taking part in leading their followers in this same direction.

[Counterfeit Christianity](#)

Surrounded by Apostasy

[The Prayer of Jehoshaphat](#)

People like me, who see unbiblical philosophies and want to call attention to them, must be careful not to imply "heretic" every time we disagree with someone.

Other people, who are not accustomed to reasoning about truth, have a tendency to see my disagreement with them as "negative" or "divisive" or "rebellious".

Our Lord will give us wisdom and grace to speak the Truth in Love.

[The Freedom to Disagree](#)

[Three Choices for Truth](#)

[Contend for the Faith](#)

Sometimes we're called to work towards the way things should be.

Sometimes we're called to simply function in the midst of the way things are.

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I'm reevaluating

...how I attempt to speak the truth in love. As followers of Jesus we have got to be able to discuss controversial topics. Our unity in the Spirit cannot be based on ignoring our differences. We have got to be able to warn others about things that are false. We need to be able to discuss the teachings of popular leaders and authors and speakers, naming their names. But, of course, we ought to be motivated by love. And we ought not treat brothers we disagree with as if they were the enemy. Warning of someone, by name, as being a false teacher or false prophet should be based on clear cut evidence and a last resort. If you have opinions on this then [let me know](#). I'm open to rewriting my articles. I'm open to examining how to discuss truth vs. error in the most effective and edifying way.

8/9/03

Glorious Wars or Heavenly Priorities?

Where do wars come from?

If we are protected, who should get the glory?

Who are our heroes?

Who or what should we trust in?

Our Calling

Our Lord Jesus wants us to love Muslims, Jewish people, Hindus, Buddhists, Catholics, Freemasons, Pagans, pagans, Apostate Evangelicals and everyone else.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." Ephesians 6:12-13

In the midst of all that is going on, followers of Jesus ought to try to be good citizens without worshipping what our fellow citizens worship. We ought to pray for the leaders of the world while understanding their true nature. Our calling is the same whether society is in the midst of peace and prosperity or cataclysm and disaster. The whole world is being prepared for a counterfeit Christ. We ought not be caught up in the manipulation of the masses, but we ought to stand for our Lord Jesus, desiring to rescue individuals out of the corrupt world system with its false christs and false gospels.

[The September 11th Turning Point](#)

My name is Jim Baumgaertel. I live in Port Orchard, Washington State with my wife, Kim, and four children. I work as an engineer who teaches people about power plants. My family and I have been a part of assemblies that meet in [homes](#). We continue to fellowship with believers in homes and also we are part of a fellowship that meets in a rented building. For more of my testimony please see my "[Introduction](#)" or "[The Summer of 76](#)". For more insight into my understanding of scripture please see my "[Statement of Faith](#)". The Statement of Faith is subject to change as I pray that I would continue to be "transformed by the renewing of" my mind (Romans 12:2) as I trust in Jesus, by the work of the Holy Spirit, according to God's Word, the Bible. I want the Bible to be the standard of Truth, not mine or anyone's "Statement of Faith"!

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*"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that **blessed hope**, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Titus 2:12-14*

Some people may be concerned that I criticize various individuals, organizations, movements, etc. But we are called to [Love the Truth](#) and to [Contend for the Faith](#). Everything I've put on my website deals with something I consider to be very serious as to "Who is Jesus Christ?" and "What is the Gospel?". I have not tried to say who is a Christian and who is not. I've simply tried to point out the many ways that Christians are being deceived. When I became a Christian about 25 years ago, I was taught basic truths of God's Word as to who Jesus is and what is the gospel. Over the years I've been amazed at how there has been a continual perverting of these truths within Evangelical Christianity. (May 2001)

Everything that I might criticize someone else for, I have been guilty of sometime in my life to some degree.

"... Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." Philippians 1:18

Questions to Ask Ourselves

Do we really belong to Jesus? Do we really believe his death and resurrection is sufficient? That his grace is sufficient? That the "fruit of the Spirit" can come only by the work of the Holy Spirit? That only Jesus can change the evil human heart? That only Jesus will bring peace to the earth? Do we really believe that God is sovereign?

Just like when I became a Christian, I had to face the fact of the wickedness and hopelessness of my own heart before I could recognize my need for a Savior. Similarly, we as Christians must face the fact of the total wickedness and hopelessness of this World System before we can be set free from our idolatrous attachments to it and be set free to truly put our hope in being with the Lord Jesus in eternity.

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Any system of morals and ethics and values that either ignores or rejects Jesus Christ is just another pagan religion. Even a system of Christian morals, without Jesus, is just another pagan religion.

[Self Esteem](#), [Sorcery](#), & [Visions of Global Unity](#)

[Idolatry](#) vs. [a pure devotion to Jesus Christ](#)

[FOUR WAYS CHRISTIANS ARE
BEING DECEIVED](#)

[Lucifer, The Garden of Eden, & The Tower of Babel](#)

[The True Nature of the World System](#)

*"Now then we are **ambassadors for Christ**, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." 2 Corinthians 5:20*

Most of the articles on this site are written by me. There are several reviews of other peoples' books or articles, written by me, both critical and supportive. I've tried to make it clear when articles I've posted are written by someone else.

Feel free to distribute any of my articles electronically or in printed form, whether you agree with me or are wanting to refute me. Either way I would like to hear from you about your use of my articles. You may link to this site or post any of my articles on your site. Please email me and let me know. Another website that posts my articles or links to my website is not necessarily endorsed by me.

"But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." 2 Timothy 2:23-26

Email address: jimbaum@procinwarn.com Web address: <http://procinwarn.com>

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*** If someone hasn't understood Biblical Truth in such a way that they separate themselves from the false christians and false gospels of this world, then they haven't understood! ***

[Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

Welcome to a site devoted to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It's my desire that the Lord would use these pages to proclaim His Gospel, to invite people to put their trust in Him, to build His Ekklesia, and to warn of false gospels, false messiahs, and counterfeit religious systems.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:23

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Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning:

Our calling, as followers of Jesus, is to proclaim the Truth to whoever will listen and leave the results in God's hands.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is an invitation, not a debate.

If we love people we will warn them about that which draws them away from a pure devotion to Jesus Christ.

Kingdom
of God

"My kingdom is
not of this
world..."

Jesus in John 18:36



New Life in Jesus Christ

The Good News

The Good News

(pdf file: 54 kbs)

Do You Have Hope?

A Gospel Tract

(pdf file: 147 kbs)

Agnostics for Jesus!

*** In our society it's considered ok to seek truth... but you're not allowed to find the truth! ***

Why are Homosexuality, Fornication, Harlotry, and Adultery Sin?

Repent!

Be Reconciled to God

"What Must I Do to be Saved?"

Humans & "Religion"

Two Kinds of Guilt

The God of Prophecy

Jesus Created Everything

Creation vs. Evolution

The Ethiopian Eunuch Reading About Jesus in Isaiah

Disciple of Jesus Christ

Abide in the Vine

"To Be My Disciple"

Walking in the Spirit

*** I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid? *** Job 31:1 ***

A Bible Reading Plan

A Wise Man & A Fool

For the "Great Leader"

Nothing can happen to us

The Prayer of Jehoshaphat

"The Last Days"

Missionaries

Christians & Civil Government

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Which is Worse, Ignorance or Apathy?

What do you want to be known for?

Who should care about the truth?

"Roach Stompers"?

When you hear something new...

Bible Contradictions and Other Bible Difficulties at the Apologetics Index

The Foolishness of Preaching

Idolatry

You only want to hear good things?

The Freedom to Disagree

*** We have a cult-like mentality unless we are willing to re-evaluate everything in the light of

[The Good News](#)
(Requires Power Point)_

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the Bible. ***

[The Good News](#)
Download the Power Point File

- [Important Principles to Understand](#)

[The Freedom to Read](#)

- [Applying the Old Testament to the
New Testament Church](#)

- [History](#)

- [The Biblical View of Education](#)

- [Home Schooling](#)

[Three issues relating to Truth](#)

Coming soon! (At least eventually,
by the grace of God.):
The Boy who cried Wolf in
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Chicken Little on the Road to
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Issues that are important for us to examine together, being motivated by love: What is the nature of God, Who Jesus is, What is the Gospel, Ecclesiology, Eschatology, the purpose and calling and priorities of the Bride of Christ, Bible translations/versions, interpreting the plain meaning of scripture, the sovereignty of God and human responsibility, the work of the Holy Spirit, what is true Biblical unity and what are the counterfeits, what are the commandments of God for the people of God since Messiah came, what are disputable matters and how shall we dispute them in love, how shall we be in the world but not of the world, how to warn of deceptions without promoting doom & gloom...

[New Testament Fellowship](#)

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[Issues of Concern Among Christians](#)

*** I just want to fellowship in
simplicity with brothers and
sisters who are content with the
Lord Jesus, the Bible, the local
assembly, and doing good to all.

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*The Passion of the
Christian*

"Many tender-
minded Christians
fear to sin against
love by daring to
inquire into
anything that
comes wearing the
cloak of Christianity
and breathing the
name of Jesus.
They dare not

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examine the credentials of the latest prophet to hit their town lest they be guilty of rejecting something which may be of God. . . . This is supposed to indicate a high degree of spirituality. But in sober fact it indicates no such thing. It may indeed be evidence of the absence of the Holy Spirit.

"Gullibility is not synonymous with spirituality. Faith is not a mental habit leading its possessor to open his mouth and swallow everything that has about it the color of the supernatural. Faith keeps its heart open to whatever is of God, and rejects everything that is not of God, however wonderful it may be.

""Try the spirits" is a command of the Holy Spirit to the church (1 John 4:1). We may sin as certainly by approving the spurious as by rejecting the genuine. . . .To

Cult?

-
Reverend? Pastor? His Holiness?

Bagwan?

To the Coercive Church Leader

appraise things with a heart of love and then to act on the results is an obligation resting upon every Christian in the world."

--A.W. Tozer (as quoted by The Berean Call email 8/10/04)

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**God
created
the
world,
the
mountains
and the
trees and
the stars,
and
called it
good.**

See Genesis 1

**However,
the world
system,
political,
economic,
and**

**World
System**



**religious,
is under
the sway
of the
wicked
one... for
a time.**

See 1 John 5:19

**Even so,
come,
Lord
Jesus.**

Revelation 22:20

Counterfeit Christianity

Four Ways Christians Are Being Deceived

Which Evangelical leaders were most responsible for:

Broken Cisterns

The Idol of the Masses

Evangelicals Prostituting Themselves with Roman Catholicism

The Roman Catholic Empire

The World Religion

**** It's not what we IMAGINE about God that matters. It's what God REVEALS about himself that determines how we should respond to him. *****

Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel

What do Islam, Roman Catholicism, Freemasonry, & Mormonism have in common?

Islamic Morality vs. Western Hedonism vs. Christendom's Morality

Da Vinci Code Deception

Motivational Seminars Promote a False Religion

The New World Order

**** The Techniques, the Systems, the Projects and Programs of Man --- These are an attempt to do in the Flesh, what only the Spirit of God can accomplish. *****

The True Nature of the World System

Hegelian Dialectic

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- Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism

- KINGDOM NOW OR NEW WORLD ORDER?

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- Unbiblical Phrases That Christians Use

- "As a Man Thinketh" ???

- "Spiritual Disciplines"

- "What goes around, comes around" ???

- "Good Luck!" ???

- "I have a VISION!" "Achieve your DREAMS" ???

- Positive Thinking

- "Positive" and "Negative" ???

**There's got to be a way to
stand for the Truth and
still give one another the
freedom to disagree!**

*If you have any thoughts on
this, please [email me](#) or post
to the [discussion board](#).*

*Our Lord will give us
wisdom and grace to speak
the Truth in Love.*

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The most famous advocate of the deception of "The Power of Positive Thinking" was the 33rd degree Freemason, Norman Vincent Peale, the founder of Guideposts magazine.

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[ShawnCuthill.com](#)

[BrethrenPedia](#)

[Plymouth Brethren discussion forum](#)

[The Emergent Church](#)

[Schuller Inherits Crystal Cathedral from Father](#)

[Hegelian Dialectic](#)

[The Idol of the Masses](#)

[The Lamp Ministry](#)

["The Chronicles of Narnia"](#)

[What is Rick Warren up to?](#)

- Some trust in chariots

Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God. Psalm 20:7

- Why do the nations rage?

Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, Psalm 2:1-2

- Our weapons are not carnal

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

- The whole world is under the control of the wicked one

And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. 1 John 5:19

- Ambassadors for Christ

Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. 2 Corinthians 5:20-21

- Lust of the eyes

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. 1 John 2:16-17

- Love of money

For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. 1 Timothy 6:10

- Where do wars come from?

From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? James 4:1-5

Contact Information - Email address: jimbaum@procinwarn.com **Web address:** <http://procinwarn.com>

If you live near Kitsap County, Washington State, USA, I would especially like to hear from you. If you would like to discuss the Truth of God's Word, Being the Body of Christ together, or any other important issues, please [email me](#).

[About This Site](#) - [Kingdom of God](#) - [World System](#) - [What's New](#) - [Discussion Board](#) - [Commentary on Current Events](#) - [Books to Consider](#) - [Links](#) - [Letters to the Editor](#) - [Search](#) - [List of Articles](#)
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Last revised: November 21, 2006.

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<http://procinwarn.com>

Links

on Procinwarn.com

I'm in the process of redoing my links page.

10/14/06

See some of the links below if you would like.

Or see the old links page at [Links Page for Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

By placing links to other websites on this page, I do not mean to give 100% endorsement to anyone. And I also don't mean to imply that they would endorse me at all!

Unless otherwise noted, the ministries I link to are, for the most part in my view, "speaking the Truth in Love" (Ephesians 4:15).

If you think I'm wrong to link to any of these sites... or if you think I need a stronger disclaimer about one of these sites... please let me know and tell me why.

Some of the links at the end are for information and research purposes only. Not only do I not endorse these sites, but I warn against what they stand for. May the Lord give you discernment.

By the way, if you see my articles on other websites or links to my site from other websites, realize that I don't necessarily endorse those sites.

<http://cbf-wa.org/>

<http://ourhousechurch.com>

<http://www.house-church.org/>

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Academy/8395/>

<http://www.searchingtogether.org/>

<http://www.housechurchportal.net>

<http://www.ntrf.org/>

<http://www.brethrenonline.org/>

http://brethrenpedia.quist.ca/wiki/Main_Page

<http://www.comnet.ca/~jmsinclair/>

<http://bbc.quist.ca/bb/>

<http://www.shawncuthill.com/>

<http://www.plymouthbrethren.com>

[Search of Brethren sites](#)

<http://www.ex-cult.org/Groups/Amway/otherside/links.htm>

<http://www.xenu.net/index.html>

<http://www.users.fast.net/~gospeltruth/>

<http://www.geocities.com/hebrews928/pkpath.html>

<http://www.thebereancall.org/>

<http://www.mediaspotlight.org/>

<http://www.lighthouse Trails Research.com>

<http://www.bereanbeacon.org/>

<http://erwm.com/>

<http://www.whatmeanthesestones.com>

<http://www.babylonthegreatisfalling.net/>

<http://www.psychoheresy-aware.org/>

<http://www.mazeministry.com/>

<http://www.thecoffeeoasis.com/>

<http://www.beyondmormonism.com/>

<http://www.meysen.ac.jp/engli/eoppor02.html>

<http://www.cephasministry.com/>

<http://www.voh-ainleuh.org/>

<http://www.polyventurepublications.com/>

<http://www.cmmlusa.org/>

<http://www.athleo.net/>

<http://typicalsaint.com>

<http://cnview.com/index.html>

[http://home.clear.net.nz/pages/
tlamb/index.htm](http://home.clear.net.nz/pages/tlamb/index.htm)

[http://www15.brinkster.com/
beyondpro/](http://www15.brinkster.com/beyondpro/)

[http://home.netcom.com/~horse/
head.html](http://home.netcom.com/~horse/head.html)

[http://members.ozemail.com.au/
~rseaborn/index.html](http://members.ozemail.com.au/~rseaborn/index.html)

<http://www.pastors.go.ro/>

<http://gospelformuslims.org>

The below links are for research only and are not endorsed.

<http://www.trilateral.org>

<http://www.cfr.org/>

<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/>

<http://wcc-coe.org/>

<http://www.uua.org/>

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[Commentary on Current Events](#) - *Index*

[Items from The Berean Call](#) - [Items from the Religion News Blog](#) - [Items from the Lighthouse Trails Research Project Newsletter](#) - [Other Current Event Items](#)



[Evangelicals & Global Warming](#) (2/8/06)

[Movie about Martyred Christian Missionaries stars a homosexual](#) (2/06)

[Scientology vs. Psychiatry](#) (7/1/05)

[Disney and The Chronicles of Narnia](#) (5/3/05)

[“Salad Bowl Sunday” Ecumenical Event Corrupts the Gospel](#) (2/27/05)

[Son Inherits Country from Father](#) (2/6/05)

[Motivational Seminars Promote a False Religion](#) (8/1/04)

[Both Presidential Candidates are Members of the Same Occult Brotherhood](#) (4/22/04)

[A Cinematic Crucifix? Mel Gibson's Catholic Movie](#) (Updated 3/21/04) (1/31/04)

[About Matrix Reloaded](#) (5/24/03)

[Warning: Information Awareness Office](#) (updated 3-29-03) (11/24/02)

[Jon Courson: Applegate Christian Fellowship](#) (10/6/02) (Updated 10/9/06)

[Dave Hunt Refutes Calvinism. Calvinists Refute Dave Hunt.](#) (5/25/02)

[The September 11th Turning Point](#) (11/17/01)

[Harry Potter & The Chronicles of Narnia](#) (7/27/01)

[George Otis Jr: Mystical Warfare in Kitsap County](#) (4/2/01)

["Faith-Based" Counterfeit](#) (3/25/01)

[Bush and Gore Deception](#) (7/30/00)

[Dove Awards on TBN](#) (1/2/00)

[Chuck Smith on TBN?](#) (1/2/00) (updated 3/21/04)

[World Trade Organization](#) (11/26/99)

[Spirit 105.3 - KCMS Radio](#) (11/26/99)

[Aspire Magazine: Body, Mind, & Spirit](#) (5/2/99)

[Young Life: Ecumenical?](#) (2/27/99)

[Impeachment of President Clinton](#) (1/30/99)

[Amy Grant and Gary Chapman Separating](#) (1/6/99)

[John Glenn - Freemason](#) (11/3/98)

[CBD Promotes Paganism](#) (10/10/98)

[Foursquare and Apostolics ???](#) (8/29/98)

[Y2K](#) (7/23/98)

[Roy Rogers](#) (7/6/98)

[Christ Memorial Church - Poulsbo, Washington](#) (6/21/98)

[Southern Baptists in Salt Lake City](#) (6/18/98)

[Overlake Christian Church](#) (6/11/98)

[Orel Hershiser](#) (6/11/98)

[The Initiative Against Partial Birth Abortion](#) (6/11/98)

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Books to Consider *as a Berean*

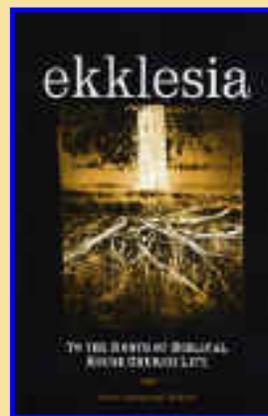
"And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

Ecclesiastes 12:12-14

[A Bible Reading Plan](#)

Ekklesia: To the Roots of Biblical House Church Life

"An easy reading book that covers both the theological and practical aspects of meeting as a church according to the New Testament model. It is a compendium of contributions from numerous authors representing a wide spectrum of experiences in New Testament church life. Subjects covered include: apostolic tradition, interactive meetings, full meal Lord's suppers, home based and living-room sized churches, consensus rule, the purpose of elders, church growth, historical traditions, integrating church and family, church discipline, healthy



assembly life, and more. If you are looking for material about Christ-centered church as the apostles originally designed it, or are ordering for the first time, this is the book to get!"

You can get a copy of this book at the [NTRF website](#)

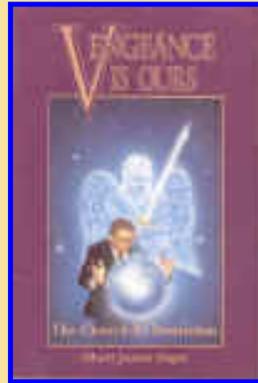
VENGEANCE IS OURS THE CHURCH IN DOMINION

Albert James Dager - 283Pages

A new militancy is stirring in the breasts of Christians in response to the evils that beset society. Tens of thousands attend spiritual warfare seminars hoping to learn how to “take back from Satan what he has stolen.” A call for vengeance on God’s enemies and a restructuring of society under God’s Law is being heard in ever-widening circles.

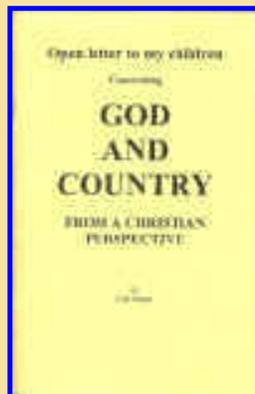
But is it the Christian’s responsibility to take control of society and to reconstruct it in accordance with God’s Law?

Vengeance Is Ours presents some startling revelations in this analysis of various forms of dominion theology from Manifested Sons of God to Christian Reconstructionism. [Media Spotlight](#)



Letter to my children concerning **GOD AND COUNTRY**

From A Christian Perspective;
by Carl Mease



"This 45 page [booklet](#) (5.5x8.5 stapled) is a result of a parent's discipling his teenage sons, and the resulting prayer guided research into

Carl Mease's booklet is an important contribution to our discussion. Carl and I may not agree on everything,

the New Testament position on non-resistance. Due to requests from other teens, the *letter* was put into booklet form. Because the content also addresses civil disobedience, patriotism, just war, and terrorism; the booklet form of the *letter* took on the *God and Country* title. There are much longer works presenting this biblical position, yet this book is unique, in that while being brief, the New Testament position is sufficiently presented. Whether a traditionalist, orthodox, liberal, evangelical, fundamentalist, or skeptic, you will find this work to be challenging, insightful, and maybe even life changing."

but I truly appreciate his heart and intent. Jim B.

The Hydra of Carnage: Bush's Imperial War-making and The Rule of Law

An Analysis of the Objectives and
Delusions of Empire

By Craig B. Hulet



Craig Hulet has some very important things to say about the nature of this world system. He exposes both the political right wing as well as the progressive left. I do not agree with his Nietchean

philosophy and I do not believe he professes to follow Jesus in the same sense that we Evangelicals believe. But his analysis of the political and economic power structure should be considered. Mr. Hulet also has harsh criticism for American Evangelicals that we need to hear. My conclusions are not the same as his and what I consider solutions and our ultimate hope is not the same as he would advocate. But Craig Hulet should be part of our discussion.

"Craig B. Hulet was Special Assistant to Congressman Jack Metcalf (R, WA) for Special Projects and periodically a consultant (Domestic Militia Movement) to The United States Treasury Department's Bureau of Alcohol tobacco and Firearms (ATF). He served in Vietnam with the 101st Airborne as a weapons expert (MOS 45J20). Mr. Hulet has appeared on the Arsenio Hall Show, CNN, and has over 10,000 hours of media interviews over the past twenty years. He presently is Government Policy Analyst, KC & Associates (business/political consultants) in Washington State."

[Info on Book](#)

SIX ROMAN CATHOLIC DOCTRINES THAT NULLIFY SALVATION BY GRACE

"Citing the Roman Catholic St. Joseph's Edition of the New American Bible, this study proves the truth of salvation by grace. It then proves that the Roman Catholic Church nullifies salvation by grace in spite of its words to the contrary. According to Roman Catholicism, salvation comes by God's grace, but the only way to receive that grace is through partaking of the Roman Catholic sacraments dispensed through the priesthood. An important aid for non-Catholic Christians in understanding the true nature of Roman Catholic "grace," this study arms believers with the knowledge to witness to their Roman Catholic friends and family."

<http://www.mediaspotlight.org/>

After clicking on the above link: Click on "Deceptions" to the left. Then scroll down in the window towards the bottom to order.

INFALLIBILITY OF THE POPE

THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

TRANSUBSTANTIATION

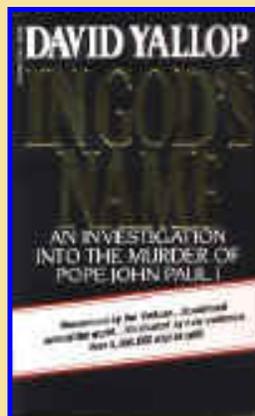
PURGATORY

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY

THE ASSUMPTION OF MARY INTO HEAVEN

IN GOD'S NAME

An Investigation into the Murder of Pope John Paul I



"On September 28, 1978, thirty-three days after his election, Pope John Paul I, "the Smiling Pope," was declared dead. No official death certificate has ever been issued. No autopsy ever performed. His body was hastily embalmed. Cause of death: Unknown. And Vatican business continues."

"Denounced by the Vatican... Acclaimed around the world... Vindicated by new

[Info on Book](#)

Author: A journalist, David Yallop
The author does not profess to be a Biblical Christian.

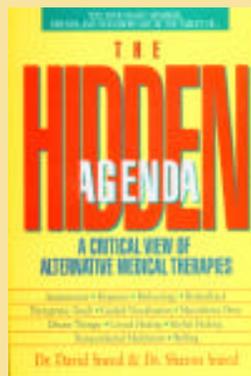
"His book has two strengths. It brings up to date and tells well the story of how the Vatican has conducted its financial affairs. The portrayal of hitherto little-known John Paul I is also excellently done... an engrossing and disturbing book. It reflects no credit on the Vatican that its spokesmen affect to view the charges with contempt and ignore the questions raised" - The Economist

evidence... Winner of the 1985 Crime writers' Gold Dagger Award for best non-fiction... "

Acupuncture - Hypnosis - Reflexology
- Biofeedback - Therapeutic Touch -
Guided Visualization - Macrobiotic
Diets - Dream Therapy - Crystal
Healing - Homeopathy - Herbal
Healing - Transcendental Meditation -
Rolfing

[The Hidden Agenda](#)

A Critical View of Alternative Medical Therapies



What Do You Believe?

Why Do You Believe It?

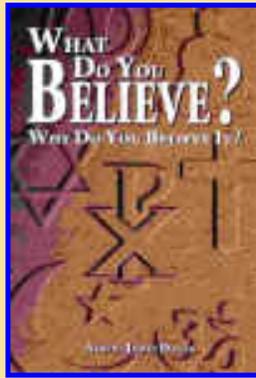
By Al Dager

"Is what you believe important? Everyone believes something: no one doesn't believe anything. What we believe, whether it has to do with religion or secular philosophy, impacts our lives.

"Wars are constantly being fought over ideological battlegrounds, sometimes spilling over into blood-drenched combat zones. Why does mankind think so highly of his opinion that he is ready to kill for, some even to die for it?

"What you believe is important. But can you give a reasoned explanation for why believe what you believe? Can you say for a certainty that your belief is superior to all other beliefs?"

Another book by Al Dager: [The World Christian Movement](#)



"Al Dager challenges you to examine the reasons for your beliefs. At the same time, he offers reasons for why he believes the way he does. You can accept or reject what he has to say, but at the very least you will be able to assess your own belief system and either give a reasoned defense for it, or perhaps, see the need to reassess what you believe.

"Are you willing to take the challenge?"

Are We Like Christ?

(pdf file: 2 mbs)

**Facing the Truth,
Holiness & Love of the
Lord Jesus Christ
Personally &
Historically**
By Steve Phillips

Are We Like Christ?

(pdf file: 2 mbs)



[The House Assembly](#)

By Al Dager

"Recapturing The First-Century Model for The Gathering of the Saints

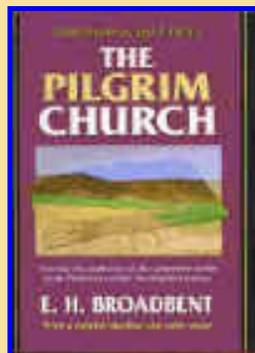
"A guide for those desiring to start a house assembly after the pattern of the first-century ekklesia.

"Includes biblical models for elders, teaching, fellowship and other aspects of gathering together for believers in Jesus Christ."



[The Pilgrim Church](#)

"It ought to be obvious to even the casual observer of history that the *real* story of the church is not the one recorded in secular history. [This book] demonstrates that the true heart of this amazing drama is not even recorded in *church* history books."

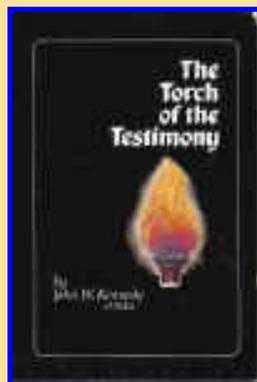


[Downloadable Version](#)

"Who were the Waldensians? The Lollards? The Stundists? The Anabaptists? These names were given by their enemies to those who claimed only the name of Christ, and who were prepared to suffer for His cause rather than submit to those man-made traditions that they believed contradicted the word of God."

[The Torch of the Testimony](#)

"The 2,000 year history of those Christians - and churches - that have stood outside the Protestant-Catholic tradition. This book was originally published in India in 1964 and is little known in the western world. Beginning in the first century John Kennedy traces the history of Christian groups who remained outside formalized religion down through the ages. A stirring, passionate and sometimes heart-rending story of suffering to the centrality of Christ within the Body of Christ."

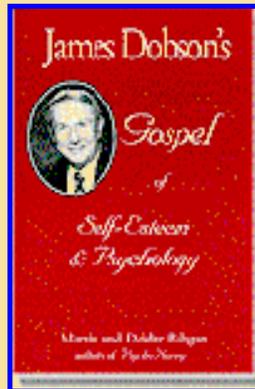


From editor of
procinwarn.com: I do
not endorse the
publisher or some of the
content about
"mystics". J.B.

Dr. Dobson's Commitment to Psychology
[Read Chapter 3 \(PDF\)](#)

[Psychoheresy](#)

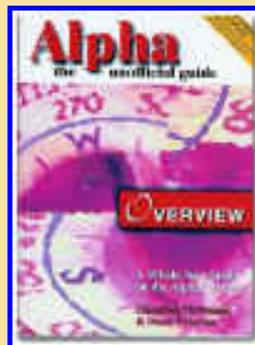
[Questions for Christians about Psychology -
The False Gospel of Self Esteem](#)



[Alpha: the unofficial guide](#)

"A Whole New Study
on the Alpha Course"

"Alpha is an
enormously popular
creation, yet some...
who have tried the
Course are actually
expressing genuine
concerns about parts
of it."

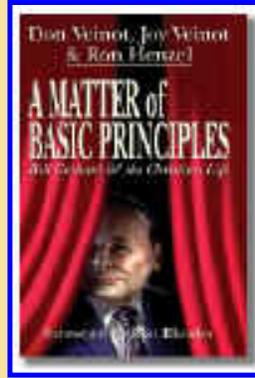


Dusty Peterson's web
site is [http://www.
bayith.org](http://www.bayith.org)

[A Matter of Basic Principles: Bill Gothard & the Christian Life](#)

"... it is clear that the problems with Gothard's Bible interpretations go deeper than I ever imagined."

[Bill Gothardism](#)



[Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith](#)

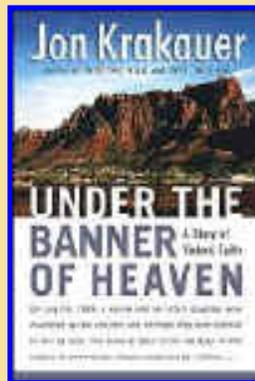
The author is agnostic.

Covers some murders in Utah by religious zealots.

Exposes the "Fundamentalist LDS" subculture in Arizona, Canada, and Utah that forces young girls to become "plural wives" of old men.

Exposes the corrupt history of mainstream Mormonism.

Asks sincere questions about religious faith in general.



"On July 24, 1984, a woman and her infant daughter were murdered by two brothers who believed they were ordered to kill by God. The roots of their crime lie deep in the history of an American religion practiced by millions..."

[An Appeal to Mormons](#)

[Agnostics for Jesus!](#)

[Showtime for the Sheep? The Church and the Passion of the Christ](#)

"Is Mel Gibson's blockbuster movie biblically true? Have silver-screen portrayals of biblical epics become the new "silver bullet" of evangelism? While Showtime for the Sheep? addresses these questions with eye-opening insights, it is far more than a polemic examining The Passion of the Christ. This block-busting little book addresses several key trends that are storming the church in this media-mesmerized millennium:



"The increasing use of entertainment and amusement to teach the Word of God - and expanding efforts to make the Gospel message more "seeker-sensitive"

"The advancing cause of ecumenism over evangelism - and the resultant confusion between Catholicism and biblical Christianity

"The multiplying effect of doctrinal error through increasingly popular paraphrased

"Bibles" - and the
proliferation of visual
interpretations of
Scripture."

[A Cinematic Crucifix?](#)
[Mel Gibson's Catholic
Movie](#)

[The Berean Call](#)

Questions? Comments? [Talk to me!](#)

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[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

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<http://procinwarn.com>

The Gospel for West Africa



[Map of West Africa](#) (jpeg 109 kb) - [Map of Africa](#) (pdf 462 kb)

Steve and Patti Phillips and their family were missionaries to Nigeria for about six years. February of 2004 they returned to Washington State, USA, for an approximately one year furlough for the purpose of Steve's writing a Church history book to help the believers of West Africa understand our common heritage in Christ. Steve's book is now finished, titled: [*Are We Like Christ?*](#), and is a rich encouragement to all who are followers of Jesus. Brother Steve also wrote [*Out of the Depths*](#) about the mystery of suffering. Both these books are available for free on this site.

The Phillips returned to West Africa on March 3rd to live in Freetown, Sierra Leone to continue their Gospel work.

3/12/2005

[West African Updates on the Procinwarn.com blog](#)

[West African Update 11-05](#)

If you would like to help
get Steve Phillips' book,

ARE WE LIKE CHRIST?

printed in the U.S. *you may donate* at Carl Mease's
site

[Polyventure Publications: Are We Like Christ?](#)

Steve Phillips' web site: <http://www.phillipsmissionforum.org/> and his email: oyinbosteve@yahoo.com

Some of Steve Phillips' books: [Are We Like Christ?](#) - [Out of the Depths](#) - [Preach the Word](#) - [All Things Loss](#) - [The Discipleship Experience](#) - [The Believer at Work](#) - [Pilgrim's Progress](#) - [Love That Gives](#) - [Broken Fragments: Black but Lovely Thoughts on the Song of Songs](#)

[Steve Phillips' writings on the Procinwarn.com Blog](#)

*Testimonies of God's Grace from Two
West African Brothers-in-Christ*

On the Procinwarn.com Blog

[Temitope Adewole \(Peters\) - Nigeria - Quintin
Small - Sierra Leone](#)

ARE WE LIKE CHRIST?

Facing the Truth,

Holiness & Love of

the Lord Jesus Christ

Personally & Historically

Below is a summary/preview of Steve's new book from his [web site](#).

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October 2004

Dear brethren,

When God commissioned Moses to construct the Tabernacle, He warned him to make everything "according to the Pattern which was shown you on the mountain" [Heb.8:5]. Novelty or neglect was not part of that pattern as it was a "copy of the true" [Heb.9:24].

The house of God, His dwelling among men, was erected according to a divine standard. Spirit filled men, skillful in workmanship and full of wisdom in order to instruct others, were employed in the holy process [Ex.35: 30-35]. The people of God lent their hand to the work. "Then Moses looked over all the work and indeed they had done it; as the Lord had commanded, just so they had done it. And Moses blessed them" [Ex.39:43].

Just so had they done it: Nothing was added by human invention, nothing deleted by human judgment. The house of God is to be built just so; according to Pattern. When it is, the glory of the Lord is evident [Ex.40: 33,34].

Christ is the Pattern for the New Testament church. Both in character and in method, He is our Standard. This is the theme of the book I've been writing these past months. Currently at 250 pages, it nears completion with two chapters remaining.

For West Africa, we believe it will supply a broad frame of reference for the church in that part of the world. The first part of the book sets forth Christ as our Pattern. The following chapters outline the developments in church history up to the modern period. Of particular emphasis are those individuals and groups that have maintained the Pattern of Christ through the centuries. As well, the progressive departure from the way is enumerated and exposed.

Following are brief selected quotes from the book that will give a flavor of its contents. The chapter number will appear before the quote.

[1] [Referring to the Synagogues]. The thoughts of man became elevated to the same level as the Scriptures themselves and the ceremonial took on the same significance as the moral and spiritual. Whenever this occurs, the text of the Word is soon neglected and forgotten while true godliness declines and disappears.

Stop and think: What are the dangers of basing your faith on the explanations of men rather than knowledge of the text of the Word of God itself?

[2] Christ Jesus is the Pattern for the church both as to character and in ministry. Conformity to Him is the standard. His mind is to dwell in His own and govern their every thought and action in all humility, considering others as more important than self [Phil.2:3-5]. In this, as in all things, the Lord Jesus is our example that we "should do as I did to you" [Jn.13:15].

Jesus was utterly unlike the religion that He came to dwell among, both in character and in approach to teaching, training, and influencing men. Because He was greater in love, humility, and service, He called those whom lesser men cast away ; fishermen, lepers, children, women, uneducated, and the poor.

Unlike the Pharisees, He was not rigid in self-devised regulations which they imposed upon multitudes whom they despised. He was no Sadducee, compromising the Word by courting the favor of the political and influential out of a heart filled with greed. Though a King indeed, he used no force to promote religious ends as did the Zealots. The corruption of the Temple in Jerusalem did not impel Him to physically isolate Himself from sinful men like the Essenes thought they must. He was even known as the friend of tax-gatherers and sinners while maintaining spotless integrity among them. Stop and think: Will following the Pattern of Christ Jesus lead us to conform to popular religious ideas and practices surrounding us?

Out of His thirty-three years of earthly life, only three were engaged in ministry. The remaining 91% were passed in quiet development of character and obtaining a comprehensive grasp of eternal purposes into which the unique contribution of His life

would fit.

Though at age twelve He was fully conscious that He “must be about My Father’s business” [Lk.2:49], that business for the next eighteen years was that of simple submission in the carpenter’s shop [Mk.6:3]. In such humble scenes one learns the discipline of the often repeated mundane tasks that fit the soul for future larger responsibilities [Lk.16:10].

Faithfulness is cultivated, not in dramatic public exploits, but in the daily sweeping of planer shavings. Through such menial chores one learns the discipline of self-restraint even though one’s thoughts and ambitions are grand, lofty, and godly.

Preparation precedes service. God must first make the man before He can send him. Character is the bedrock of usefulness in the design of heaven. Apprenticeship was ever Christ’s method to instruct, train, and equip disciples. His practice was that His followers would learn spiritual principles by observation and participation. For them to be able to repeat mechanically memorized information gained in a classroom setting was never His purpose.

His school required men to reason about spiritual issues for themselves. By encountering life’s situations with the Word of God and by the use of repeated questions, disciples’ inner character was developed. The barrenness of a mere academic exercise of mind was not His aim and could never be thought of as training.

In self-forgetful humility, Christ is the perfect pattern of sinlessness. Jesus’ perfection was rather seen in a pure expression of an uninterrupted love for God and man which never was provoked to act unbecomingly by seeking His own interests [I Cor.13:5,6].

As the King of Truth [Jn.18:37], Christ was a controversialist who had to assail nearly the entire religious system of His day. Yet though He contended earnestly for the truth, Jesus possessed both fervency of spirit while tempered with self-restraint. His manner that we must follow is that of a compelling example of love and holiness merged with the persuasive power of truth. Lord of all that He is, He has provided a servant’s pattern for us to imitate, not that of lordship [see Appendix 1 NT Leadership].

Stop and think: How does the rule of a man over one's soul prevent someone from following Christ?

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[4] Perpetua c.202 AD. A beloved African sister of wealthy and noble birth, highly educated and honorably married, was taken captive by persecutors of the faith. Only twenty-two years old and with babe at her breast, she was begged by her aged and pagan father to deny Christ because of the shame that she was bringing upon the family.

What a scene it was! Before the court and a great assembled multitude, he threw himself at her feet, pleading with her tenderly, weeping and kissing her hands. "My daughter," he appealed, "pity my gray hairs, pity your father, if I am still worthy to be called your father. Do not expose me to such shame before men! Look upon your child - your son - who, if you die, cannot survive without you!"

Imagine the pull upon this daughter's heart: the threats of merciless Rome, the honor and loving tears of her elderly father, the cries of her infant son. How they all pressed to the depths of her young soul! "Offer sacrifice for the welfare of the Emperor!" demanded the governor.

And thus she stood before her judges, the assembled crowd, her pathetic father, the admiring hosts of heaven, and the hateful legions of hell. But firmly and calmly like Abraham, whose eye was not upon his son but upon the God of resurrection, she said, "That I cannot do. I am a Christian."

Her condemnation was sealed by that simple statement and so was led to the stadium before the bloodthirsty throng. Yet even this did not silence Psalms of praise to God from pouring through her pure lips before them all. Only the tossing and goring upon the horns of the wild bull put an end to her song here below. But she continues singing above, having entered into the joy of her Lord where she was received with, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Stop and think: How does honoring Christ relate to honoring parents, family, and the government? [Mt.10:34-39]. What would you have told Perpetua to do?

[6] Initially, through meekness, love, and purity,

Christianity had spiritually triumphed over Rome. Yet in the end, through compromise, greed, and lust, pagan Rome triumphed over the church.

It was the church's choice to erect its own shrines complete with images, priests, superstitious rituals, and oppressive rule. And, like heathen Rome but even more furiously so, the Church of Rome persecuted those who did not bow at their altars and acknowledge their priests and pontiffs. Thus the church that had triumphed outwardly, perished inwardly. It is not elephants that spoil the vine, it is the little foxes [S. of S. 2:15].

With the new capital of the Empire now moved to Constantinople in 334 AD, bishops who once were fed to wild beasts in the Empire's arenas now dined with the Emperor at the palace. Those who had properties, possessions, and positions wrenched from their hands, now had all restored and their purses fattened from the imperial treasury.

Persecution for righteousness' sake once was their portion, now promotion and enrichment. Once shame and reproach, now pride and exaltation.

The world, formerly the church's savage enemy, now reclined comfortably in her bosom. Thus, though outwardly Christianity had converted the world, the world in turn was rapidly converting the church. The devil, who has come only to steal and destroy, has more than one masquerade to achieve his ends. The roaring lion of Diocletian knew how to quickly slide into his subtle serpent's dress during the reign of Constantine and seduce the church into his coils. What he did not achieve through fire, he managed to do by friendship.

Augustine of Hippo in North Africa [354-430 AD] said about the church in his day, "The man who enters is bound to see drunkards, misers, tricksters, gamblers, adulterers, fornicators, people wearing amulets, clients of sorcerers, astrologers...He must be warned that the same crowds that press into the churches on Christian festivals, also fill the theaters on pagan holidays." St. Boniface wrote to Pope Zachary [741-752 AD], "Young men who spent their youth in rape and adultery were rising in the ranks of the clergy. They were spending their nights in bed with four or five women, then getting up in the morning to celebrate the Mass!" Pope John VIII [872-882 AD] promised to soldiers fighting bravely against the pagans, the rest of eternal

life and forgiveness of sins. Stop and think: Was this Jesus' method and promise to His followers? [Jn.18:36; Mt.26:51,52].

Pope John XXIII [1410-1415 AD] had the godly John Huss and Jerome of Prague condemned and burned at the stake at the Council of Constance. Later, that same council condemned this same John XXIII, one of the three rival Popes at the time, "for being a mass-murderer, mass-fornicator, a pirate, rapist, and sodomite."

[7] There was nothing artificial about the beginnings of Christianity. The church received her life from the Holy Spirit of God and this became their testimony both by word and deed. The progress of the kingdom of heaven was due to the efforts of spiritual common believers and not from "professional" preachers [Acts 8:4; 11:19; I Thess.1:6-8].

Apart from organized campaigns and without exhortations to do so, simple Christians spread the Word of life throughout the known world. The church in Rome began and developed this way without Apostolic presence. The NT pages are refreshingly free from the appeals for funds and pleas for laborers so prevalent in our day.

Spontaneous expansion begins with the joy of a new found love and purity in the light. It breaks out in a spiritually instinctive desire to help and bless others. Love must have an outlet, for it can only but extinguish if expended upon self. Purity's radiance cannot be hid. Truth's compelling persuasion to the soul swells within seeking to vent its internal pressure. These are the deep wellsprings of an unrestrained expansion of true faith.

Space would fail me if I were to include more. We give glory to God for His help during this project and your continued prayer for us all along. When finished we intend to have it printed in West Africa and distributed via faithful brethren at no charge as have been done with my other publications.

Our earnest expectation and hope is that we will return to West Africa by next month or December at the latest in the will of the Lord. We intend to begin a fresh work in Sierra Leone and take periodic trips into Nigeria to continue to strengthen and encourage the brethren there. Do pray for us as there are many things to arrange before that takes place.

With all of our love,
Steve and Patti

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Steve's Web Site:
<http://www.phillipsmissionforum.org/>

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Are We Like Christ?

[Portions of the book in html form.]

[Begin Here](#)

[Chapter 1 - In the Fulness of Time](#)

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**Facing the Truth, Holiness & Love of the Lord Jesus
Christ Personally & Historically**

By Steve Phillips



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Out of the Depths
The Mystery of Suffering
By Steve Phillips

an excerpt...

For in this we groan [2 Cor.5:2]. The body, in time, here on earth, is our present house of sorrow. Here, while the inner man is renewed day by day, the outer man perishes [2 Cor.4:16].

Tears become our food here by day and by night [Ps.42:3], yet they are all, each one, recorded in His book [Ps.56:8].

There are no wasted sufferings in the economy of God.

Sorrows for a season effect eternal comforts for suffering saints. **In faithfulness You have afflicted me** [Ps.119:75]. Can you say so? **It was good for me that I was afflicted** [Ps.119:71]. Is this your testimony?

When standing on eternal shores, it certainly will be. When seen from the standpoint of an All-Wise Sovereign, you will say so. If our trust in His kindly wisdom were but more simple, we would say so now.

Should we for a moment be granted all-knowledge with all wisdom to discern, along with all-power to effect any change that wisdom perceived, we should choose for ourselves precisely the circumstance that we find ourselves in at the moment. We would realize that these very afflictions are the best possible situation for our eternal well-being.

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The Mystery of Suffering
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By Steve Phillips

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ALL THINGS LOSS



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EXPERIENCE

AN APPROACH TO
EQUIPPING FAITHFUL MEN
FOR GODLY LIVING AND
GOSPEL SERVICE

By Steve Phillips

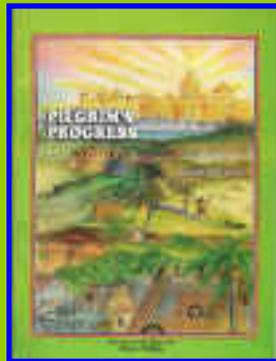
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Godly Giving With Gladness

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[Broken Fragments: Black but Lovely Thoughts on the Song of Songs](#)

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Gather up the fragments that remain So that nothing is lost Jn.6:13

Black but Lovely

Thoughts on the Song of Songs

Introduction

God speaks in images of the commonplace. Through lowly parables, sublime truths emerge by employing the things of earth to unveil those of heaven. Concealed to the casual glance are storehouses of undisclosed wealth in the Word of God. Gold is not gathered on the surface. Hidden treasures must be searched out ere their riches are discovered and possessed by the seeker. Shadowed in the narratives of Scripture are portraits of Christ and saving grace that the Spirit of God illumines radiantly to refresh and invigorate every seeking soul.

Peculiar among the sacred writings of the Scriptures are the books of Esther and the Song of Songs. In neither one is the name of the Lord to be found, yet both illustrate the ways and work of God among His people. Esther's extended parable portrays that of the Holy Spirit within the individual believer, while the Song paints a portrait of Christ's love for His church and of hers for Him.

Solomon penned an inspired trilogy that chronicles the journey of the soul from utter vanity in the world to utmost rapture in glory. Spiritually, the sequence moves first from Ecclesiastes, then to Proverbs, and finally climaxes in the Song of Songs.

[Broken Fragments](#)

(PDF file: 300 kb)

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Freely you have received, freely give [Mt.10:8]

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Feel free to email [Steve](#) or myself, [Jim Baumgaertel](#), if you have any questions.

Steve Phillips' web site: <http://www.phillipsmissionforum.org/>

Some of Steve Phillips' books: [Are We Like Christ?](#) - [Out of the Depths](#) - [Preach the Word](#) - [All Things Loss](#) - [The Discipleship Experience](#) - [The Believer at Work](#) - [Pilgrim's Progress](#) - [Love That Gives](#) -

Broken Fragments

Missionaries

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What do you want to be known for?

What you're against or what you're for?

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10/9/05

An elder, in the assembly I am a part of, recently made the point that we ought to be more known by what we are for than what we are against. I agree.

“For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” 1 Corinthians 2:2

Jesus is our only hope. Our purpose in life is not about being against things. Our purpose is to trust and obey the real Jesus in terms of the Biblical Gospel.

In fact there are dangers in being obsessed with what you are against. This is a form of idolatry. There is a tendency for many, I believe, to develop their doctrine by what they are against rather than from the Bible.

Developing Doctrine from What You are Against

Consider, for example, if one is against relativism when it comes

“Why are Christians Against Everything?”

When I first became a follower of Jesus, a relative of mine asked me rhetorically, “Why are Christians against everything?” At the time, I did not have a very good answer for her. Now I would have to tell her that, to a great degree, it is because professing Christians are deceived by many of the world’s agendas to be against this list or that list.

And yet...

In addition to corrupt reasons for being against things, there are Biblical reasons for being against things.

What are the facts... according to the Bible?

If you are true to the Lord Jesus and His word, how might you appear to the people in the world when you take a stand: for Jesus and against the “world, the flesh, and the devil”?

to truth. I believe that is a good thing to be against. Consider that society is greatly being influenced to “dialogue” and negotiate “truth”. And consider then that influence in “small group” Bible studies where people are encouraged to discuss what the passage “means to them”. Each person is encouraged to subjectively state how they “feel” about the verses and then by the group dialoguing about it, they can arrive at some negotiated “truth”. The person that is against such dialoguing might rather advocate, “teaching the Bible with authority”. If they are driven by what they are against, rather than by the Bible itself, they may develop a conviction against any small group of people discussing God’s word because it looks to them like dialoguing and negotiating truth. Because of what they are against they may end up advocating a “Man of God” teaching the laity from on high “with authority”. They may end up advocating the hierarchical leader as the standard of truth rather than remembering that it is the Bible that is the standard of truth. They may be deceived into thinking it is wrong for the brethren to gather together in informal fellowship to discuss the Bible as equals. They have been deceived by what they are against. They have added to scripture. They have made a law that is not found in scripture.

The “prolife movement” is another

Will you not be accused by the world and even religious people of being “against everything”? Will you not be accused of being known by what you are against?

“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” John 15:18-19

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world . If any man love the world , the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.” 1 John 2:15-16

Consider Germany in the 1930’s. What a "glorious vision" of national pride the people were being given. There was such an atmosphere of hope for a positive future. What if someone was NOT raising their hand in stiff-armed salute and shouting, "Sieg heil! "? What if they were not at all happy with the trends all around them? Would they be accused of being a bum? Would they be accused of always being against

example of an entire belief system created by what people are against rather than by deriving truth from the Bible. What unites proliferators? It certainly is not the sound doctrine of scripture, the Jesus of the Bible, or the Gospel of the Bible. Rather, being united by being against abortion, they have developed their own apologetic using proof texts from the Bible to create a world view that minimizes the true Gospel and enables Evangelicals to unite in religious vision and zealotry with Catholics, Mormons, Masons, Muslims, and Moonies! Of course the murder of children, born and unborn, is evil! But a false gospel that leads to eternal hell is worse!

What are “Conservatives” against? Whatever Rush Limbaugh and talk radio tells them to be against! A right winger (or a left winger) devotes his life to what their ideology tells them to be against. On the right: homosexuality and taxes. On the left: intolerance and world hunger.

Remember in the 1980’s when many were against rainbows because they were against the New Age Movement? It is true that one should be skeptical of popular symbols that are representing folk paganism. But we professing Christians can also appear foolish when we lose a sense of priorities from the Bible.

everything? What if a follower of Jesus tried to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified? And what if the church-goer sitting in the pew next to them replied, “Oh, yes of course! Jesus, yes, Christianity, yes, positive Christianity... that is what our Fuehrer is all about!” So are you going to leave it there? Are you going to let your friend go on thinking that his Fuehrer, his guru, and our Lord Jesus are compatible?

If you love your friend you will warn your friend!

Even at the risk of being “negative”. Even at the risk of being accused of always being against every thing and every guru-celebrity! You will warn them with tears!

For Jesus, Against the World

Brothers and Sisters, we are surrounded by paganism. We are surrounded by a pseudo-evangelicalism that is pagan at its roots; worshipping created things rather than the Creator. We must preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified in such a way that people can clearly see the contrast between our Lord Jesus and His Gospel versus the false christs and false gospels of this world system.

If someone hasn't understood Biblical Truth in such a way that they separate themselves from the

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false christs and false gospels of this world, then they haven't understood!

Look at the New Testament! Look at the very words of Jesus! They are written in the format of 1) This is what the world says, 2) This is what God says, 3) Reject what the world says and return to a pure devotion to Jesus Christ.

We are immersed in a political system in rebellion against God; an economic system in rebellion against God; a religious system in rebellion against God.

If we are truly and clearly standing for the real Jesus in terms of the real Gospel... we stand against everything this world system stands for.

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CONTEND FOR THE FAITH

...Contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. *Jude 3*

...Be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. *Titus 1:9*

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. *2 Timothy 3:16, 17*

Come now, and let us reason together... *Isaiah 1:18a*

Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend. *Proverbs 27:17*

[The Bereans] were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. *Acts 17:11*

For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? *1 Corinthians 5:12*

Ye shall know them by their fruits. *Matthew 7:16b*

Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. *1 Corinthians 14:29*

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ... *Ephesians 4:15*

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. *Romans 16:17*

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils... *1 Timothy 4:1*

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world... *Revelation 12:9a*

Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us... *1 John 2:18, 19a*

And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you: For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch. *Mark 13:5, 6, 37*

Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. *2 Thessalonians 2:9-12*

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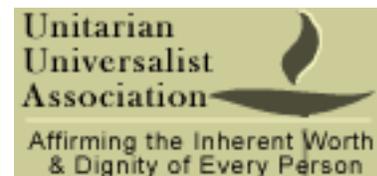
Professing Evangelical Christians are effectively becoming

Unitarian - Universalists

Preparing the world
for the counterfeit

Christ: Some people I really care about are Unitarian! I'm not against people, but I do want to contrast what I believe the Bible teaches with what is advocated by the UUA. My main reason for mentioning the UUA on my website is to, not so much criticize the UUA, but to try to show those who profess to be Evangelical Christians that they are **effectively becoming Unitarians**, whether they know it or not!
Jim B.

[Unitarian Universalist
Association](#)



"With its historical roots in the Jewish and Christian traditions, Unitarian Universalism is a liberal religion -- that is, a religion that keeps an open mind to the religious questions people have struggled with in all times and places. We believe that personal experience, conscience and reason should be the final authorities in religion, and that in the end religious authority lies not in a book or person or institution, but in ourselves. We are a "non-creedal" religion: we do not ask anyone to subscribe to a creed."

Mikhail Gorbachev

Consider the effects of one

[Freemasons
and Other
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recently (1990) said,
"Tolerance is the
[Alpha and Omega](#) of
the New World
Order". Tolerance
used to mean
respecting a
differing view
without having to be
accepting of it.

These days
"tolerance" means
unity at the expense
of integrity. Whether
it's [George Bush](#),
Mikhail Gorbachev,
John Paul II, the
Dalai Lama, Carl
Sagan, Isaac
Asimov, or [Billy
Graham](#); regardless
of the guru, the
whole world is
following its leaders
into a Global Unity
at the expense of the
truth. Two recent
examples in Kitsap
County illustrate.
See article:
[Tolerance](#)

of the most prominent
trends in Evangelicalism
today:

[The Emergent Church Movement](#)

M. SCOTT PECK

"COMMUNITY", "SPIRITUAL GROWTH", AND GLOBAL "PEACE"

M. Scott Peck's books are a tragic example of the means by which professing Christians are being deceived. See [Four Ways Christians Are Being Deceived](#)

1. M. Scott Peck, M.D.

a. "Educated at Harvard (B.A.) and Case Western Reserve (M.D.), Dr. M. Scott Peck has served in administrative posts in the government during his career as a psychotherapist. He has been the Medical Director of the New Milford Hospital Mental Health Clinic and a psychiatrist in private practice in New Milford, Connecticut." (The Road Less Traveled)

b. "After many years of vague identification with Buddhist and Islamic mysticism, I ultimately made a firm Christian commitment - signified by my non-denominational baptism on the ninth of March 1980..." (People of the Lie)

2. Books

a. The Road Less Traveled - 1978 A Touchstone Book by Simon & Schuster, Inc. "A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth" (See quotes in section 4)

b. People of the Lie - 1983 A Touchstone Book by Simon & Schuster, Inc. "The Hope For Healing Human Evil" (See quotes in section 7)

c. The Different Drum - 1987 A Touchstone Book by Simon & Schuster, Inc. "Community Making and Peace: A Spiritual Journey Toward Self-Acceptance, True Belonging, and New Hope for the World" (See quotes in

sections 5, 6, 8, and 9)

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3. M. Scott Peck's books can be found in both Christian and New Age bookstores.

4. Evolving to god-hood

- a. "God wants us to become Himself (or Herself or Itself). We are growing toward godhood. God is the goal of evolution."
- b. "To put it plainly, our unconscious is God. God within us."
- c. "I am indebted for this analogy to [Carl] Jung, who, [described] himself as 'a splinter of the infinite deity'..."
- d. M. Scott Peck has never refuted or modified in subsequent books the views expressed in *The Road Less Traveled*. In fact, his later books continue to express the same metaphysical world-view.

5. Mystical Transformation

- a. "Patterns of Transformation" - "Stages of Spiritual Growth"

Stage I : Chaotic, Anti-social

Stage II : Formal, Institutional

Stage III: Skeptic, Individual

Stage IV: Mystic, Communal

- b. Stage II Conversion

"But for most, the institution to which they submit themselves for governance is the Church." "There are several things that characterize the behavior of men and women in Stage II of their spiritual development, which is the stage of the majority

of churchgoers and believers."..."their attachment to forms (as opposed to the essence of their religion)...formal... institutional...threatened when someone seems to be playing footloose and fancy-free with the rules." "Another thing characterizing the religious behavior of Stage II people is that their vision of God is almost entirely that of an external, transcendent Being. They have very little understanding of the immanent, indwelling God.....And although they consider Him loving, they also generally feel He possesses - and will use - punitive power....they need a legalistic religion for their governance."

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c. Stage IV - Becoming a Mystic

Every Shade of Religious Belief "Yet through the ages, mystics of every shade of religious belief have spoken have spoken of unity, of an underlying connectedness between things: between men and women, us and the other creatures and even inanimate matter as well, a fitting together according to an ordinarily invisible fabric underlying the cosmos."

Deeper Mysteries "Mystics acknowledge the enormity of the unknown... they seek to penetrate ever deeper into it that they may understand more... They love mystery, in dramatic contrast to those in Stage II, who need simple, clear-cut dogmatic structures and have little taste for the unknown and unknowable." "Mystics throughout the ages have not only spoken of emptiness but extolled its virtues."

One World Community "...they are the ones most aware that the whole world is a community.... they know this to be one world."

Psychoactive Drugs "...after he had drunk a bit of whiskey or smoked a little marijuana, Michael would begin to talk of life and death and meaning and glory and become 'spirit-filled', and I would sit listening at his feet enthralled.See the early 'Don Juan' books by Carlos Castenedas for a description of the role of psychoactive drugs in his Stage III to Stage IV

conversion.....I do not mean to bless the use of drugs for such purposes but simply to state the reality that in his case they loosened him up enough to flow in the direction he was being called..."

All Religions and Interdependence "Stage IV therapists do best leading highly independent people toward a recognition of the mystical interdependence of this world." "My experience suggests that this progression of spiritual development holds true in all cultures and for all religions. Indeed, one of the things that seems to characterize all the great religions - Christianity, Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism - is their capacity to speak to people in both Stage II and Stage IV. In fact, I suspect this is why they are great religions."

No End to Conversion "...the whole point of life is the development of souls... we are all on an ongoing spiritual journey and... there is no end to our conversion." "The individual journey through the stages of spiritual development is also a journey into and out of culture. Erich Fromm [in *The Sane Society*] once defined socialization as the process of 'learning to like to do what we have to do.'"

The Perennial Philosophy "Aldous Huxley labeled mysticism 'the perennial philosophy' because the mystical way of thinking and being has existed in all cultures and all times since dawn of recorded history. Although a small minority, mystics of all religions the world over history. Although a small minority, mystics of all religions the world over have demonstrated an amazing commonality, unity. Unique though they might be in their individual personhood, they have largely escaped free from - transcended - those human differences that are cultural."

Jesus the Mystic "Nowhere in all of literature is there a better description of someone who had transcended culture than in the Gospels. Before and since Jesus, from time to time there have been saints who have transcended their culture and also had 'no place to lay their heads'."

Global Leap of Human Evolution "But they were one in ten

thousand, if that. Today it is different. Because of.. mass communication that brings foreign cultures to our door, and... psychotherapy that leads us to question [the way] we were raised - the number of people entering the mystical stage of development and transcending ordinary culture seems to have increased a thousandfold in the course of a mere generation or two. They remain a minority - currently no more than one in twenty. Still, one wonders if the explosion in their numbers might represent a giant leap forward in the evolution of the human race, a leap toward not only mystical but global consciousness and world community. Perhaps the greatest prophet of this leap was Teilhard de Chardin."

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6. Meditation

a. Hindu Mystic Krishnamurti

"Our responsibility as individuals to empty ourselves in order to achieve peace was stated clearly by the Hindu mystic Krishnamurti twenty years ago in his book Freedom from the Known.

b. Emptiness - What Comes In Is Beyond Our Control

"It is important for people who find the concept of emptiness frightening to remember that meditation - emptiness - is not an end in itself but the means to an end. It is said that nature abhors a vacuum. So it is that the moment we become empty something comes into our emptiness. The virtue of meditation is that whatever comes into emptiness is beyond our control. It is the unforeseen, the unexpected, the new. And it is only from the unforeseen, the unexpected, the new that we learn."

7. Psychology and Education

a. "God does not punish.... God cannot destroy; He can only create."

b. "In one [scenario] all human souls, having been converted to light and love, reach out to the spirit of hate and falsehood in friendship. Finally realizing itself to be totally defeated, with no human body left to possess,

with all immune to its power, out of utter loneliness it breaks down and accepts the offer of friendship, and thereby in the end even Satan is converted. That is the scenario I pray for."

c. "The final major model [of evil], that of traditional Christianity, I label 'diabolic dualism.' Here evil is regarded as being not of God's creation but a ghastly cancer beyond His control. While this model has its own pitfalls, it is the only one of the three that deals adequately with the issue of murder and the murderer."

d. "It is the principal thesis of this work that these specific [evil] people - as well as human evil in general - need to be studied scientifically.... A psychology of evil must be a healing psychology.... a psychology of evil must be a religious psychology...it must not only embrace valid insights from all religious traditions but must also recognize the reality of the 'supernatural'".

e. "The effort to prevent group evil - including war - must therefore be directed toward the individual. It is, of course, a process of education. And that education can be conducted most easily within the traditional existing framework of our schools. This book is written in the hope that someday in our secular as well as religious schools all children will be carefully taught the nature of evil and the principles of its prevention."

8. Community - Salvation of the World

a. "In and through community lies the salvation of the world... peacemaking must be the first priority of civilization..."

b. "I am dubious, however, as to how far we can move toward global community - which is the only way to achieve international peace - until we learn the basic principles of community in our own individual lives and personal spheres of influence."

c. "But what is spiritual salvation, particularly when we think of the spirit as immortal? Here the work takes on more the meaning of healing... Spiritual healing is a process of becoming whole or holy. Most specifically, I would define it as an ongoing process of becoming increasingly conscious. Even Freud, an atheist, said that the purpose of psychotherapy - healing of the psyche - was to make the unconscious conscious. And Jung ascribed human evil to the refusal to meet the Shadow - the Shadow being those aspects of ourselves that we do not want to own or recognize and that we continually

attempt to sweep under the rug of consciousness."

d. "The key to community is the acceptance - in fact, the celebration - of our individual and cultural differences. Such acceptance and celebration - which resolves the problem of pluralism and which can occur only after we learn how to become empty - is also the key to world peace."

e. "And that community, which includes all faiths and all cultures without obliterating them, is the cure for 'the core of our greatest contemporary trouble.'"

f. "One of the roots of the community movement was what has been called the T-Group.... [which] became the model for the sensitivity-group movement."

g. "Empowerment - What to do now? Start communities. Start one in your church. Start one in your school. Start one in your neighborhood."

h. "But there are rules!...The hope of the book is that we will learn them first in our personal lives, then apply them universally. For that is how the world will be saved."

i. "But what, then, does such a rare group [a true community] look like? How does it function? What is a true definition of community?"

j. "Community is a spirit - but not in the way that the familiar phrase 'community spirit' is usually understood.... The spirit of community is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit. This does not mean that community is solely a Christian phenomenon. I have seen community develop among Christians and Jews, Christians and atheists, Jews and Muslims, Muslims and Hindus. People of any religious persuasion or none whatever can develop community."

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9. One World Government - "The Obsolescence of the Nation-State System"

a. "Instead, our primary goal should be as rapidly as possible to turn our swords - and our guns and bombs and tanks and missiles - the whole kit and caboodle - over to the United Nations or another variety of supranational

government."

b. "In fact, a supranational government is incompatible with the nation-state system."

c. "A society must be able to work through an economic depression in order to make the changes it needs to make to remain a sane and healthy society."

d. "If we were willing to undergo an economic depression voluntarily, there would be time for planning, for gradual change, for innovative changes it needs to make to remain a sane and healthy society."

e. "If we were willing to undergo an economic depression voluntarily, there would be time for planning, for gradual change, for innovative strategies that would minimize economic disruption. The key to large social change is substitution - not demolition of institutions but their transformation."

f. "In the process of achieving peace I would not, for example, suggest that we simply do away with our military.... I would propose the transformation of our military into a national service corps, an idea that many of our best minds have long been espousing.... [to be used for] slum clearing, education, and conservation... self-defense through nonviolent means: a cadre of brave men and women thoroughly trained in the techniques of passive resistance and nonviolent action."

g. "In December 1984 nine of my colleagues and I met together to form The Foundation for Community Encouragement (FCE). The purpose of this tax-exempt public foundation is 'to encourage the development of community wherever it does not exist, and to assist existing communities, whether secular or religious, to strengthen themselves and their relationships with other communities ultimately thereby fostering the movement toward world understanding.'"

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10. Endorsements

a. People of the Lie - "The Washington Times", "Contemporary Christian Magazine"

b. The Different Drum

- Marilyn Ferguson, author of The Aquarian Conspiracy and Care of Mind/Care of Spirit

- Madeleine L'Engle, author of A Wrinkle In Time

11. Aquarian Conspiracy

- a. The Aquarian Conspiracy, was written by Marilyn Ferguson in 1980.
- b. Called the "Handbook of the New Age" by "USA Today", it describes an "underground network" that is "working to create a different kind of society based on a vastly enlarged concept of [human potential](#)."
- c. The Road Less Traveled is listed under "Readings and References" for chapter 11, "Spiritual Adventure: Connection to the Source"

12. New Age Catalogue

- a. The New Age Catalogue, was published in 1988 by the editors of "Body, Mind, and Spirit" magazine.
- b. The catalogue includes books on channeling, Edgar Cayce, crystals, tarot cards, meditation, yoga, etc.
- c. The Road Less Traveled, is featured in an audio tape format in the section called "Create Your Reality" ("Dr. Peck... shows you how to cultivate your own religion and open up to the positive force he calls grace.) The Aquarian Conspiracy, is featured in the section called "The Planet".
- d. The Different Drum, is promoted in a section called, "New Lifestyles/Communities - The Meaning of Community".

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Lucifer, The Garden of Eden, & The Tower of Babel

The following scriptures tell us much about the trends during these last days, in the World System, and trends in the Church.

(Modified 9/10/05)

[Attitudes That Lucifer Inspires](#) - [Eve and the Rebellion of Self](#) - [Global Rebellion in the Time of Noah](#) - [The Tower of Babel](#) - [Save Us from Our Imagination](#) - [Global System of the Counterfeit Christ](#)

Attitudes That Lucifer Inspires

Consider an example of the attitudes that Lucifer inspires (actually the first recorded use of **affirmation** and **self-talk** to reprogram the subconscious to achieve **infinite potential!**),

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, **I** will ascend into heaven, **I** will exalt my throne above the stars of God: **I** will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: **I** will ascend above the heights of the clouds; **I** will be like the most High."

Isaiah 14:12-14

"I will... I will... I will..." And I half-kiddingly tell people I think that Satan has these affirmations on 3x5 cards, and he wakes up in the morning and

looks in the mirror and says, "I will..." And he repeats his affirmations...

So because of his rebellion of self-exaltation, Satan was booted out of heaven.

Eve and the Rebellion of Self

Then Satan went to the **Garden of Eden** in Genesis 3 where he deceived Eve into the rebellion of Self. This was the origin of the Human Potential Movement... and the origin of the Feminist Movement... and the origin of the Patriarchal-dominate-women-mentality... the origin of everything in which humans exalt themselves.

Eve was deceived into thinking that she didn't need to obey the God who created her and who loved her; that she didn't need that love relationship; rather that she needed to decide for herself what was right and wrong; that she needed to "take responsibility" for her own life... to "**look within**" for wisdom... to pursue self-realization... to find her SELF... to be the god of her own life.

So, Eve was deceived and Adam followed her, and they joined Lucifer's rebellion of Self.

Global Rebellion in the Time of Noah

Eventually, the Rebellion of Self went global, in **the time of Noah**. What God says about the World System at that time is true about the nature of the World System at any time:

"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every **imagination** of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

Genesis 6:5

God judged and destroyed the World System... and yet it was not long before the Rebellion of Self went global again.

The Tower of Babel

In Genesis 11, at the place that came to be known as Babel and later Babylon, the people of the earth gathered together.

"And they said, Go to, let us build us **a city and a tower**, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us **make us a name**, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."

Genesis 11:4

What God says, I believe is very important:

"And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have **imagined** to do."

Genesis 11:5, 6

The people will be able to do whatever they imagine!

This word, "imagined", "proposed", "plan" is the Hebrew word "**zaman**"...2161 zaman (zaw-mam'); "a primitive root; to plan, usually in a bad sense: -consider, devise, imagine, plot, purpose, think (evil)." (Strong's)

Save Us from Our Imagination

What ever they IMAGINE to do they will be able to do. Now in our age, we have been conditioned to say, "That's great isn't it?" Because we have been conditioned to worship the human imagination, to worship human **creativity**... But God said NO. God confounded the languages and dispersed the nations to SAVE US FROM OUR OWN IMAGINATIONS. God loves us so much that he wants to save us from our own imaginations!

The human imagination is central to how mankind is being deceived and how humans are rebelling against God and how even those who profess to be Bible-believing Christians are being deceived.

The human imagination is foundational to the ancient mysticism, occult, sorcery, and shamanism found on every inhabited continent, and in every culture in every century. It is every bit as prevalent in our society today and is even in the Church in many disguised forms.

The human imagination is the central tool of the "visions" of humans to achieve their "infinite potential" and to be the gods of their own lives.

Global System of the Counterfeit Christ

The human imagination is also central to the "Tower of Babel" visions for Global Unity. The vision of the people at the Tower of Babel was to gather together in "community" to build a city to make a name for themSELVES. We don't need God. Through our imagination... our vision... our technology... our COMMUNITY we can create heaven on earth. We can create Global Unity. This is the vision being promoted in the World System today: Preparing mankind for a global government, a global economic system (controlling the buying and selling of everyone on the earth), a global RELIGIOUS system, preparing the world to worship a COUNTERFEIT CHRIST.

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Several of these insights came from a video of Dave Hunt teaching in the late 1980's. See [The Berean Call](#)

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The Good News

I invite you to consider the Good News of Jesus Christ and I invite you to surrender your life to the Lord Jesus.

"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners**, of whom I am chief." 1 Timothy 1:15

Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and **become as little children**, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 18:3

The God who has created everything has revealed himself by what he has created; by the history of the Jewish people; by becoming one of us and walking among us for 33 years and allowing us to nail him to a cross; by his death and resurrection; by the unique collection of 66 books called the Bible; and by the Holy Spirit's testimony to our hearts.

The Gospel (Good News) as I understand it from the Bible is this:

1. God created us for the purpose of a love relationship with him.
2. Since you can't love a robot, he gave us the ability to reject him.
3. Each of us rejected him out of self-centeredness and rebellion and we became enemies of God. We each chose to try to be the gods of our own lives. Hell is a place for people who insist on being the gods of their own lives, not wanting to surrender to the God who created them and who loves them; not wanting to be with him on his terms for all eternity.

4. God already had a plan to rescue whoever would respond to his provision. Even though we deserved eternal capital punishment (death) God, himself, would become one of us and die in our place. He did come to die for us and he rose again to show, objectively, to humans that he was who he said he was.

5. God gave the Law in the Old Testament to show us his holiness; to show us that we could never live up to his holiness in our own efforts; and to show us that we needed a Savior. In fact the entire Old Testament points to Jesus. "God will provide the lamb" (Genesis 22:8).

6. We cannot save ourselves by our good works, trying to be a good person, or thinking the right thoughts.

We go from being enemies of God to becoming a child of God by humbling ourselves before God, [repenting of our sin](#), receiving God's forgiveness because of what Jesus did for us, putting on Jesus' righteousness instead of a righteousness of our own, and asking Jesus to be the Lord of our lives for ever and ever, instead of trying to be the god of our own lives.

What I'm saying here is from the Bible and has nothing to do with the evils of historic "Christendom" or modern American religious right-wingers. And it doesn't depend on whether or not Jim Baumgaertel is a self-righteous holier-than-thou, religious hypocrite zealot! Jesus wants to set me free of all of that! It is simply a matter of each of us realizing that we were once lost but now we're found as we put our trust in the Lord Jesus.

I invite you to receive Jesus as your Savior and Lord.

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that **while we were still sinners, Christ died for us**. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Romans 5:8-10

"But **as many as received Him**, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name." John 1:12

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What is the Church?

To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord

Ephesians 3:10-11

The Greek word translated "Church" is "ekklesia", meaning "called out ones". The Church is also called the "Body of Christ" (Ephesians 1:22, 23) and the "Bride of Christ" (Ephesian 5:23-33).

In the context of the New Testament, "The Church" refers to **people**; individuals **who belong to Jesus** and who are called to be in a relationship with each other. The word "Church" can refer to all the followers of Jesus everywhere, or those believers in a certain location.

The New Testament usage of the term "Church" does **not** refer to **a building**, or some place we "go", **or a social organization** like the Lions Club or Elks Lodge, or a corporation.

The traditions of men, especially those coming from the Roman Catholic Empire (and continued via Protestantism and Evangelicalism), have perverted our understanding of the word, "Church". We think of "going to Church" meaning that we are going to a building we call "the church" or a meeting we call "church". We are deceived into thinking in terms of a building, or some place we "go", or a social organization like the Lions Club or Elks Lodge, or a corporation.

But, it is crucial that we continuously remind ourselves that "The Church" is people: all individuals who belong to Jesus and are called

to be in relationship with each other.

The modern concept of a "corporation" serves as a good illustration. Our friends (let's call them Dan and Cheryl) incorporated their business. They created a legal entity called, a "corporation" which is an institution. It is its own legal entity. The corporation is not Dan and Cheryl. It is legally distinct from them as individuals. A corporation has officers and employees. They are part of the machinery of the corporation. Dan and Cheryl are officers in the corporation, i.e., part of the machinery. But they and the corporation are distinct.

There is no teaching in the Bible that the Church is a corporation, an institution, distinct from individual Christians. Rather, the Church, IS the individuals who belong to Jesus and are called to be in relationship with each other.

The Church is people. We who belong to Jesus are the Church. When we meet together, it is a meeting of the Church. We go to meetings of the Church. The Church meets in buildings or homes or out in the woods. When the Church ministers, individual Christians minister as the Holy Spirit empowers them.

What do you think? [Let me know.](#)

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Applying the Old Testament

to the New Testament Church

Modified 7/3/06

Note (12/29/02): The Church has not replaced Israel. Rather, gentile believers have been ingrafted into the ~~Israel~~ People of God; the Promises of God along with Jewish believers. God still has a purpose and a plan for the nation of Israel. What the "nation of Israel" consists of and what it does not consist of... I'm still examining. I am convinced that how God deals with his people, believing Jews and gentiles, is different in some ways after Messiah came versus before Messiah came.

Out of Context: "If my people..."

How many of us, in the last 15 years, have heard the following Old Testament scripture used as if it were written to Americans?

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (2 Chronicles 7:14)

The message that is advocated is that if American Christians will do this, this, and this, God will make America great again. But God has never promised to make America great under any circumstances.

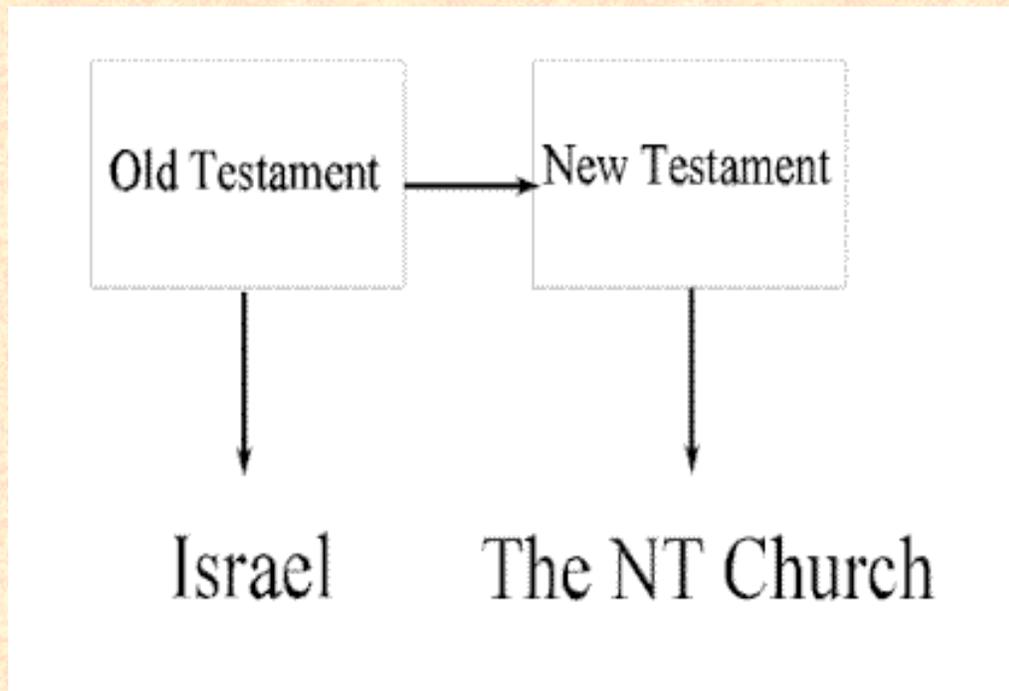
Of course, this verse was not written to Americans. It was written to the people of the ancient nation of Israel. To try to apply it to America is to take it out of context. This promise of God was not made to

America. It was made to ancient Israel. It no more applies to us in America than to Noah in his time and country. Noah and his family did humble themselves, and sought God's face, and turned from their wicked ways. God forgave their sins, but he did not heal their land. It was destined for judgment and destruction. America is destined for judgment and destruction as is every nation of this pagan world system.

Misapplying the Old Testament

This is a general problem among those who profess to be Bible Believing Christians: Taking Old Testament scriptures that were written to Israel at a specific time for a specific purpose, and then trying to apply them directly to followers of Jesus in the New Testament Church.

This ends up



causing many problems that distract from a pure devotion to Jesus Christ. These problems end up turning a New Testament relationship with Jesus into a religious system of food and drink and rituals and holy days. And as referred to above, it also causes Christians to pursue Nationalistic Patriotic Idolatry.

The Old Testament as applied by the New Testament

The diagram above (or adjacent) illustrates that:

- The Old Testament was applied to Israel directly.
- The Old Testament is the foundation for the New Testament.
- The New Testament applies to the New Testament Church directly.
- The Old Testament applies to the Church as it is drawn through the understanding of the New Testament; as it is interpreted and applied to the Church by the New Testament.
- The Old Testament does not apply directly to the New Testament Church.

The Old Testament was a shadow of what was to come. The Law was given to show us our need for a savior. The Prophets spoke to Israel. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law. The following verses are important examples of how the New Testament puts the Old Testament in perspective for the Body of Christ.

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: **I am** not come to destroy, but **to fulfill**. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." (Matthew 5:17-18)

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the **prophets**, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by **his Son**, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds..." (Heb 1:1-2)

"Wherefore **the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ**, that we might be justified by faith." (Galatians 3:24)

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the **Sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come**; but the body is of Christ". (Colossians 2:16-17)

"For the law having **a shadow** of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually

make the comers thereunto perfect". (Hebrews 10:1)

Many other New Testament verses show us, as the Church, what our priorities ought to be in these last days and interpret and apply Old Testament Truth for us in the Body of Christ:

"Jesus answered, **My kingdom is not of this world**: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." (John 18:36)

"For **our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven**; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Philippians 3:20-21)

"Let not then your good be evil spoken of. For the kingdom of God is **not meat and drink**; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men". (Romans 14:16-18)

"**Let no man therefore judge you** in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the **Sabbath days**: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ". (Colossians 2:16-17)

"One man esteemeth **one day above another**: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks" (Romans 14:5-6)

If you believe that I'm missing something here; or that I've misunderstood God's Word in this area, I hope you'll [write me](#) and let me know.

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The Bible Versions Debate

By Dusty Peterson, Published in Media Spotlight

Posted here 1/6/07

Part 1

<http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~emcd/BTRBVDpart1.htm>

Part 2A

<http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~emcd/BTRBVDpart2a.pdf> (482 kb pdf file)

Part 2B:

This is a 15 megabyte pdf file... so don't click unless you really want to wait for the download:

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Background:

Al Dager is publishing what I consider to be a very important series of articles by Dusty Peterson called: The Bible Versions Debate.

Dusty Peterson's web site is <http://www.bayith.org>. or <http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~emcd/>

In part 2B in Media Spotlight's Winter 2006 issue are some very good summaries about Family A Greek Manuscripts versus Family B. Those are the author's way of summarizing the two groups of manuscripts that must be considered to understand what is at stake in these discussions.

Al Dager's site is <http://www.mediaspotlight.org>.

Join the debate in the [Bible Translations](#) section of the procinwarn.com discussion board.

See the following topic for some summaries and discussion about the series: [Al Dager's Media Spotlight Series: The Bible Versions Debate](#)

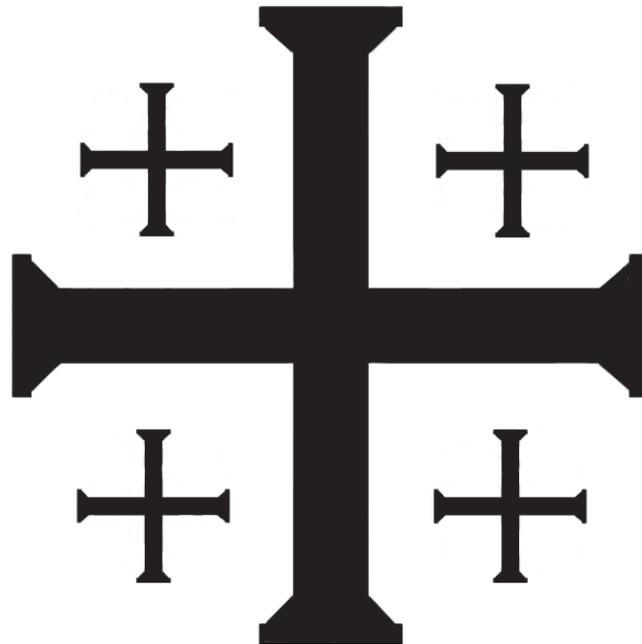
The articles themselves are written by Brother Dusty.

Jim B.

[Return to Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

<http://procinwarn.com>

IN CELEBRATION OF AND THANKSGIVING FOR
THE LIFE OF
GERALD RUDOLPH FORD
1913-2006



TUESDAY, THE SECOND OF JANUARY
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD TWO THOUSAND SEVEN

THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF SAINT PETER AND SAINT PAUL
IN THE CITY AND EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WASHINGTON



Gerald Rudolph Ford

July 14, 1913 - December 26, 2006

Thirty-Eighth President of the United States

PRELUDE

Performed by the Cathedral Organists.

Prelude and Fugue in G Major, BWV 541

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Cortège et Litanie, Op. 19

Marcel Dupré (1886-1971)

Choral in E major

César Franck (1822-1890)

Prelude and Fugue in B minor, BWV 544

J. S. Bach

Prelude and Fugue in G Major, Op. 37, No. 2

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Praeludium circulare, from Symphony No. 2, Op. 13

Charles Marie Widor (1844-1937)

Prelude and Fugue in A minor, WoO 9

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Choral in A minor

C. Franck

Two choral preludes

Paul Manz (b. 1919)

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing
What Wondrous Love Is This

Prelude and Fugue in E-flat (“St. Anne”), BWV 552

J. S. Bach

Performed by the United States Marine Orchestra.

Fanfare for the Common Man

Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

When Jesus Wept, from *New England Triptych*
(after the music of William Billings)

William Schuman (1910-1992)

Performed with the Armed Forces Chorus.

O waly waly, from *Suite for Strings*

John Rutter (b. 1945)

Pilgrims’ Hymn

Stephen Paulus (b. 1949)

How Lovely Is Thy Dwelling Place, from A German Requiem, Opus 45

J. Brahms

Music from the Bicentennial of American Independence

arranged by Stephen Bulla

Heritage
Amanda
Chester

The Promise of Living, from *The Tender Land*

Aaron Copland

America

Traditional
lyrics by Samuel F. Smith
arranged by Robert Edgerton

America, the Beautiful

Samuel Augustus Ward
lyrics by Katherine Lee Bates
arranged by Carmen Dragon

BURIAL OF THE DEAD - RITE I

The Bourdon Bell tolls thirty-eight times as the cortege moves from the Capitol to the Cathedral.

RECEPTION OF THE BODY

The Right Reverend John Bryson Chane

The Bishop meets the body at the door of the church and says:

With faith in Jesus Christ, we receive the body of our brother Gerald for burial. Let us pray with confidence to God, the Giver of life, that he will raise him to perfection in the company of the saints.

Deliver your servant, Gerald, O Sovereign Lord Christ, from all evil, and set him free from every bond; that he may rest with all your saints in the eternal habitations; where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Let us also pray for all who mourn, that they may cast their care on God, and know the consolation of his love.

Almighty God, look with pity upon the sorrows of your servants for whom we pray. Remember them, Lord, in mercy; nourish them with patience; comfort them with a sense of your goodness; lift up your countenance upon them; and give them peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The people stand.

ANTHEM IN PROCESSION

The Reverend Dr. Robert Certain

I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though this body be destroyed, yet shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold, and not as a stranger.

For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For if we live, we live unto the Lord; and if we die, we die unto the Lord. Whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; even so saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labors.

OPENING COLLECT

The Very Reverend Samuel T. Lloyd III

Dean The Lord be with you.

People **And with thy spirit.**

Dean Let us pray.

O God, whose mercies cannot be numbered: Accept our prayers on behalf of thy servant Gerald Ford, and grant him an entrance into the land of light and joy, in the fellowship of thy saints; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

People **Amen.**

TRIBUTES

The Honorable George H.W. Bush

The Honorable Dr. Henry A. Kissinger

Mr. Thomas J. Brokaw

The Honorable George W. Bush

ANTHEM - O God, Our Help in Ages Past

arr. Mack Wilberg

Sung by the Armed Forces Chorus with the United States Marine Orchestra.

O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast,
and our eternal home:

A thousand ages in thy sight
are like an evening gone;
short as the watch that ends the night
before the rising sun.

O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
be thou our guide while life shall last,
and our eternal home.

The people stand.

THE HOLY GOSPEL

John 14:1-6a
read by Father Certain

Priest The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John.

People **Glory be to thee, O Lord.**

Jesus said, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

Priest The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise be to thee, O Christ.**

The people are seated for the Homily.

HOMILY

Father Certain

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The people stand for the prayers. After each petition, the people respond Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rear Admiral Robert F. Burt

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Almighty God, who hast knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord: Grant, we beseech thee, to thy whole Church in paradise and on earth, thy light and thy peace. **Amen.**

Grant that all who have been baptized into Christ's death and resurrection may die to sin and rise to newness of life, and that through the grave and gate of death we may pass with him to our joyful resurrection. **Amen.**

Grant to us who are still in our pilgrimage, and who walk as yet by faith, that thy Holy Spirit may lead us in holiness and righteousness all our days. **Amen.**

Grant to thy faithful people pardon and peace, that we may be cleansed from all our sins, and serve thee with a quiet mind. **Amen.**

Grant to all who mourn a sure confidence in thy fatherly care, that, casting all their grief on thee, they may know the consolation of thy love. **Amen.**

Give courage and faith to those who are bereaved, that they may have strength to meet the days ahead in the comfort of a reasonable and holy hope, in the joyful expectation of eternal life with those they love. **Amen.**

Help us, we pray, in the midst of things we cannot understand, to believe and trust in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, and the resurrection to life everlasting. **Amen.**

Grant us grace to entrust Gerald to thy never-failing love; receive him into the arms of thy mercy, and remember him according to the favor which thou bearest unto thy people. **Amen.**

Grant that, increasing in knowledge and love of thee, he may go from strength to strength in the life of perfect service in thy heavenly kingdom. **Amen.**

Grant us, with all who have died in the hope of the resurrection, to have our consummation and bliss in thy eternal and everlasting glory, and, with all thy saints, to receive the crown of life which thou dost promise to all who share in the victory of thy Son Jesus Christ; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The people are seated.

Sung by the Armed Forces Chorus with the United States Marine Orchestra.

Eternal Father, strong to save,
whose arm hath bound the restless wave,
who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep
its own appointed limits keep:
O hear us when we cry to thee
for those in peril on the sea.

O Spirit, whom the Father sent
to spread abroad the firmament;
O Wind of heaven, by thy might
save all who dare the eagle's flight,
and keep them by thy watchful care
from every peril in the air.

O Christ, the Lord of hill and plain
o'er which our traffic runs amain
by mountain pass or valley low;
wherever, Lord, thy people go,
protect them by thy guarding hand
from every peril on the land.

O Trinity of love and power,
our people shield in danger's hour;
from rock and tempest, fire and foe,
protect them wheresoe're they go;
thus evermore shall rise to thee
glad praise from space, air, land, and sea.

The people stand.

THE COMMENDATION

Father Certain

The Officiant and other ministers take their places at the body.

Officiant Give rest, O Christ, to thy servant with thy saints,
People **Where sorrow and pain are no more,
neither sighing, but life everlasting.**

Officiant Thou only art immortal, the creator and maker of humankind; and we are mortal, formed of the earth, and unto earth shall we return. For so thou didst ordain when thou createdst me, saying, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." All we go down to the dust; yet even at the grave we make our song: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

People **Give rest, O Christ, to thy servant with thy saints,
where sorrow and pain are no more,
neither sighing, but life everlasting.**

Officiant Into thy hands, O merciful Savior, we commend thy servant Gerald. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech thee, a sheep of thine own fold, a lamb of thine own flock, a sinner of thine own redeeming. Receive him into the arms of thy mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light.

People **Amen.**

THE BLESSING

Bishop Chane

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant: Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight; through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE DISMISSAL

Dean Lloyd

Dean Let us go forth in the name of Christ.
People **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN - For All the Saints

Sung by all.

tune: *Sine Nomine*

For all the saints, who from their labors rest,
who thee by faith before the world confessed,
thy Name, O Jesus, be for ever blessed.
Alleluia, alleluia!

And when the strife is fierce, the warfare long,
steals on the ear the distant triumph song,
and hearts are brave again, and arms are strong.
Alleluia, alleluia!

Thou wast their rock, their fortress, and their might;
thou, Lord, their Captain in the well-fought fight;
thou, in the darkness drear, the one true Light.
Alleluia, alleluia!

The golden evening brightens in the west;
soon, soon to faithful warriors cometh rest;
sweet is the calm of paradise the blest.
Alleluia, alleluia!

O may thy soldiers, faithful, true, and bold,
fight as the saints who nobly fought of old,
and win, with them, the victor's crown of gold.
Alleluia, alleluia!

But lo! there breaks a yet more glorious day;
the saints triumphant rise in bright array;
the King of glory passes on his way.
Alleluia, alleluia!

O blest communion, fellowship divine!
We feebly struggle, they in glory shine;
yet all are one in thee, for all are thine.
Alleluia, alleluia!

From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast,
through gates of pearl streams in the countless host
singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Alleluia, alleluia!

POSTLUDE

Pièce Héroïque

César Franck (1822-1890)

*As the President leaves the Cathedral,
the congregation is asked to remain in their seats until directed by an usher.*

PARTICIPANTS

OFFICIATING CLERGY

The Right Reverend John Bryson Chane
Bishop of Washington

The Very Reverend Samuel T. Lloyd III
Dean of the Cathedral

The Reverend Dr. Robert G. Certain
Rector, St. Margaret's Episcopal Church & School, Palm Desert, California

HOMILIST

The Reverend Dr. Robert G. Certain
Rector, St. Margaret's Episcopal Church & School, Palm Desert, California

MINISTER OF CEREMONIES

The Reverend Canon Carol L. Wade
Canon Precentor of Washington National Cathedral

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rear Admiral Robert F. Burt
Chief of Navy Chaplains

READERS

Mr. John (Jack) Ford

Mrs. Susan Ford Bales

TRIBUTES

The Honorable George H. W. Bush
Forty-First President of the United States

The Honorable Dr. Henry A. Kissinger

Mr. Thomas J. Brokaw

The Honorable George W. Bush
Forty-Third President of the United States

REPRESENTATIVES OF FAITHS

Dr. Akbar Ahmed
Ibn Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies, American University, Washington, D.C.

Archbishop Demetrios
Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America

The Right Reverend Frank T. Griswold III
The Twenty-fifth Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church

The Metropolitan Herman
Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada, Orthodox Church in America

Rabbi Bruce Lustig
Senior Rabbi, Washington Hebrew Congregation

Archbishop Pietro Sambi
Papal Nuncio to the United States

The Most Reverend Donald W. Wuerl
Catholic Archbishop of Washington

HONORARY PALLBEARERS

Martin Allen
James A. Baker, III
Robert Barrett
James Cannon
Kenneth Chenault
Richard B. Cheney
William Coleman
Richard DeVos
Robert Dole
Richard Ford
Alan Greenspan
Robert Hartmann
Carla Hills
Henry Kissinger
Jack Marsh
Paul O'Neill
Donald H. Rumsfeld
Brent Scowcroft
Sanford Weill
Frank Zarb

MUSICIANS

Ms. Denyce Graves

THE UNITED STATES MARINE ORCHESTRA
Lieutenant Colonel Michael Colburn, *Director*

THE ARMED FORCES CHORUS
Lieutenant Colonel John Clanton, *Director*

THE CATHEDRAL CHOIRS OF MEN, BOYS AND GIRLS
Michael McCarthy, *Director of Music*
Erik Wm. Suter, *Organist and Associate Director of Music*
Scott Hanoian, *Assistant Organist and Assistant Director of Music*
Christopher Jacobson, *Organ Scholar*
Edward M. Nassor, *Carillonneur*
The Washington Ringing Society

THE CATHEDRAL VERGERS

Stephen Lott, *Head Verger*

THE CATHEDRAL USHERS

Michael Heid, *Head Usher*



University of Michigan, B.A., 1935
Yale University School of Law, LL.B., 1941
United States Navy, 1942 - 1946
United States House of Representatives, 1949 - 1973
Vice President of the United States, 1973 - 1974
President of the United States, 1974 - 1977

FOUR WAYS

CHRISTIANS ARE BEING DECEIVED

Revelation 12:9 speaks of,

"... that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world."

The Lord put that and similar verses in his Word to warn us of a reality of world history: **Global deception**. And even those who profess to be Evangelical Christians are susceptible to the Serpent's lie.

"In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."

1 Timothy 4:1.

Four ways that Christians are being deceived in our day are:

- The Repackaged Lie
- Blurred Distinctions
- Unequal Yoking
- Following Gurus

The Repackaged Lie

Satan is brilliantly clever at taking age-old lies, disguising them in subtlety, and gradually introducing them to even those who insist that they believe in the infallible authority of the Bible. Examples of lies the Enemy has deceived us with are all the various ways we are obsessed

with "Self"; the numerous techniques of "Christianized" sorcery and divination within the Church; and the many issues and fads designed to give us a "Tower of Babel" vision for global unity.

Blurred Distinctions

Not only is Satan the "Father of lies", but he is also the "Author of confusion". It is getting harder and harder to tell the difference between neo-paganism and the liberal church; or between the liberal church and Evangelical Christianity. The message and the priorities of the Church are becoming indistinguishable from the World. Books by [M. Scott Peck](#), for example, are found in both Christian bookstores and New Age/Occult bookstores. These books teach that humans are evolving to godhood; that we must become "mystics" and use Eastern meditation; and they advocate a one-world government.

Unequal Yoking

Christian leaders and Christian organizations are more and more yoking themselves with unbiblical, pagan groups and movements which set the followers up for synthesis, syncretism and compromise of doctrine and priorities. What fellowship does light have with darkness? These unholy alliances are often taking place in the name of "traditional family values" and involve relationships between Evangelicals, Roman Catholicism, Mormons, and Moonies; or, the alliances involve solving the problems of "Mother Earth" in association with various utopian movements.

Following Gurus

The final way in which Christians are being deceived is very much related to the first three. We are much more likely, these days, to not refer to our Bible for our convictions and world-view, but instead to follow the opinions of leaders we look up to. In these days of "Christian Mass Media", Celebrity Ministers are likely to draw our attention and our allegiance. It is a dangerous thing to set up Gurus within the Body of Christ who are beyond criticism. "Touch not the Lord's anointed!" we

are told when the Guru's doctrine or behavior is questioned, which is a reference to 1 Samuel 24 and 26. In those references, David was referring to not KILLING Saul. He was not forbidding CRITICISM of Saul. In fact, David himself rebukes Saul publicly. In these last days we cannot afford to follow human leaders as if they were Gurus; whether they be [Dr. Dobson](#), [Bill Gothard](#), [Pat Robertson](#), or [Billy Graham](#), [or](#) . We are to be disciples of Jesus, and him alone.

Our only hope to not be deceived in these last days is to "abide in the vine"; to surrender our hearts moment by moment to the Holy Spirit; to be Acts 17 "Bereans" and filter everything through the written Word of God; and to be lovers of the Truth.

"Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

[The Evangelical Subculture](#)

[Counterfeit Christs: Is your pastor a one-man show?](#)

Professing Evangelical Christians are effectively becoming [Unitarians](#).

[Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism](#)

[THE NEW WORLD ORDER - Part II](#)

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COUNTERFEIT CHRISTIANITY, THE WORLD RELIGION, AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER

A Seven Part Presentation

This is an outline for a presentation I was giving to groups and individuals from about ten years ago to about three years ago. (1998)

[THE BIBLICAL WARNING OF WORLD-WIDE DECEPTION](#)

["HUMAN POTENTIAL", THE RULERS, AND IDOLATRY](#)

[THE NEW WORLD ORDER - PART I](#)

[THE NEW WORLD ORDER - PART II](#)

[COUNTERFEIT CHRISTIANITY](#)

[THE PRIORITIES OF NOAH](#)

SUMMARY: [Important Principles to Understand](#)

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FREEMASONS AND MEMBERS OF OTHER OCCULT BROTHERHOODS

(a sampling)

U.S. Government (modern) - Freemasons

President Gerald Ford, Senators on the Judiciary Committee (1988): Strom Thurmond, Grassley, Specter, Simpson; other Senators: Byrd, Sam Nunn, Jim McClure, Bob Dole, Bennett Johnston, John Stennis, Jim Exon, Jesse Helms, Quentin Burdick, John Glenn, Mark Hatfield, Fritz Hollings, Lloyd Bentsen, Robert Stafford; Congressman: Jim Wright, Don Edwards, Claude Pepper, Dan Glickman, William Ford, Trent Lott, and at least 54 others.

President George Bush - The Order of the Skull and Bones

Members of The Order of the Skull and Bones

Prescott Sheldon Bush, George W. Bush (George Bush's father and son), George Bush, John Kerry, David Boren, William F. Buckley, Henry Sloane Coffin Sr. and Jr., Henry Luce, Henry Lewis Stimson, William Howard Taft, McGeorge Bundy, Archibald MacLeish

...a kinder, gentler fascism.

U.S. Government (historical) - Freemasons

Presidents: Washington, Buchanan, Garfield, Harding, Jackson, Johnson, McKinley, Monroe, Polk, the Roosevelts, Taft, Truman

FBI Director J. Edger Hoover, Chief Justice Earl Warren

Thomas Jefferson was a Rosicrucian

Signers of the Declaration of Independence - Freemasons

Benjamin Franklin, John Hancock, and at least 6 others

Astronauts - Freemasons

Jim Irwin, Gordon Cooper, Don Eisle, Edgar Mitchell, Virgil Grissom, Walter Schirra, Paul Wertz, Edwin Aldrin, Thomas Stafford, Fred Haise

Historical Masons

Gilbert Lafayette, Paul Revere, Edmund Burke, Albert Mackey, John Sousa, Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain), Meriweather Lewis, William Clark, Richard Byrd, Charles Lindbergh

Simon Bolivar, Garibaldi

Joseph Smith - founder of the occult LDS ([Mormon](#)) religious system

Prominent Masons in Public Life - Freemasons

Clyde Beatty, Ty Cobb, Eddie Rickenbacker, Harry Blackstone, Darryl Zanuck, Henry Ford, Jack Dempsey, Tom Mix, Eddy Arnold, Will Rogers, Buffalo Bill Cody, Conan Doyle, Robert Livingston, Kit Carson, Arnold Palmer, Barry Goldwater, David Sarnoff, J.C. Penney, Cy Young, John Wayne, Emmett Kelly, Gene Autry, Norman Vincent Peale, Red Skelton, Hubert Humphrey, Eddie Cantor, Robert Peary, Irving Berlin, Cecil B. DeMille, W. Clement Stone

Demolays: Walt Disney, Walter Cronkite, Dan Rather, John Wayne, Willard Scott, Bob Mathias, Fran Tarkenton, Paul Harvey, President Bill Clinton, and Senator Bill Bradley.

World War I and II - Freemasons

John J. Pershing, John A. Lejeune, George C. Marshall, Ernest J. King, Douglas MacArthur, Jonathan M. Wainwright, Omar Bradley, James Doolittle

Jim Shaw's Initiation to the 33rd Degree at the Washington D.C. Temple at which the participants drank out of human skulls: Two former U.S. Presidents, a Scandinavian King, an internationally famous Evangelist, two other internationally famous Clergymen, and a very high federal official gave him his certificate.

According to David Yallop's book, In God's Name, many Cardinals and Bishops on the

Vatican Staff are members of a Secret Masonic Order called "P2"

Other Brotherhoods

Rosicrucians, Knights of Malta, Knights of Columbus, Jesuits, Wicca, [Latter Day Saints](#), Skull and Bones, Opus Dei, Mafia, Triads, and many many others

(Most of these are from the 1980's. Some updates added 7/2004, 9/2004, 1/2006, 8/06)

[Wikipedia List of Freemasons](#)

[THE NEW WORLD ORDER - Part I](#)

[A Leader Shows Up On the Scene](#)

[The Symbol of the Skull & Bones](#)

[About "Conspiracies"](#)

Wikipedia article: [The Order of the Skull & Bones](#)

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TRILATERAL COMMISSION AND COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS MEMBERSHIP

(A SAMPLING)

These individuals were members of either the Trilateral Commission or the Council on Foreign Relations, or both, in the 1980's.

International

Japan, North America, Western Europe

The following are examples of just the members from the U.S.A.

Government

George Bush, Jimmy Carter, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Henry Kissinger, George Schultz, William Casey, Alexander Haig, Cy Vance, Casper Weinburger, Gen. David Jones, Frank Carlucci, John Lehman, Jr., Donald Regan, Howard Baker, Lloyd Bentsen, Alan Cranston, John Glenn, Ted Kennedy, George McGovern, Walter Mondale, Daniel Moynihan, Edmund Muskie, Claiborne Pell, John Anderson, Thomas Foley, Harold Brown, Stansfield Turner, Andrew Young

Media

Dan Rather, Harry Reasoner, Bill Moyer, David Brinkley, John Chancellor, Marvin Kalb, Ted Koppel, John Scali, Barbara Walters, Robert McNeil, Jim Lehrer, C. Hunter-Gault, Katharine Graham, Michael Posner, James Reston, William Scranton, A.M. Rosenthal, Walter Lippman, Sol Linowitz, George Will, Meg Greenfield, William F. Buckley

Banking

David Rockefeller, Robert McNamara, Alan Greenspan, Paul Volcker

Corporations

Carla Hills, David Packard, George Weyerhaeuser, Juanita Kreps

Unions

Lane Kirkland, Leonard Woodcock

[THE NEW WORLD ORDER - Part I](#)

[About "Conspiracies"](#)

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The September 11th Turning Point

11/17/01

Every event will be contrived or taken advantage of for the purpose of establishing the new order: a global government, economic, and religious system. World history is unfolding just as the Bible said it would. The whole world is being prepared for the counterfeit Christ. We are transitioning into the global "peace" system, but it is a counterfeit peace: Pax Romana, Pax Americana, Pax Universalis, Novus Ordo Seclorum.

"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." Psalm 2:1-6

The attacks on the World Trade Center towers and the Pentagon on September 11th, 2001, were incomprehensible tragedies for the people who were lost and their families and friends. We are told that the perpetrators of this attack are radical fundamentalist Islamic terrorists. The regime governing America is leading the nations of the world in a war on global terrorists, beginning with the Al Qaeda network and their Taliban hosts.

[Dictatorial Powers](#) - [Everything Has Changed](#) - [A Nation's Right to Defense](#)
[The War for the NWO Against Iraq](#) - [Clinton, Quigley, Machiavelli, and](#)
[Global Change](#)

[The Crusades](#) - [Transitional Enemies](#) -
[Putin and Gorbachev Speak of the New World Order](#)

[Patriotism & Propaganda](#)
[Islam, the Pope, and the World Religion - Our Calling](#)

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Dictatorial Powers

A new Office of Homeland Security and a Homeland Security Council have been established in the wake of the attacks and in the midst of the parallel crisis of anthrax in the postal system. There is now even more discussion of National Identification Numbers. Executive Orders are being signed that relate to trial by secret military tribunals, email monitoring, restricting access to Presidential Library archives, use of the Armed Forces Reserves and other issues affecting freedoms, peace, and security. One mainstream media political commentator, William Safire, is already crying out with alarm that President George W. Bush is, "Seizing Dictatorial Power" in regard to the military tribunals (New York Times, November 15th, 2001).

Everything Has Changed

"Everything has changed" is the often-repeated refrain. The Y2K hype leading up to January 1st, 2000 was a boy-who-cried-wolf smoke screen which I still don't understand. But, September 11th truly has become a turning point for the unfolding of world history.

"Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD." Psalm 31:24

The mass media is powerful in its ability to tell us what to think. A follower of Jesus should always step back and examine the reported events and the published analyses and interpretations of those events in order to consider other possibilities and in order to understand events on several levels. Recall how the Nazis burned the German Reichstag (Parliament) building on February 27th, 1933 and blamed it on the Communists (as reported in William Shirer's The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich). Paul Von Hindenberg, the German President who had named Adolf Hitler Chancellor on January 30th, 1933, then signed into law an emergency decree that gave the government dictatorial powers.

It is not necessary to speculate as to what degree the September 11th events may or may not have been contrived. Our calling is not to devote ourselves to “conspiracy theories” but neither should we be “lemmings” following the masses to destruction. We ought to be skeptical of the “party lines” the masses are being fed. If we are truly Acts 17:11 Bereans, we ought to trust our Lord to see everything in the light of God’s Word. We ought to understand the true nature of the world system as the Bible reveals.

“Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.” Isaiah 8:12-13

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A Nation's Right to Defense

Thousands of people were murdered on September 11th, 2001. Governments of nations have the Biblical authority to use force to restrain evil (Romans 13:1-4). Nations have a right to defend themselves. On the surface, it is appropriate for the United States to use its internal “homeland” police forces and the military to take action against those who may have attacked its people. If this ongoing war is the “new normalcy”, the military draft may eventually be reinstated. Young people who are followers of Jesus may be called upon to make some hard decisions. There is a Biblical case for those who would submit to the draft and serve in the military. There is a Biblical case for those who would respectfully disobey an order to serve in the military, in which case they would be called to accept the consequences. It is a disputable matter that each Christian ought to be convinced about. We ought to encourage one another and pray for one another regardless of the decision each person makes on the issue of taking part in this war.

Perhaps there is a follower of Jesus who lives in Afghanistan, an Afghan native, who has had to make a similar decision. He has had to decide whether to obey his government’s call to arms or accept the consequences. It is hard to imagine a follower of Jesus living under the Taliban, but I don’t doubt there are some. What if such an Afghan Christian found himself having to bear arms against the U.S. Special Forces invaders? And what if one of those Special Forces was a follower of Jesus from America? Similar to how C. S. Lewis describes (who I do not generally endorse), perhaps the Christians on both sides shoot one another dead and immediately embrace in heaven. Who does an American Christian have more in common with: an American pagan or Afghan Christian?

The War for the NWO Against Iraq

This current war by the world community is another phase built on previous steps such as George Bush Sr.'s war against Iraq for a New World Order. Then President Bush announced the war on January 16th, 1991, and included the following statements:

"This is an historic moment. We have in this past year made great progress in ending the long era of conflict and cold war. We have before us the opportunity to forge for ourselves and for future generations a new world order, a world where the rule of law, not the law of the jungle, governs the conduct of nations.

"When we are successful, and we will be, we have a real chance at this new world order, an order in which a credible United Nations can use its peace-keeping role to fulfill the promise and vision of the U.N.'s founders.

"We have no argument with the people of Iraq. Indeed, for the innocents caught in this conflict, I pray for their safety.

"Our goal is not the conquest of Iraq. It is the liberation of Kuwait. It is my hope that somehow the Iraqi people can, even now, convince their dictator that he must lay down his arms, leave Kuwait, and let Iraq itself rejoin the family of peace-loving nations."

The following is from **President Bush's** January 29th, 1991 State of the Union Address:

"Halfway around the world, we are engaged in a great struggle in the skies and on the seas and sands. We know why we're there. We are Americans - part of something larger than ourselves.

"For two centuries we've done the hard work of freedom. And tonight we lead the world in facing down a threat to decency and humanity.

"What is at stake is more than one small country, it is a big idea - a new world order, where diverse nations are drawn together in common cause to achieve the universal aspirations of mankind: peace and security, freedom, and the rule of law. Such is a world

worthy of our struggle, and worthy of our children's future.

"The community of nations has resolutely gathered to condemn and repel lawless aggression. Saddam Hussein's unprovoked invasion - his ruthless, systematic rape of a peaceful neighbor - violated everything the community of nations holds dear. The world has said this aggression would not stand, and it will not stand.

"Together, we have resisted the trap of appeasement, cynicism and isolation that gives temptation to tyrants. The world has answered Saddam's invasion with 12 [United Nations](#) resolutions, starting with a demand for Iraq's immediate and unconditional withdrawal, and backed up by forces from 28 countries of six continents. With few exceptions, the world now stands as one.

"The end of the cold war has been a victory for all humanity. A year and a half ago, in Germany, I said our goal was a Europe whole and free. Tonight, Germany is united. Europe has become whole and free, and America's leadership was instrumental in making it possible."

The night that the "New World Order" coalition began its saturation bombing of Iraq, Billy Graham spent the night with George Bush at the White House. "In a speech January 16, 1991, Billy Graham declared: 'There come times when we have to fight for peace.' He went on to say that out of the present war in the Gulf may 'come a new peace and, as suggested by the President, a new world order.'" (March 1991 CIB Bulletin.) During a March 12th, 1991 CBS broadcast of Billy Graham's Long Island, New York crusade, Graham said in reference to the war, "As our President, President Bush, has said, it is not the people of Iraq we are at war with. It is some of the people in that regime. Pray for peace in the middle east, a just peace."

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In a speech to the United Nations on September 23rd, 1991, President Bush promotes the vision of Pax Universalis:

"Finally, you may wonder about America's role in the new world that I have described. Let me assure you, the United States has no intention of striving for a Pax Americana. However, we will remain engaged. We will not retreat and pull back into isolationism. We will offer friendship and leadership. And in short, we seek a Pax Universalis built upon shared responsibilities and

aspirations.

"To all assembled, we have an opportunity to spare our sons and daughters the sins and errors of the past. We can build a future more satisfying than any our world has ever known. The future lies undefined before us, full of promise, littered with peril. We can choose the kind of world we want: one blistered by the fires of war and subjected to the whims of coercion and chance, or one made more peaceful by reflection and choice. Take this challenge seriously. Inspire future generations to praise and venerate you, to say, 'On the ruins of conflict, these brave men and women built an era of peace and understanding. They inaugurated a new world order, an order worth preserving for the ages.'"

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Clinton, Quigley, Machiavelli, and Global Change

The following are selected quotes from a speech given by President Bill Clinton on November 10, 1994, The 75th anniversary of the Edmund J. Walsh School of Foreign Policy, at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

"In the fall of 1964, with about 200 other freshmen in the School of Foreign Service, I was enrolled in Carroll Quigley's [author of Tragedy and Hope] Western Civilization course. All of us -- that was 30 years ago; it's kind of spooky now to think about it. (Laughter.) All of us who were there then -- and there were a bunch of us here that were there then -- we can remember things from those lectures. At the end of the series he did a lecture on Plato, and he always had this appropriately beat-up copy of *The Republic*, which he ripped into at the end of the lecture and threw across the room and said, 'Plato was a fascist.' (Laughter.)

"Finally, I urged that we should see ourselves not as isolated individuals, but as members of interdependent communities, locally, nationally, and, of course, globally -- communities in which we have to work together if we're going to make the most of our opportunities and deal with our problems.

"After I was elected president, I was well aware going into the office that it would be very difficult to translate these ideas into specific policies, then to get them enacted into law, and to keep the country with me during a process which would take time and patience, which

would inevitably be contentious and which would require a delicate balance between a determination to stand on principle and a willingness to have principled compromise.

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"The pressures of the global economy are relentless and dynamic. And government can help to deal with them, but it cannot reverse them. The fact that workers must be willing to upgrade their education and their skills throughout a lifetime is absolute. Government can help to create opportunities to do that, but workers must take advantage of them and cannot deny the facts of economic life.

"We also know that in this time, particularly as we are going through a period of change, people feel uncertainty because they don't have a new framework within which to view the world after the Cold War that is neat and understandable and that has a definable enemy. And here at home, people feel genuine insecurities that are personal to them, an uncertainty about their personal future.

"Finally, there is the immutable fact that in every age and time, real change is difficult. Most everybody is for change in general, but then against it in particular. Machiavelli said over 400 years ago, 'It must be considered that there is nothing more difficult to carry out, nor more doubtful of success, nor dangerous to handle than to initiate a new order of things.' He turned out to be pretty smart. (Laughter.)

"All of us who do the people's business must be ready to work, as Professor Quigley said over and over again, to make the future better than the present. That commitment is not only important at home, it is terribly important when it comes to our crucial role in the world.

"Today I want to talk with you about the third of those goals -- our strategy in the global economy -- and three crucial events that are coming up in rapid succession in the next couple of weeks that will help to broaden and bolster our progress.

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"When I came to this hall as a candidate for president in 1991, I said

something that I'm still having trouble getting everybody in the country to focus on -- that we had to tear down the wall in our thinking between domestic and foreign policy, and forge a new economic policy, rooted in our own security interests, that would serve ordinary Americans by launching a new era of global growth. I argued then that all our efforts to lead the world would fail if we weren't strong at home, but that if we withdrew from the emerging global economy, our workers and our families would inevitably be hurt. And from the day I took office, we have acted on those beliefs.

"After the second war, Congress faced a vote on the Marshall Plan. At that time we rose to the challenge and put aside our partisan differences and helped to launch 50 years of peace and prosperity, not only with the Marshall Plan but with other institutions that rebuilt our former enemies and constructed the framework of security which enabled us ultimately to prevail in the Cold War.

"Now, once again we face such a test. The United States has been leading the world in pushing for the adoption of GATT. And now we've got to follow through and lead once again. We should not delay GATT. That will jeopardize our leadership and our prosperity. Negotiations among scores of nations have produced an agreement that will produce the biggest tax cut in history, and in the long run help tie together a global economy and usher in a new era of prosperity. It is the key link to free trade, more open societies and economic growth all around this world.

"Everywhere people aspire to be treated with dignity, to give voice to their opinion, to have a say in choosing their leaders. At a time when we are strong enough to inspire people around the world, we have to keep pressing on for freedom. In Asia and elsewhere, we have good reason for hope. We have good reason for progress because free markets and democracy are on the move. The new global community is taking place all around the world, enshrouding the values of tolerance and liberty and civil society. I guess I really do believe that history is on our side, and we have to keep trying to push it along."

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The Crusades

After the September 11th attacks, President George W. Bush called the war against terrorism a “Crusade” which shocked many because of the historic connotations for Muslims. On September 17, 2001, the New York Times reported:

“This is a new kind of evil,’ Mr. Bush said at the White House after a weekend war council with senior aides at Camp David, ‘and we understand, and the American people are beginning to understand, this crusade, this war on terrorism, is going to take a while, and the American people must be patient.’

‘We will rid the world of the evil-doers,’ Mr. Bush said, adding a moment later, ‘They have roused a mighty giant, and make no mistake about it, we're determined.’“

And yet the comparisons to the Crusades of the Middle Ages are obvious. Those were wars between Christendom, the Roman Catholic Empire, and Islam. The word “crusade” comes from the Latin “crux” which means “cross”. Indeed, the Knights Templar, the “Champions of Christendom”, according to Stephen Howarth’s book (The Knights Templar) about the Order, wore a red cross on their tunics during the crusades.

Of course, the Crusades were not a war between true followers of Jesus and Islam. It was a war between Islam and the worldly economic, political, and religious system of western Europe, the Empire of the Popes, the remnants of the Roman Empire. The wars were not just about “retaking the Holy Land” but were about an expanding European economy and a battle of worldly empires.

A “hidden” aspect of the crusades was the nature of the Knights Templar. On the surface, they represented the Pope and the European Kings. And yet they were eventually betrayed and destroyed by the Pope and the Kings. The Templars had become rich bankers and so politically powerful, they were called king makers. Their last Grand Master, Jacques De Molay, was executed by fire by the King of France with the support of the Pope. The Templars’ betrayers had accused them of being a heretical occult brotherhood.

Modern occult brotherhoods such as the Freemasons and the Rosicrucians (of the rose cross) trace their heritage, in part, to the Knights Templar.

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Transitional Enemies

The crusades demonstrated how important war could be to stimulating the economy of Europe and how unifying an influence a common enemy could be. The “organizing principle” for tribes and nations and empires has always been war, from a human point of view. An enemy is always a requirement.

For 50 years in the last part of the 20th century, the capitalist west was organized against the “godless” Communism of the East. With the end of the Cold War and the growing vision for a Global Peace System, various transitional enemies have served the unifying and organizing functions: Left-wing terrorists, Ayatollah Khomeini and Iran, various drug lords, Manuel Noriega of Panama, Moammar Gadhafi of Libya, Daniel Ortega and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, Abu Nidal and his terrorist network, Saddam Hussein and Iraq, Neo-nazis, Koresh, McVeigh, Right-wing Militias, the ELF, and now Osama Bin Laden, Al Qaeda, the Taliban and other “bad” Muslim nations and groups. Many transitional enemies were actually “made” by the U.S and were allies of the U.S. before they became enemies.

In the New Order, there is no longer to be huge monolithic sections of the globe facing off against each other as enemies. China was just admitted to the World Trade Organization November 10th and as long as that huge “homeland” plays along the New Order should go mostly as planned. The earth is now to be one global community that must enforce a Pax Universalis against “internal” enemies within the various “homelands”.

To go along with this “New Paradigm” is a new vocabulary. Several years ago when Ted Turner still ruled CNN he outlawed the word “foreign” for his commentators. Also, in the financial community, Gross National Product became Gross Domestic Product. And now National Defense and local police forces are being transitioned to a “Homeland” security system which will continue to violate the Posse Comitatus Act in order to increasingly use the uniformed military for civilian law enforcement.

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Putin and Gorbachev Speak of the New World Order

To show just how much the former enemy has been synthesized out of conflict into the new system, the following is from the November 16th, 2001 issue of Pravda Online as Russia's President Putin responds to "Washington's unilateral bid to downsize its nuclear arsenal":

"President Vladimir Putin of the Russian Federation spoke of a new

concept of politics, based not upon fear but upon the political will of peoples.

"Regarding the new world order, the Russian president stated that 'We do not need to frighten each other any more to reach agreements. It is not piles of scrap that create security. Security is created by the political will of peoples, States and their leaders'. The new world order, based very firmly on the Moscow-London-Washington axis, is cemented on mutual trust, collaboration and friendship, instead of the suspicion, hatred and deceit apparent during the Cold War years."

Putin's Soviet predecessor, Mikhail Gorbachev, said in 1990, "Tolerance is the Alpha and Omega of the New World Order", indicating that the synthesis was already well under way. Gorbachev's buzzword for the people was "Perestroika" - New Thinking or Restructuring.

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Patriotism & Propaganda

As always, the rulers need propaganda, vision, and myth to get the masses to go along peacefully: Manifest Destiny, the White Man's Burden, Remember the Maine, Remember Pearl Harbor. Even the liberal "children of the Sixties" are waving flags and saying, "shoot Bin Laden. Kill him." A new wave of patriotism is everywhere. Many professing Christians are promoting the Red, White, and Blue. I do believe that disciples of Jesus Christ have the freedom to display the flag of whatever nation they live in. My concern, however, is that there is global propaganda building that promotes the idolatry of "civil religion" and "patriotism": first for the nation-states, and then for the global community.

As followers of Jesus in this country, we should support the U.S. Constitution. We ought to support a Christian citizen's freedom to work for America's military strength. We should not advocate undermining this country's war effort or giving aid and comfort to this country's enemies. But, citizens of the United States have a right to dissent. And those U.S. citizens who are also followers of Jesus and therefore Ambassadors for Christ ought to speak the Truth in Love no matter how unpopular that message becomes.

"These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of

the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." John 15:17-19

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Islam, the Pope, and the World Religion

I have often heard Christians, over the years, wonder how Islam could possibly be merged into a World Religion. Now we are witnessing a sorting out of "Bad" Muslims from "Good" Muslims. Those Muslims who, following the heritage of Mohammed, seek to expand empire and achieve objectives through military force are condemned as "terrorists". And those Muslims willing to "fit in" with the New World Order along with other religious systems are said to represent "true Islam".

Malachi Martin (an author I do not endorse) says:

"In reckoning the future of Islam, Pope John Paul [II] takes into account that as a genuinely religious faith, it preserves certain fundamental truths that the Holy Spirit reveals to all people of good will; and that, in God's providence, Islam can be a threshold from which its adherents can be prepared to accept the only historical revelation made by God in this world. There will come a day, John Paul believes, when the heart of Islam – already attuned to the figures of Christ and of Christ's Mother, Mary – will receive the illumination it needs. In the meantime, the Pontiff knows that Islam will stand against him and his Church and his geopolitical vision. Still, the Pope can foresee no possibility that the Angelist mentality, [Martin's term for Islam's globalist vision] ... will serve as the practical stuff from which the world will be able to fashion its future." (Page 285 in The Keys of This Blood: The Struggle for World Dominion Between Pope John Paul II, Mikhail Gorbachev & the Capitalist West published in 1990. The subtitle was later changed to Pope John Paul II versus Russia & the Capitalist West for Control of the New World Order.)

Several Evangelical writers, in recent weeks, have extensively documented that the Koran and historical mainstream Islam stand for violence, force, and killing in the pursuit of their aims; not just "bad" Muslims. Dave Hunt writes in the October 2001 issue of "The Berean Call":

"Who dares to make the obvious connection between this declaration

of war against America, and the declaration of war against the entire world by Muhammad in the seventh century, a part of Islam ever since? Since its inception, jihad has been waged by Islamic warriors to spread that religion of violence and hatred. Islam does not change. Rioting Muslim mobs invariably chant in their 'fanaticism, 'Allah is great! Allah is great!'

“It would be extremely naive to imagine that terrorists who are willing to blow themselves up in Israel or to crash a plane at the loss of their own and many other lives do so for some commendable humanitarian cause. The courage comes solely from a unique doctrine of Islam. Abu-Bakr, the first Caliph to succeed Muhammad (and one of the few to whom Muhammad promised Paradise without martyrdom), declared that even if he had one foot in Paradise he could not trust Allah to let him in. The only sure way in Islam of achieving Paradise is to sacrifice one's life in jihad. Yes, suicide is forbidden as self-murder. But to sacrifice one's life in killing infidels carries the highest reward.”

Al Dager, in the most recent issue of "Media Spotlight", states:

"The Qur'an claims that Jesus and Muhammad are both messengers from Allah. But Muhammad's message is one of hatred against his enemies, while Jesus' message is one of love for His enemies. So regardless of what Muslims say, the very tenets of their religion demand destruction of their enemies. Just because a large number of Muslims do not openly espouse those tenets does not mean that it is a religion of peace."

However, the doctrine of Jihad is not nearly the most dangerous aspect of Islam whether the “good” or “bad” kind. By far the most dangerous deceptions of Islam are of the same nature as those of Roman Catholicism and Mormonism and Freemasonry and the rest of the world's religions: They promote false Christs and a false gospel of salvation by works.

For years Evangelical leaders have been promoting unity with Roman Catholicism. There are two types of propaganda we can expect. First, the unity of Evangelicals and Catholics together can now be promoted by provoking both Evangelicals and Catholics to take a Crusader's stand against the onslaught of Islam. On the other hand, the “Unity of the People of Faith” can be promoted by finding “common ground” among Evangelicals, Catholics, Jews, and “good” Muslims. In the Babel of the New World Order I expect to see both types of

propaganda.

“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12

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Our Calling

Our Lord Jesus wants us to love Muslims, Jewish people, Hindus, Buddhists, Catholics, Freemasons, Pagans, pagans, Apostate Evangelicals and everyone else.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." Ephesians 6:12-13

In the midst of all that is going on, followers of Jesus ought to try to be good citizens without worshipping what our fellow citizens worship. We ought to pray for the leaders of the world while understanding their true nature. Our calling is the same whether society is in the midst of peace and prosperity or cataclysm and disaster. The whole world is being prepared for a counterfeit Christ. We ought not be caught up in the manipulation of the masses, but we ought to stand for our Lord Jesus, desiring to rescue individuals out of the corrupt world system with its false christs and false gospels.

“And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?” Revelation 13:4

“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”

Revelation 13:7-8

“And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” Revelation 13:16-18

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John 16:33

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About "Conspiracies"

"We must be very careful when it comes to speculation about conspiracies, particularly if they lead us away from the Word of God. Consequently, we do not keep much information concerning the various conspiracies such as the Illuminati, Club of Rome, [Trilateral Commission](#), etc. It is instructive to consider the historical example of Nazism. Pre-war Germany had any number of conspiratorial groups, but only one got the [lucky](#) breaks which enabled it and its leader to dominate an entire nation for more than a decade. In the 1920s, who could have singled out Hitler and the Nazis as the ones who would succeed?"

"Peter tells us that

we have been "given all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3-9). We need to "keep reading." In order to access what has already been given to us, we must do as the scripture instructs, "through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue." In other words, if we want to know the will of the Lord, walk in the way the Lord wants us to walk, and do the things that are both pleasing to Him as well as most edifying to us - learn more about the Lord. The scriptures are the door to this knowledge. By continued immersion in His Word, we learn about Him and learn to follow Him (From The Berean Call correspondence file)."

From [TBC Today](#) 12/13/04

I agree with the above TBC Today item, in the sense that we ought to be careful when it comes to, "[speculation about conspiracies](#)". Every person I've seen who is obsessed with conspiracy theories is also into serious doctrinal error and their obsession is actually a

form of [idolatry](#). In fact I see almost no value in such speculation, because there is much available that is published in the open to confirm what the Bible says is the [true nature of the World System](#).

I do not agree with what the above writer says about the Nazi's being "lucky". There is no such thing as "[luck](#)". The unfolding of [world history](#) is neither random nor driven by an impersonal force such as luck.

Similar to TBC, I have very little on file about power groups such as George W. Bush's "Order of the [Skull & Bones](#)". Also, I do not desire to become an expert in [sorcery](#) or witchcraft. I want to know and speak up about just enough to help other Christians recognize when we are being deceived by clever [counterfeits](#). It was Dave Hunt (TBC), in a video series in the 1980s, that first alerted me to the profoundly unbiblical nature of [Freemasonry](#).

Sometimes, I have found that when we expose someone's guru or say what the Bible says about this corrupt world system, there are those who begin to accuse us of "[negativism](#)" or "[conspiracy theories](#)".

If we love people, we will warn people. We should persevere in love and trust our Lord Jesus for patient endurance. And, of course, be willing to be corrected ourselves, from the Bible.

Most definitely, our Lord Jesus has given us, "all things that pertain unto life and godliness". (2 Peter 1:3). The [warnings of scripture](#) are many. Let's encourage one another to apply them as world history unfolds. You cannot obey the word of God in applying the warnings

of the Bible unless you are willing to examine what men have said and done and compare it to what God says. And when men say or do something contrary to scripture we must trust the Lord for wisdom to recognize it, warn about it, and reject it, in obedience to our Lord. This is exactly what much of the New Testament is about. God did not give us the Bible to be read in a vacuum. The word of God is given to be APPLIED; to enable us to be in the world but not of the world. Jim B. 12/18/04

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OCCULT TERMS

SORCERY : A FUNCTIONAL DEFINITION

Sorcery is the usurping for ourselves god-like powers to manipulate reality. We attempt to be Sovereign and Lord. We attempt to get what we want through :

- (1) Incantations (confessing it)
 - (2) Mind Power techniques (thinking it)
 - (3) Voodoo (doing a technique)
-

Sorcery (dictionary definition) - The use of supernatural power over people and their affairs.

Magick - The use of charms, spells, rituals to cause or control events or govern natural or supernatural forces.

Witchcraft - The use of supernatural power by compact with the devil or evil spirits. (A modern witch would rather define witchcraft like "Magick", above, is defined.)

Divination - To foretell the future or to know the unknown by occult means.

Alchemy - The use of magical techniques for the transmutation of baser metals into gold and the finding of the elixir of youth.

Occult - Things that are hidden, concealed, secret, esoteric, or magick; or things having to do with alchemy, astrology, tarot card reading, palm reading, tea leaf reading, etc. etc. etc.

Esoteric - That which is intended only for the chosen few, or only understood by the chosen few, or the initiates, or the inner circle.

(Taken from Webster's New World Dictionary, 1976)

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Missionaries

It seems to me that we are called in the New Testament to either be missionaries or help missionaries. What a privilege!

I recommend that we continue in prayer for our going out to preach the Gospel and make disciples and plant assemblies. And in the mean time, we can find brethren who are going forth, who still preach the real Jesus and the real Gospel and we can help them.

In 3 John, notice how the brethren were commended for assisting the itinerant evangelists.

Beloved,
thou doest
faithfully
whatsoever
thou doest
to the
brethren,

[Disciples of Jesus Christ](#)

[The Gospel for West Africa](#)

[Breakfast Pig Christians](#)

[Nathan & Julissa in Mexico](#)

[Christian Missions in Many Lands](#)

[Village of Hope](#)

[Meysen Academy](#)

and to
strangers;

Which have
borne
witness of
thy charity
before the
church:
whom if
thou bring
forward on
their journey
after a godly
sort, thou
shalt do well:

Because
that for his
name's
sake they
went forth,
taking
nothing of
the Gentiles.

We
therefore
ought to
receive
such, that
we might be
fellowhelpers
to the truth.

3 John 5-8

My Wife's Head Covering

By Michael B. White
Posted 8/9/06

Jim,

It was good to see you also. Interesting that you noticed my wife's head covering. We do believe in a literal interpretation of that passage [[1 Corinthians 11](#)] as I feel that is the only way that the passage makes sense.

Some folks like to compare it to foot washing [John 13:5-7] but the distinct difference I see is that Head coverings are commanded "I have no other command for the Churches of God anywhere" and Foot washings were an object lesson: "You do not understand what I do now but you will understand later." Also since Paul [in 1 Corinthians 11] argues from the beginning of creation, that should lay aside any cultural justification of the passage (verse 14), having to do with the condition of Corinth.

The men are mentioned first [11:4 -

Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.] There would have been many men coming out of Judaism needing to remove their covering that had been commanded in the Old Testament (yarmulke or kippah). Here the men's head covering is commanded to be removed and so this would have been very difficult to do for the believers, much more so than the women taking a covering. And yet, we never hear of people in our culture complaining about that one. Another nail in the coffin for the cultural justification that I am sure you have heard before is that Paul wasn't commanding these women to wear a head covering all the time, but only in the context of "when you come together in one place (verse 18 KJV)" or in other words in the church. So when these same women went to the grocery store there was no covering command. This is specifically a sign for believers to practice because of the angels watching down in an assembly as I read it. So if it was due to the culture I think Paul would have commanded the head covering all the time not just at church and not just when one was praying or prophesying.

I also take it that it is a sign to the angels not to the outward world. The text clearly says "because of the Angels" not "Because of the unbelievers walking by" (besides they have tongues for that (1Cor 14 "its a sign for believers not unbelievers") Also the comment "because of the angels" I take in conjunction with Ephesians 3:10 that says "His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms..."

Basically, a culturalizing of the passage or some other explanation for the passage causes the scissors effect. What I mean by that is that if this is a cultural practice only for ancient Corinth then why do I have it in my Bible and I may as well cut it out with a pair of Scissors. :-). Or is it relevant to me today? I know no one would consider that... But with that being said I think that everyone has to do this or not do it based on their own conviction. If the point of a head covering is to display the subjection to our head (Jesus Christ) by uncovering our (Men's) heads and the Women's responsibility is to show it by covering her head then we should make the issue

of the heart being subject of more importance than the physical sign of it without neglecting the latter. This can only be done voluntarily by the individual practicing it. And if we, (men) who bear Christ's blood as our covering, because of the "new and living way" Jesus made for us into heaven, no longer need to cover our sinful heads when approaching the presence of God, as the Old Testament priest once did when entering God's presence in the temple, really get a grasp of it we should be rejoicing to do it. It's a sign of freedom to approach God through his shed blood. We uncover our head to show the blood covering that freed us from the bondage of sin to the "authorities in heavenly realms" recognizing our head Jesus Christ. The Women cover their heads when entering, picturing the submissive role that Jesus, Our Bridegroom, took for us with respect to God. They symbolize it with covered head towards their husbands "When they come together" which is a symbol for the Angels. The Angels look down and see a perfect sign or picture in the church showing what Christ did for his bride.

So what about the long hair you may ask... Isn't that a covering? If it wasn't for the word's "If" in

that passage [11:14, 15] I might look into it more. But since the Spirit uses the long hair in that passage as an example arguing from creation we know it's not a literal substitute for the head covering. If it was then we need to interpret the rest of the passage consistently along with that and allow men to cover their heads in a fellowship as long as they have short hair. :-)

I hope this helps as far as showing you where I stand. My biggest beef with this is not that people practice or don't practice it. It's that a good passage of scripture gets thrown away every time I have heard it preached on because people are afraid to take this literal due to the culture we live in. I think we just need to believe what the Bible clearly says and not throw this passage away. If I ever preached on this I would preach it literally but allow plenty of grace for each person to make a personal decision of obedience to what the Holy Spirit convicts for them on this issue. Then we would have the best of both worlds: personal responsibility mixed with truthful handling of the passage. :-) As in everything ...

Thank You,
Michael

Because of the Angels - 1

Corinthians 11

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THE FALSE GOSPEL OF

SELF-ESTEEM

COUNSELING

"Christian counseling" has become a very prominent feature of the Church of Jesus Christ. The fact that the general area of "counseling" is rife with the philosophies of man results in great danger that the "wisdom" of this world will infiltrate the message of the Church at the expense of the wisdom of God. A growing deception found in Christian counseling (and throughout society) is the false gospel of "self-esteem" which is incompatible with the Biblical Gospel of the Cross of Jesus Christ.

Increasingly, the counseling mentality is that "low self-esteem" is the root cause of a teenager deciding to engage in pre-marital sex or of a house-wife who is always depressed. In fact, prominent Christian personalities can be heard to claim that society's greatest problem is that of "low self-esteem", and that everything from abortion, school drop-outs, teen pregnancy to rape, robbery, and poverty can be solved if only we help people to esteem themselves more highly; to love themselves more and more; and to realize their great self-worth!

Those of us who call ourselves Bible-believing Christians must ask some crucial questions. Is mankind's problem a lack of self-esteem or is it pride, self-centeredness and rebellion? Is the answer to our problem "building self-esteem" or is it brokenness and repentance at the foot of the Cross? And how about my "self-worth"? Doesn't God's Word say that in-and-of my "self" I am worthy of eternal hell?

THE REBELLION OF SELF

The origin of the theology of "selfism" can be found in Isaiah 14:12-14 where Satan's long list of self-exalting "I will's" are recorded. Satan then

took his message of "Self" to the Garden of Eden in Genesis three where, in the form of the serpent, he told Eve that she could be her own god and decide for herself what is right and wrong. Revelation 12:9 says, "...that serpent, Satan, who deceives the whole world."

THE CROSS

Far from exalting or esteeming "self", Jesus says in Matthew 16 that we should deny ourselves, pick up our cross and follow him. Jesus says in Matthew 22:34-40 that the two (not three, but two!) greatest commandments are to love God and to love your neighbor as yourself. Jesus wasn't, also, giving us a third commandment to love ourselves. He was acknowledging that even in our sin nature we love ourselves already: we feed ourselves, we clothe ourselves. He is saying, "Now, go and serve other people like you are already serving yourself."

The whole Christian life is built upon dying to self and serving God and serving people. We are to get our eyes off of self and fix our "eyes on Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2). People-in-need must realize that they are helpless and hopeless, but, "While we were yet sinners Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8) Through repentance we find forgiveness and then a life of surrender; of trusting and obeying. What we must respond to is, not any sense of our own worth, but the fact that Jesus loves us and has a purpose for our lives, and he wants to use us!

THE WORLD RELIGION

The Bible says that there is coming a one-world religion whose inspiration is the author of "Selfism". May we never take part in synthesizing the Evangelical Church into that one-world religion. First Timothy 4:1 tells us that, "In latter times some will abandon the faith and follow after seducing spirits and the doctrines of devils." And 2 Timothy 3 warns, "But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves..." and chapter three goes on to list the inevitable results of a self-absorbed society.

As we counsel people in the midst of crisis or tragedy or trouble of any kind, I pray that we will give them Jesus, and him crucified; having confidence that in his word, God, "...has given us everything we need for life and godliness." (2 Peter 1:3)

SOLA SCRIPTURA!

Recommended reading: The Biblical View of Self Esteem, Self Love, Self Image, by Jay Adams

["Building Your Mate's Self-Esteem"](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

[Questions for Christians about Psychology](#)

[Humanistic & Transpersonal Psychology 1 of 2](#)

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Unbiblical Phrases

That Christians Use

[I'm proud of you](#)

[Self-Worth](#)

[Self-Confidence](#)

[Find your self-worth, self-esteem in Christ instead of the world](#)

[My Value to God](#)

[Good Luck](#)

[Luckyly](#)

[You're so lucky](#)

"I'm proud of you"

Pride is condemned in the Bible. There is no where in the Bible where pride is encouraged. I recommend telling your child, for example, "I am pleased with you and I am grateful to the Lord for you."

"Find your self-worth, self-esteem in Christ instead of the world"

There is no Biblical concept of "self-worth" or "self-esteem" or "positive self-image". Often, Christians who know that psychology's self-esteem is corrupt will try to give a Biblical answer and say, "you must find your self-esteem and self-worth in Christ".

They don't realize that they are STILL giving a worldly, unbiblical answer. The only reason Christians are conditioned to speak like that at all, in these days, is because of the influence of humanistic psychology.

Our calling and our hope in the Bible is not based on any form of positive self-image or esteeming our selves. We are not called to help people gain "self confidence". It is all about Jesus. Realizing that I am hopelessly lost without Jesus and that it is His righteousness that is my hope. Jesus loves me. My future depends on trusting and obeying Him. Fixing my eyes on Him, not finding worth or confidence in my self.

"My Value to God"

The world is obsessed with Self and focuses on "My Value", my self-worth, my self-esteem. It was Humanistic Psychology that popularized a concept that originated with the Serpent's lie in the Garden of Eden. These same deceptions from the world have now pervaded Evangelicalism.

And yet the respected Bible teachers of the previous centuries never emphasized our "value to God". More importantly the Bible does not emphasize our value to God. Rather God's word teaches that we were hopelessly lost and separated from Him because of our self-centeredness and rebellion. Not only did God not need us, we were "worms" in a sense, we were worthy of eternal hell.

And yet God loves us and He became one of us and died in our place. We did not deserve it, our value did not require it. But as the song goes, "When I was worthless, Lord, you bought me"! Glory to God! He alone is worthy!

Some will point to Matthew 6:26 or Luke 12:24:

"Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?" Luke 12:24

Newer translations use the term "value". But the emphasis here is not how much "better" than the birds or the flowers we are; it is not emphasizing our "value". These verses are about God's love for us! That our Lord Jesus can be trusted! It's teaching us about the Lord not our "Self"!

[Biblical Encouragement](#)

[The False Gospel of Self Esteem - "Building Your Mate's Self-Esteem" - "Good Luck!" ???](#)

[Humanistic & Transpersonal Psychology 1 of 2](#)

["NEEDS"](#)

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A BEREAN'S REVIEW (1992)

BUILDING YOUR MATE'S SELF-ESTEEM

by Dennis and Barbara **Rainey** - 1986, Here's Life Publishers, **Campus Crusade for Christ**

Forward by Howard and Jeanne **Hendricks**

SELF-ESTEEM IS UNBIBLICAL

The entire thesis of Building Your Mate's Self-Esteem is unbiblical and corrupt. Self-esteem is based on Self-Image Psychology which derives from that branch of modern psychology called Humanistic Psychology. Self-Esteem, Self-Image, Self-Worth, Self-Love are not from God's Word, the Bible, and are not found in the writings of historical Christianity. (See [The False Gospel of Self Esteem](#))

HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY

These concepts and their associated terms are not found within the Evangelical Church until the 20th century with the rise of Humanistic Psychology and its concepts of Self-Actualization and the emphasis on "needs". Humanistic Psychology has played a major role in obsessing this generation with "Self" and was developed by such men as Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. (See [Humanistic & Transpersonal Psychology 1 of 2](#))

LOVERS OF THEMSELVES

God's Word, in fact, warns of these very trends: "But mark this: There will

be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves..." (2Timothy 3) and this chapter goes on to list the inevitable results of a self-absorbed society.

A COUNTERFEIT

Superficially, the Rainey's book appears to be Christian. It looks close, but it is a counterfeit. It is sprinkled with Bible verses and even contains portions that express the Biblical gospel. It is, however, a dangerous syncretism between Biblical truth and the Wisdom of Man.

WORLDLY SOURCES

The worldly sources of their philosophy of Self is represented by various references to such advocates of unbiblical views as Dorothy Corkille Briggs, Dr. Joyce Brothers, William James, Mark Twain, Denis Waitley, Tom Peters, and Dr. W. Hugh Missildine.

We are not questioning Dennis and Barbara Rainey's sincerity in desiring to follow Jesus. We are simply evaluating their message, as Bereans (Acts 17), and declaring the message to be false by the authority of God's Word, the Bible.

BACKGROUND

Dennis Rainey is a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary and serves as the national director of the Family Ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ.

From the description on the back cover the Raineys claim:

1. "You can strengthen your mate's self-esteem."
2. "Self-esteem is either the crippler or the completer of the marriage relationship."
3. "From their experience in counseling hundreds of couples, Dennis and Barbara Rainey have found that one of the most vital and missing ingredients in marriage today is the diligent effort on the part of each spouse to build the other's self-esteem."
4. "Creative ideas for immediate results!"

INCANTATIONS

Affirmations are central to "building your mate's self-esteem" according to the Rainey's. In chapter 7, "Words are Seeds", they claim that as God created with words, "...we share in God's creative handiwork when we use words that give life to our mate's self-esteem." (p. 105)

"Your mate will become the person you tell him he is." (p. 111)

The idea that there is creative power in our words is straight from the heresies of the Positive Confession movement which in turn is derived from the New Thought movement at the end of the 19th century. The New Thought movement simply advocated the mystical powers of incantations and mind power found in ancient paganism. The Positive Confession preachers such as Kenneth Hagin and Kenneth Copeland often refer to the same claim that since God created when he spoke words, that we, too, can create when we speak words.

However, when God created the universe by his word, the significance was not that God **SAID** it, but that **GOD** said it. God is the Creator. We are to simply be instruments in his hands. We are not the Holy Spirit in our spouse's life. For our spouse to bear the fruit of the Spirit they must abide in the Vine (Gal. 5:22,23 and John 15:5). We can only be an encouragement for them to do so.

The Praise of Men

On page 107, they say that one must praise their spouse. " Everyone loves to be praised; your mate is no exception. William James wrote, 'The deepest principle in human nature is the craving to be appreciated.' Mark Twain said, 'I can live for two months on a good compliment.'" It is true, as the Rainey's say, that "Everyone loves to be praised."

It is true, as William James is quoted, that "craving to be appreciated" is a "principle in human nature". But this is sin to be repented of, not a "need" to be accommodated! The Pharisee's loved the praise of men! (Matthew 6:1-4)

"Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets." (Luke 6:26)

"NEEDS"

It is a tenant of Humanistic Psychology that humans have "needs" for "esteem" or "appreciation" or "belonging". Abraham Maslow said that individuals develop according to a hierarchy of needs: First the physiological needs must be satisfied (nourishment, safety, and comfort), then the psychological needs (affection and esteem), and then the need for Self-Actualization. A Self-Actualized person, according to Maslow, will exhibit spontaneity, independence, social involvement, self-acceptance, sense of humor, and a lack of hostility. He will have had what Maslow called "peak experiences", including "mystical" experiences that he calls "transient moments of Self-Actualization".

But what Humanistic Psychology calls "needs", the Bible often calls sinful desires (e.g., 1 Peter 1:14; 2:11; 4:2,3; 2 Peter 2:10, 18; 3:3). Self-centeredness and the desire to be praised is sin.

"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content that." (1 Timothy 6:6-8)

SEEK FIRST...

Maslow's idea of human development through the Hierarchy of Needs is the exact opposite of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Jesus acknowledges that it is the pagans who chase after their "felt needs": "what to eat" and "what to wear". But Jesus says, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added to you." (Matthew 6:33).

WILLIAM JAMES AND MARK TWAIN

The fact that the Rainey's quote William James and Mark Twain is very telling as to the worldly sources of such philosophies. William James (1842-1910) was an American philosopher who, with John Dewey, were leaders of a philosophical movement called Pragmatism. James wrote Principles of Psychology in 1890. His philosophy was, basically, that everyone must decide for himself the answers to the fundamental questions of life.

Mark Twain was a Freemason who wrote blasphemous attacks on Christianity.

SELF-IMAGE

Chapter 1 is called, "Giving Your Mate a New Image". In the section, "Give

Your Mate the Gift of Value", the Rainey's quote Denis Waitley (a human potential advocate) from his book Seeds of Greatness.

"Denis Waitley underscores the poisonous effect of fear and the releasing power of love. He writes in his first chapter, 'The Seed of Self-esteem': 'So then, the gift of value is the absence of fear..... people who live with optimism will grow up thinking they were born to fly!.... If our people are reminded of all the bad we see in them, they'll become exactly what we hoped they'd never be!' That's it - love casting out fear! Perfect love (God's love) is more powerful than the fear of rejection."

On page 37, the Rainey's answer the question, "What is a Self-Image?"

In chapter 2, "Slaying the Phantom", is the section, "The Centrality of Self-Image". On page 38: "Your mate's self-image is central to all he is and does daily. In Seeds of Greatness, Denis Waitley calls our self-esteem 'the beginning and first seed to all success. It is the basis for our ability to love others and to try to accomplish a worthy goal, without fear.'" [But is that what the Bible says?]

Building Your Mate's Self-Esteem emphasizes the "centrality" of self-image in determining who we are and what we do. In Humanistic Psychology, the power of the self-image is based on the mechanism of the "subconscious". The subconscious is said to be an impersonal, amoral part of our personality that controls everything we are and will become. This subconscious is said to have been programmed with negative programming since our childhood and this is what limits us from achieving our unlimited potential. The purpose in life is to reprogram the subconscious with positive programming. This, of course, denies the role of our conscious selves where our moral will is operative and certainly ignores the sovereignty of God.

BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT

Humanistic Psychology promotes "affirmation", "self-talk", and "building self-esteem". The Bible tells us to encourage one another. There is a great deal of difference between Biblical encouragement and reprogramming the subconscious, or stroking each other, or affirming each other, or pumping up each other's self-image.

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing" (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

"Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage - with great patience and careful instruction." (2Tim 4:2)

"But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness." (Hebrews 3:13)

Rather than trying to give each other a new "self-image", we are to encourage each other to trust and obey Jesus; to abide in the Vine; to love the Truth; to put our hope in Him.

We are to be motivated by Jesus' love for us and by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, not by the stroking of other human beings.

"We love because He first loved us" (1John 4:19)

RIGHT BRAIN - LEFT BRAIN

Barbara Rainey promotes the New Age popular mythology of Right Brain - Left Brain in chapter 16, "Securing Your Man" on pages 224-225. (See [The Popular Mythology of "Right Brain-Left Brain"](#))

In order to support these views that are both unbiblical and unscientific, she refers to a pop-psychologist who makes a living on game shows and talk shows.

"My understanding quotient took a giant stride forward when I read Dr. Joyce Brother's book, What Every Woman Should Know About Men ... Simply put, a man's brain operates specifically, while a woman's operates wholistically. The right hemisphere of a man's brain can and does operate without the left being involved, and vice versa. A woman's brain uses and integrates both hemispheres simultaneously. "

A discussion with any neurological scientist will reveal that these notions have no basis in fact. More importantly, these concepts are not derived from scripture. They are popular New Age myths that attempt to turn the human brain into a Yin-Yang symbol.

NEW AGE AUTHOR

How did the Rainey's come to believe the unbiblical philosophies and techniques of Self-Image Psychology? One indication is their reference to a

book by author [Dorothy Corkille Briggs](#), [Your Child's Self-Esteem](#), published in 1975. The Rainey's call this book a "classic work" on page 36 of their book. Brigg's book is quoted: "Children rarely question [their parents'] expectations; instead, they question their personal adequacy." This quote is in a section of the Rainey's book describing the consequences of a faulty self-image.

It is important to realize what Dorothy Corkille Briggs stands for since she has influenced the Rainey's by her "classic work". She does not profess to be a follower of Jesus Christ. Rather, Briggs is clearly a writer of "classic" New Age philosophies. Her other book (not referenced by the Rainey's) [Celebrate Your Self - Enhancing Your Own Self-Esteem](#) (1977) is filled with such neo-pagan themes as: "Positive Mental Action. Bathe in the Truth of You. Your Knower lives within. Your Knower is One with Universal Wisdom. "I am" affirmations. Positive Imaging. The Real Self. Inner Child. Within the assemblage making up you is a non-physical Beingness, a Conscious Awareness, an Inner Power centered in Love. Life Force. I am related to all Creation. I am part of the great Whole. Visualize the Inner Perfection created in You. I am one with all Life."

HUMAN IMAGINATION AND DENIS WAITLEY

Recall that the Rainey's promote their concept of the "centrality of self-image" by referring to the human potential author, Denis Waitley and his book, [Seeds of Greatness](#). To further expose the unbiblical nature of Waitley's views the following are quotes from two of his books.

In [The Winner's Edge](#), Waitley says, "Perhaps the most important key to the permanent enhancement of self-esteem is the practice of positive self-talk. Every waking moment we must feed our self-images positive thoughts about ourselves and our performances, so relentlessly and vivid that our self-images are in time molded and modified to conform to new, higher standards."

In [Seeds of Greatness](#), he advocates improving "health, self-esteem, and creative growth" by recording and playing back "positive self-talk".

In the same book he says that the "right-brain" can record "images and feelings about yourself". "Who you see in your imagination will always rule your world."

"As you see yourself in the heart of your thought, in your mind's eye, so you

do become." (The Winner's Edge)

To rely on the human imagination is dangerous and leads to death. The human imagination is evil. Our only hope is to abide in the Vine, Christ Jesus and let him bear fruit in our lives by the Holy Spirit.

TOM PETERS

On page 203, the Rainey's name drop Tom Peters and "his best selling book", In Search of Excellence and his audio tape series, "The Excellence Challenge", in order to illustrate a point about men's attitudes.

Tom Peters is the guru of worldly wisdom who promotes a worldly view of "success" and corporate "restructuring". The philosophies of men like Tom Peters ought to be exposed, not name-dropped.

"YOUR INNER CHILD"?

Dr. W. Hugh Missildine's book, Your Inner Child of the Past, is quoted on page 48 of Building Your Mate's Self-Esteem.

"Modern psychology documents that most first-borns are perfectionists. So also are many second- and third-born children because, as Dr. W. Hugh Missildine says in Your Inner Child of the Past, perfectionism 'literally runs in families.'"

The "inner child of the past" concept is another unbiblical concept from the occult psychologist, Carl Jung, and is popular with the New Age movement.

TECHNIQUES AND THE WISDOM OF MAN

Dennis and Barbara Rainey's book, Building Your Mate's Self-Esteem, represents the wisdom of man disguised as "Christian" by a sprinkling of superficially applied verses from the Bible. They rely on the subjective experiences of humans and on the pseudo-scientific observations and conclusions of psychology instead of on the objective authority of God's Word, the Bible. (See [Questions for Christians about Psychology](#))

They turn a relationship with Jesus into a set of techniques for success in marriage.

COUNTERFEIT "FRUIT"

The Rainey's attempt to produce the "fruit of the Spirit" in their spouse's life by the techniques of "building self-esteem". But when you use man's techniques you will only produce counterfeit "fruit". Only the Holy Spirit can produce genuine fruit in our lives and only when we surrender and "abide in the Vine", that is, through a personal relationship with Jesus. He produces the fruit, not our techniques.

JESUS SAYS...

Far from exalting or esteeming "self", Jesus says in Matthew 16:24 that we should deny ourselves, pick up our cross and follow him. Jesus says in Matthew 22:34-40 that the two (not three, but two!) greatest commandments are to love God and to love your neighbor as yourself. Jesus wasn't, also, giving us a third commandment to love ourselves. He was acknowledging that even in our sin nature we love ourselves already: we feed ourselves, we clothe ourselves. He is saying, "Now, go and serve other people like you are already serving yourself."

FIX OUR EYES ON JESUS

The whole Christian life is built upon dying to self and serving God and serving people. We are to get our eyes off of self and fix our "eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2). Husbands and wives must realize that they are helpless and hopeless, but, "While we were yet sinners Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

Through repentance we find forgiveness and then a life of surrender; of trusting and obeying. What we must respond to is, not any sense of our own worth, but the fact that Jesus loves us, and he wants to use us!

Husbands and wives who truly desire to be bond-servants of Jesus Christ will have marriages that are all that God desires them to be.

"But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves..." (2Timothy 3)

"The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons." (1Timothy 4:1)

"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It

teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope - the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ..." (Titus 2:11-14)

[The False Gospel of Self Esteem](#)

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Formerly known as "est" and the "Forum", "Landmark Forum" is a so-called [LGAT](#) - Large Group Awareness Training program, operated by Landmark Education.

What Is Landmark Education?

Landmark Education says:

The Landmark Forum provides a technology that enables participants to think and act outside existing views and limits, both in their personal lives and relationships in the wider communities and areas of concern in which they are engaged.

[Landmark Overview](#) □

Watchman Fellowship has said:

est, Warner Erhard: Personal transformation seminar promising individual growth, business management skills, stress reduction, etc. Teaches the world has no objective meaning, enlightenment, and to live moment to moment with no regard for the future. New Age themes. [...] est has been discontinued and replaced by the Forum and later Landmark.

[Watchman Fellowship's Index of Cults and Religions](#) □ **Note:** this is from a local copy on file.

What Are The Concerns? □

A Landmark critic sums them up as follows:

To round things up, everything in short:

1. THE BAIT

A friend/relative tricks you with the most sincere words into attending an introductory meeting, while appealing to your trust and curiosity, or actual weakness, or all of the above.

2. THE TRAP

Group pressure techniques and wordplay are used upon you and at least 100 more people in 3 days, during which, proper rest and natural needs are denied from you.

3. THE EFFECT

Overwhelming. Might lead to personality disorders. The Forum becomes the most important thing, not its outcomes. You might become a zealot for the Forum (without even registering for the advanced courses), or addicted to it by registering for more, or both. The real effect, most importantly, is economically beneficial to the Forum (unless, of course, you lose your mind and sue them...)

[Think About It](#) □ [Top of article](#) □

TIME, in [The Best of est?](#) □ - subtitled, "Werner Erhard's legacy lives on in a kinder, gentler and lucrative version of his self-help seminars" - wrote:

Critics say Landmark is an elaborate marketing game that relies heavily on volunteers. Says Tom Johnson, an "exit counselor" often summoned by concerned parents to tend to alumni: "They tire your brain; they make you vulnerable." Says critic Liz Sumerlin: "The participants end up becoming recruiters. That's the whole purpose." Psychiatrists who speak on Landmark's behalf dispute these claims. But Sumerlin says a 1993 Forum turned her fiance (now her ex) into a robot. She organized an anti-Landmark hot line and publications clearinghouse. Landmark officials made sounds to sue her.

[The Best of est?](#) □ TIME magazine, March 16, 1998 □

How Does Landmark Handle Criticism?

With lawyers. Landmark does not appreciate criticism - real or perceived. After [ELLE magazine](#) wrote a typical reporter-experience piece, Landmark sued:

Although the Elle article made it clear that Landmark and its programs are not cult-like, the lack of

research and the thoroughly evident intent of the writer to denigrate the reputation of Landmark and our employee Beth Handel with irresponsible statements and shoddy research require a legal response.

[Press Release: Landmark Education Corp. Sues Elle Magazine for Libel](#)☐

A writer for [MetroActive](#) was warned beforehand:

Once word about my story got around, popping up in an online Landmark newsgroup, it somehow made its way into the office of Art Schreiber, general counsel of Landmark Education Corporation.

Schreiber responded swiftly with a 10-page letter advising me of his "serious concern" that I might defame Landmark. What followed were six pages explaining why Landmark is not a cult, a page of why Landmark cannot be said to brainwash its enrollees, a page and a half of why I must not defame Werner Erhard or est, and a tedious summary explaining that should I "leave Landmark and its programs depicted in a false light ... Landmark is fully prepared to take the appropriate legal action."

[The est of Friends](#)☐

Landmark's lawyers also lean heavily on those who provide information online - including [Watchman Fellowship](#)☐ in the USA, Jan Groenveld's Cult Awareness and Information Center in Australia, and [SIMPOS](#)☐ in the Netherlands.

The business takes a more mature approach in the "Overview" section on it's own site. There Landmark Education used to address what it called "Past Controversies" in an informative article titled [Controversy and Misunderstandings](#)☐ However, even that articles ends on a mixed note:

Landmark does not expect that its work will always be perfectly represented in the media and public conversation, and recognizes that as with any corporation or enterprise, there will be valid criticism and room for improvement.

At the same time, Landmark is committed that it be represented in the media and public conversation consistent with the facts regarding the quality, content, and results of its programs. Landmark's policy is to take appropriate action to both generate consistent representations and to correct misrepresentations.

[Controversy and Misunderstandings](#)☐

Just so there is no confusion: Apologetics Index believes it is important to present accurate information, and welcomes documented corrections where appropriate. However, this site also includes a [disclaimer](#) for those who can not handle free speech.



Is There A Scientology Connection?

A small one:

In the late 1960s, Erhard studied Scientology and L. Ron Hubbard became a significant influence. Scientologists to this day accuse Erhard of having stolen his main ideas for est from Hubbard. We do know that when Erhard set up est he considered making it a church, as Hubbard had done with dianetics and the Church of Scientology. But Erhard decided to incorporate as an educational firm for profit in a broad market.

Erhard and his supporters accuse Scientology of being behind various attempts to discredit Erhard, including hounding by the IRS and accusations of incest by his children.

(...)

est bears little resemblance to Dianetics or Scientology, however. est is a hodgepodge of philosophical bits and pieces culled from the carcasses of existential philosophy, motivational psychology, Maxwell Maltz's Psycho-cybernetics, Zen Buddhism, Alan Watts, Freud, Abraham Maslow, L. Ron Hubbard, Hinduism, Dale Carnegie, Norman Vincent Peale, P.T. Barnum, and anything else that Erhard's intuition told him would work in the burgeoning Human Potential market.

[Werner Erhard and est](#) - Skeptic's Dictionary

Landmark's own site at one time included a copy of a Los Angeles Times article, titled, [Scientologists Ran Campaign to Discredit Erhard, Detective Says](#) (now published on [wernererhard.com](#), a site operated by "Friends of Werner Erhard.")

Resources

- Articles -

[The Best of est?](#) March 16, 1998, TIME magazine article, subtitled, "Werner Erhard's legacy lives on in a kinder, gentler and lucrative version of his self-help seminars"

[Controversy and Misunderstandings](#) Article on Landmark's own site addressing what it calls "Past Controversies." [This copy located at the WayBackMachine.org internet archive]

[Do You Believe In Miracles?](#) ELLE Magazine, Sep. 1998 article the on Landmark Forum. ELLE promptly got sued: [Press Release: Landmark Education Corp. Sues Elle Magazine for Libel](#)

[Drive-thru Deliverance](#) New Phoenix Times, Oct. 19, 2000: "It's not called est anymore, but you can still be ridiculed into self-awareness in just one expensive weekend"

[Enlightenment in Two Weekends - The est Training](#) Excerpt from the book Outrageous Betrayal, by Stephen Pressman

[The est of Friends](#) MetroActive's July 1998 article on Landmark.

[Landmark Education](#) pdf (German-language only) Information provided by [Oekumenische Beratstellung](#), a Swiss countercult ministry.

[The Siren Call of Modern Pied Pipers](#) Addresses the New Age leanings and implications of LGATs.

[Think About It](#) (Contra) Clearly-reasoned critique

[Werner Erhard and est](#) An entry in The Skeptic's Dictionary

[When it comes to Landmark Education Corporation, There's no meeting of the Minds](#) (Contra) Westword, April 18-24, 1996, article

- Information Package -

[ICSA Information Package](#) [ICSA](#) has an information package about [LGATs](#)

- Multimedia -

Recently we posted a [link](#) to a French TV documentary about Landmark Education. We were subsequently contacted by an attorney for Landmark Education, requesting that the link be removed since, the letter claims, the documentary includes copyrighted material from the "Landmark Forum Manual."

Copies of the documentary in question were briefly posted at Google Video, YouTube and the Internet Archive. Those copies were removed, but are currently the subject of legal action (See, for instance, [Landmark Education sues Google over video](#)).

In response to Landmark's actions against Google, YouTube and the Internet Archive, the [Electronic Freedom Foundation \(EFF\)](#), a nonprofit group working to protect digital rights, on Oct. 30, 2006 posted a story titled, ["Self-Help Group Bullies Net Critics"](#)

EFF subsequently [explained in detail](#) why it is challenging Landmark Education's efforts:

The video was posted on several websites, including the Internet Archive, YouTube and Google. In October 2006, Landmark Education started to send threatening cease and desist letters to online service providers who hosted the material. In addition to disputing the truth of the documentary program's allegations, Landmark Education claimed the French documentary infringed its own U.S. copyright in the "Landmark forum leaders manual" (Copyright Reg. No. TXu-1-120-461).

Using the copyright allegation as a pretext, Landmark then issued subpoenas pursuant to the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, which allows content owners to issue subpoenas to identify alleged infringers even without filing a lawsuit. Subpoenas were sent to Google Video, YouTube and the Internet Archive, demanding to find the identity of the uploader(s).

A review of the video makes clear that the documentary does not contain a copy of the leader manual referenced in Landmark's letters. Rather, it is a news documentary critical of the Landmark organization in France. Moreover, even if Landmark's copyrighted works were visible in the documentary, any such limited and transformative use of a copyrighted work for purpose of criticism, commentary and news reporting is self-evidently fair use and, therefore, noninfringing.

Landmark is not seeking to identify those who originally made the documentary, since it already knows who made it. Nor are the subpoenas based upon the defamation claims Landmark's letter asserts -- DMCA subpoenas are only authorized to identify alleged infringers of the sender's copyright. They are not, however, designed to allow content owners to identify their critics, as Landmark is attempting to do here. [Landmark and the Internet Archive](#) EFF

EFF's explanation includes direct links to the video as well as a transcript of the video.

In turn, Landmark Education has distributed Press Releases like this one: [Landmark Education Takes Action Against Copyright Infringement](#) .

On Nov. 9, 2006, EFF responded as follows:

Last week, EFF announced that it was fighting against Landmark Education's campaign to identify individuals who posted a French documentary, entitled Voyage Au Pays Des Nouveaux Gourous (Voyage to the Land of the New Gurus), that was critical of the Landmark program, and included hidden camera footage from inside a Landmark Forum event in France.

EFF is currently talking with Landmark in an attempt to reach an amicable resolution about Landmark's DMCA subpoena to Google. In the hope that we can resolve this without need of litigation, EFF has held off on filing its motion to quash that subpoena.

In the mean time, Landmark responded to our press release, according to Red Herring magazine:

"While we appreciate the work of the EFF, the allegation that our copyright claim is bogus is entirely inaccurate," [Art Schreiber, general counsel for Landmark Education] said. "The facts are clear that the Landmark Forum program has for many years been copyrighted. Materials covered by this copyright registration were included throughout the video."

While we appreciate the kind words, we disagree with Mr. Schreiber's copyright analysis. To the extent that the documentary includes any materials copyrighted by Landmark, that use is clearly for purposes of criticism and commentary, i.e., a non-infringing fair use. Yesterday we released a draft of our motion to quash, which explains in detail (see pages 11-16) why Landmark's copyright claim does not hold water. Indeed, it's not even a close call. Sorry, Landmark, but your claim is still bogus.

[EFF and Landmark: Cards on the Table](#) EFF

Wikipedia, the user-edited online encyclopedia, has an indepth entry on the documentary:

Voyage au pays des nouveaux gourous, (Voyage to the Land of the New Gurus) is a TV documentary that presents an investigation of the activities of Landmark Education in France. The documentary was made in 2003 by the investigative journalism program Pièces à Conviction [Exhibits], and aired in France on May 24, 2004 on the channel France 3. The documentary has been the subject of various legal repercussions in France and the United States. As of June 2004, Landmark Education ceased its activities in France.

[Voyage Au Pays Des Nouveaux Gourous](#), Wikipedia entry, accessed Nov. 15, 2006

The Wikipedia entry talks about the controversies surrounding the documentary, and includes links to the the Australian website that carries the video, a transcript of the video, and related material.

The [Google search engine](#) also carries links to the video, which is titled, "Voyage Au Pays Des Nouveaux Gourous" ("Voyage to the Land of the New Gurus")

We are currently in the process of obtaining legal advice regarding the legality of our direct link to the video in question. While we do not encourage nor condone copyright violations, we await the outcome of the EFF communications with Landmark Education before we decide whether or not to remove our link.

By the way, we encourage you to support the Electronic Frontier Foundation:



- News Database -

» [Religion News Blog](#) RNB logs current and archived news about religious cults, sects, alternative religions and related issues.

» [Database of archived news items on Landmark Education](#)

(Includes items added between Oct. 25, 1999 and Jan. 31, 2002. See [about this database](#))

- Newsgroup -

[alt.fan.landmark](#)

- Sites -

[The Awareness Page](#) Pro- and contra information on LGATs in general. Includes a good collection of links, and a "fictional LGAT section" with information that is "a stone's throw from the truth" (this approach is probably due to the fact that some LGATs are known for taking legal action against detractors).

[Landmark](#) collection of links on the site of SIMPOS: a Dutch "foundation for information on social problems and occult tendencies"

[Landmark Education and the Landmark Forum](#) (Pro) Official site.

[Landmark Forum: Just a Bowl of Cherries...But Watch Out for the Pits!](#) Archived at ex-cult.org (and at the [WayBackMachine](#)) Mostly addresses the pits.

[Landmark Forum: Rants and Raves](#) (Pro and Contra) Mirror of a disappeared US-based site.

[Landmark versus SIMPOS/Kleintje Muurkrant](#) (Dutch). A roundup of media coverage in Holland, documenting Landmark's uphill battle against Dutch web sites, magazines and newspapers.

Apologetics Index (apologeticsindex.org, countercult.com, cultfaq.org) provides 25,000+ pages of research resources on religious cults, sects, new religious movements, alternative religions, apologetics-, anticult-, and countercult organizations, doctrines, religious practices and world views. These resources reflect a variety of theological and/or sociological perspectives.

The site provides information that helps equip Christians to logically present and defend the Christian faith, and that aids non-Christians in their comparison of various religious claims. Issues addressed range from spiritual and cultic abuse to contemporary theological and/or sociological concerns.

Apologetics Index also includes ex-cult support resources - including a directory of cult experts (CultExperts.org), up-to-date religion and cult news ([Religion News Blog: ReligionNewsBlog.com](http://ReligionNewsBlog.com)), articles on Christian life and ministry, and a variety of other features.

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Crosspoint.net

Planning to visit Amsterdam, Holland? See DutchAmsterdam.nl

- Technical Support generously provided by the makers of [Good News Blog](http://GoodNewsBlog.com)
- AI is sponsored in part by [Dutch Amsterdam](http://DutchAmsterdam.nl), [Blanes Costa Brava Self Catering Apartments](http://BlanesCostaBravaSelfCateringApartments.com), and IerseBouwer.com

Nathan & Julissa Cedarland

Serving In Mexico

Newsletters

11/4/06

[Dec 2006](#)

(845 kb pdf)

[Fall 2006](#)

(225 kb
pdf)



From Right: Nathan, Julissa, and
"One of the new Christians and her baby"



Julissa with some of the kids from her Bible class

Nathan and Julissa are from Gig Harbor-Lakebay and Port Orchard areas of Washington State, USA.

They ministered this last year in Tititla, south of Mexico City and have just moved to Navolato, Sinaloa on the Pacific coast.

Financial Contributions:

Latin America Mission

P.O. Box 52-7900

Miami, FL 33152

Checks should be made to "Latin America Mission" or "LAM."

Indicate on a separate piece of paper that it is for our support. You will get a tax-deductible receipt for your financial gift.



Navolato, Sinaloa

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<http://procinwarn.com>





Extreme Calvary Chapel

10/19/06

Most Calvary Chapel Clergymen that I have known or come in contact with are genuinely nice people. Many Calvary Chapels pride themselves on being "laid back". However, even the nicest Calvary Chapel Pastors I've met keep an iron grasp on their Church. When the Moses authoritarian power structure promoted by the booklet called, "THE PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY OF CALVARY CHAPEL" is combined with a not-so-nice man, things can get bad.

Below is an email I received this week that represents one of the more extreme accounts I have heard or observed among Calvary Chapels.

Dear Jim,

You asked for emails if a reader had a cult type experience in an evangelical church. I have and it was a Calvary Chapel.

My husband and I were attracted to the verse-by-verse teaching style of Pastor Chuck Smith from a radio program broadcast in our area and invited a young pastor from another community into our

home to lead a bible study that grew into a new Calvary Chapel church.

It has been a strange and painful journey this past 6 years. My husband and I were rewarded with "positions" in the church. My husband was the church administrator and later asked to be a deacon too. I was asked to initiate a bookstore within the church, which I did and operated successfully for 4 years. This young pastor was very ambitious, charismatic in personality and admitted to struggling with pride. He made it clear from the beginning that he had been chosen by God to lead this church and even though he had appointed a board and a group of deacons, he could fire them and start over at any time. He flaunted the fact that the "leadership" was special. There were retreats and get-aways. There were many "secret" meetings. He kept my husband out late many nights till near midnight or later in emergency leadership business. He called my husband multiple times a day (and night). He criticized my husband to me, in private, and to my husband, he would criticize me. . He began a discipleship group within the church called the Intern Program. This was supposed to be a bible study class for a year, for those who possibly felt "called" to full time ministry. The kicker was that anyone in the program was not allowed to tell him "no" to any request. That was actually in the form of a written contract that participants had to sign. I refused.

This pastor stopped by my husband's office almost every day, as it was near the church. He interfered so much with our personal lives that at one point, I said to

my husband that there were 3 of us in our marriage bed.....him and me with the pastor in the middle.

I was exasperated and finally suggested that my husband and myself get some outside Christian marriage counseling because this was destroying our marriage. It was the last straw when this pastor told my husband that he wanted to sit in on the sessions. I said "no". My husband and I separated. He moved out. I left the church. At this point in time, there were 4 of us, middle aged couples with long marriages, either separated or in the process of separating, under this pastor, out of a congregation of maybe 75 people. It was bizarre. The 4 of us ladies who were involved, met together once a month for a year to pray.

After being cut off and more or less "shunned" by friends at Calvary, I was welcomed into a fundamental Baptist church. After 2 years, I have pretty much recovered and grown beyond the experience under that controlling pastor. A few months ago, my estranged husband called and asked if I minded if he visited my church. My ladies group at the new church had been praying for my marriage for almost a year. They got to see their prayers answered. He began to visit and we began to date. My husband left Calvary Chapel and that other pastor, reconciled with me and joined the new church.

Of the 4 couples who were separated and headed for divorce, all left that Calvary Chapel and reconciled in other churches. God is good and still doing miracles!!

[The Moses Cults](#)

[Calvary Chapel
Clergy & Moses
Authoritarianism](#)

[Calvary Chapel](#)

Marie (not her real name)

[Critique](#)

[Coercive Church
Leaders](#)

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<http://procinwarn.com>

Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism

- [Crusades for "Morality"](#)
- [Christians & Political Action](#)
- [American Dream: Idolatry](#)
- [Christians: Republican Party or American Heritage Party?](#)
- [Machiavelli and How Rulers Think](#)

God created the world, the mountains and the trees and the stars, and called it good.

See Genesis 1

However, the world system, political, economic, and religious, is under the sway of the wicked one... for a time.

See 1 John 5:19

Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Revelation 22:20

[The World System](#)

Out of Context: 2 Chronicles 7:14

*Noah and his family did humble themselves, and sought God's face, and turned from their wicked ways. God forgave their sins, **but he did not heal their land.** It was destined for judgment and destruction.*

[Applying the Old Testament to the New Testament Church](#)

Democrats are Communists and Republicans are Fascists!

I'm just joking.

Well... half joking...

Politicians

Must Appear to be Religious so that they can manipulate the
Religious...

—
They have all read Machiavelli...

Manipulated or Set Apart?

How often in our day are professing Christians being manipulated and deceived by demagoguery? A "demagogue" is, "a popular leader who stirs up the people by appealing to their emotions and prejudices. The chief aim of most demagogues is to get power and money for themselves alone." ¹²

When someone observes a conflict in society, the tendency is to try to figure out which side is the good guys and which side is the bad guys and then jump on board the bandwagon of the "good guys".

But if a powerful ruler thinks like Machiavelli, what is the most powerful means by which to control the outcome of any conflict in society? Control both sides! If Machiavelli is smart enough to think of such deceptions then certainly Satan and his demons are even smarter. And certainly they have inspired worldly leaders in this regard for centuries. Consider how Joshua was also caught up in such worldly, fleshly thinking:

"And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, **Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?** And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the LORD's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so." Joshua 5:13-6:1

Our Lord Jesus calls us out of these worldly entanglements and deceptions. We stand on Holy ground, set apart unto Him, to be used for his purposes. We are called out of the world's philosophies and battles in order to represent Jesus to the world, to be an Ambassador from our sovereign Lord to this foreign land, to speak the Truth in Love.

We should submit to worldly authority according to Romans 13 and Acts 5:28, 29 without worshipping those in authority and without allowing ourselves, by the grace of God, to be deceived and manipulated by those in authority.

Machiavelli and How Rulers Think

Slaughtering a Pig

Bringing the politics of the world system into the assembly of the saints, is like slaughtering a pig in the Holy of Holies.

Edmund Burke

was a _

Freemason

Our "Prolife" Days

Christians & Civil Government

I Support the U.S. Constitution

Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel

The Evangelical Subculture

Idolatry - Scriptures

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<http://procinwarn.com>

Quotes about Mel Gibson's movie: "The Passion of the Christ" by Icon Productions.

Of course it's impressive. Of course it's emotional. However...

Look who is yoking with who for the sake of this movie:

Evangelicals and Catholics, together...

From thepassionoutreach.com

I experienced moments of profound spiritual intimacy with Jesus Christ. I would gladly trade some of the homilies that I have given about The Passion of Christ for even a few scenes from this film. **-Cardinal Castrillon Hoyos, The Vatican, Worldwide Prefect of the Clergy**

...if they're critical of the film, they would be critical of the Gospel. **-Archbishop John Foley, President, Pontifical Council for Social Communications, The Vatican**

I can't tell you how I admire, respect and applaud you. May God give you the blessing you need, where you need it most. The Passion is an awe-inspiring portrayal of the last hours of Jesus' life. It is an accurate account of Jesus' real sufferings for the sins of the whole world. This is not a film anyone should miss. **-Dr. Robert Schuller, Crystal Cathedral / Hour of Power**

This will do for "Jesus" movies what "Saving Private Ryan" did for war pictures. Every Christian MUST go see this movie and hold Mr. Gibson up in prayer. He's going to take a lot of heat for this project, but if we'll support him, this movie could have a profound spiritual effect on millions of people. **-Paul Crouch, Jr., Trinity Broadcasting Network**

Every time I preach or speak about the Cross, the things I saw on the screen will be on my heart and mind. **-Billy Graham, Billy Graham Evangelistic Association**

"I've read the Passion narratives of the Lord and contemplated them and prayed over them many, many times, and I've never thought of the crucifixion with the images that I received while watching this," George said. "I'll never read the words the same way again." (Chicago Sun Times, Aug 3, 2003) - **Cardinal Francis George, Archbishop of Chicago**

It is deeply moving, powerful, and disturbing. A film that must be seen - although the graphic scenes of

the scourging of Jesus are emotionally wrenching. (From an email to Icon) **-James Dobson, Chairman, Focus on the Family**

The Passion tells the story of the twelve hours surrounding the Crucifixion. While The Passion is only the latest in a series of films about Jesus, it stands out for two reasons: First, it is unsparing and unsentimental. In Gibson's opinion, previous cinematic efforts had failed to capture the enormity of Jesus' suffering on our behalf. **-Chuck Colson, Break Point**

Brilliant, biblical - a masterpiece. **-Rick Warren, Pastor, Saddleback Church and Author of "The Purpose Driven Life"**

I believe The Passion of The Christ may well be one of the most powerful evangelistic tools of the last 100 years, because you have never seen the story of Jesus portrayed this vividly before. **-Greg Laurie, Harvest Crusades**

As President of Young Life, I am pleased to voice my strong support for The Passion. The Young Life sphere of influence includes tens of thousands of staff and volunteers, as well as hundreds of thousands of adults and kids who would be lining up in an instant to see this film. In addition, I think the film will have mass appeal to people of any faith or no particular faith, simply because of the quality of the production and the historical nature of the content. **-Denny Rydberg, President, Young Life**

Everyone should see this movie. It could be Hollywood's finest achievement to date. **-Tim LaHaye, Tim LaHaye Ministries**

I found it deeply moving, factually accurate and unprejudiced in its presentation. **-Jack Hayford, Chancellor, The King's Seminary**

Mr. Gibson has attempted to painstakingly recreate the crucifixion of Christ, not to assail Jews, but to arouse in people a desire to understand the price paid for their salvation. I am praying that Mel Gibson's movie will have a powerful impact on our culture and that it will appeal to millions of movie lovers who are starving for a glimmer of honesty regarding the miraculous and life-changing story of the One who died for everyone, no matter their religious heritage, station in life, sexual preference or skin color. (From Falwell Confidential, Sept 24, 2003) **-Dr. Jerry Falwell, The Liberty Channel**

Having viewed the film in Chicago, I see no basis for the ongoing allegation that the film is anti-Semitic in any fashion. Please express our deep appreciation to Mr. Gibson for his excellent work and assure him of our ongoing prayers in this important endeavor. (From an email to Icon) **-Chuck Moore, President, Northern Baptist Theological Seminary**

It has been nearly three weeks since I saw the rough cut of The Passion. It is still impacting my life. I can't stop thinking about it nor can I stop talking about it. I have never seen a film that has so affected my life. **-Del Tackett, Executive Vice President, Focus On The Family**

Three words summarize for me: Sobering, Stunning, Haunting. The film speaks for itself. I hope you keep the graphic nature of it complete in the film, because it will cause everyone to reflect on what His death was. The world tends to wash over this directness. The details are very accurate -- this is the kind of death our Lord died for me. (From an email to Icon) **-Dr. Darrell Bock, Research Professor of New Testament, Dallas Theological Seminary**

I have no doubt that the movie will be one of the greatest evangelistic tools in modern day history. I think people will go to it and then flood into the churches seeking to know the deeper implications of this movie. **-Ed Young Jr., Pastor, Dallas-Area Fellowship Church**

The thing that I'm most excited about is the opportunity it's going to give those of us who preach the cross. **-Jack Graham, President, Southern Baptist Convention**

It took a brave heart to make "The Passion". "The Passion" is the most graphic, gritty and gripping depiction of Christ's arrest, trial and execution ever made. As a film, it will become a classic work of art with dramatic lighting, authentic sets, compelling music, realistic dialog, believable actors coupled with a timeless story. (From an email to Icon) **-Jim West, President, Faith Television Network**

The Passion will stun audiences and create an incredible appetite for people to know more about Jesus. I urge Christians to invite their spiritually seeking friends to see this movie with them. **-Lee Strobel, Former Atheist & Author "The Case for Christ" & "The Case for Faith"**

From a ministry perspective I tried to imagine what young people would think and how they would respond. My hope is that they will also be captured by the presentation. I believe they will because it is simply the telling of God's story. I am most encouraged by the fact that they will see a true representation of Jesus: fully God and fully man. (From an email to Icon) **-Roger Cross, President, Youth For Christ/USA**

"The Passion" is simply fabulous. It is emotionally wrenching because it is brutally honest about the violence of Jesus' death. Never in my life have I seen any movie that comes even close to depicting what Roman crucifixion was really like. Long familiarity and theological explanation have leached out in our minds the awful brutality of Jesus' trial and death. John's simple words, "then Pilate took Jesus and scourged him" feel vastly different as you watch two brutal Roman soldiers go on minute after terrible minute bludgeoning Jesus near-naked body with flesh-gouging whips. Pious talk about Jesus' death for our sins takes on a whole new meaning. (From an email to Icon) **-Ron Sider, President, Evangelicals For Social Action**

As a Jew, while I see why some Jewish leaders might be offended, I must say that the only reason they would be is because of how close to the Scriptures you stayed in the telling of the story. There are a whole host of reasons why we, as Jewish people, can feel a keen sense of rejection, offense or other things by what some Christians have done "in the name of Christ" during the last 2,000 years. But, let

me assure you that Mel Gibson is not to be named in that number. Mel has chosen the narrow road of staying true to the Scriptures. (From a letter to Icon) **-Stan Kellner, *International Bible Society***

I thought it was an extraordinary work of art and extraordinarily faithful to the gospels. If I was critical of the film's detractors it's because I think it's unwise for any group to try to intimidate either the church or people of Mel Gibson's faith from speaking very clearly what they believe to be true. You know anti-Semitism is a terrible sin; it's a sin the church has repented from and will need to continue to repent from if and when there are examples of it in church life. But to clearly proclaim our belief that Jesus is the messiah and that he suffered, died and rose from the dead is for us something we have a duty to proclaim. (Rocky Mountain News, Aug 21, 2003) **-Archbishop Charles Chaput, *Archbishop of Denver***

I urge critics who have not seen the final film to keep an open mind and not prejudge it. **-Carl Anderson, *Supreme Knight, Knights of Columbus***

I think what you have done in "The Passion" is extraordinary and will probably be recognized as the best religious film ever made. I will continue to pray for you and for the success of the film, and will ask our students to do so as well. (From a letter to Icon) **-Thomas Dillon, *President, Thomas Aquinas College***

From an aesthetic standpoint, the film is beautiful. Its visual narrative carries traces of the long tradition of Christian art, from the very earliest Christian styles and medieval iconography up to pre-Raphaelite images. My wife Theresa and I came away from the film with a sense that our faith had been revitalized. Make no mistake: this movie will convert and uplift hearts. Once you've seen it, you'll never again take for granted the words: "He suffered, died, and was buried." **-Deal Hudson, *Crisis Magazine***

[Gibson's film] represents by far the most moving, substantive and artistically successful adaptation of biblical material ever attempted by Hollywood. **-Michael Medved, *Jewish Film Critic and Radio Show Host***

It's a monumental accomplishment. It continues to impact me in ways I couldn't have imagined. (From a letter to Icon) **-Pat Boone, *Singer/Actor***

I thought Passion was a superior recounting of the 'greatest story ever told,' the last days of Jesus. There is in the film the gravity and seriousness it deserves. There are moments so heart-rending, the tears come easily. I cannot but believe that people of all religions will find this truly an impressive (and respectful) piece of art and realism, emerging from the New Testament. As a cinema artist, you have just reason to be proud of what you have done. (From a letter to Mel Gibson, July 2003) **-Jack Valenti, *CEO, Motion Picture Association***

The precept of freedom of expression often takes a back seat once the ideologues and pedants get involved. Mel Gibson's movie, "The Passion," provides the latest and most vivid example. Though Gibson is still editing his film and has shown it to a very small number of people, there already are cries of protest and dark insinuations of an anti-Semitic subtext. These blatherings strike us as

irresponsible.... Some will be moved by this film, others disturbed. As with all previous films depicting the period, some scholars and theologians will doubtless challenge Gibson's historical accuracy - indeed he is an actor, not a Biblical scholar. But to condemn both the film and the filmmaker in advance reflects both bigotry and a disdain for free expression. *-Peter Bart, Editor, Variety*

This may be the last movie Mel Gibson makes. This is the ultimate film. It's magical. Best picture I have seen in quite some time, and even people like Jack Valenti were in the audience in tears at this screening. There was about 30 of us. It depicts a clash between Jesus and those who crucified him, and speaking as a Jew, I thought it was a magical film that showed the perils of life on earth... They haven't seen the darn film and those of us, every single person in there, and I'm not talking about tears, I'm talking total tears. It is something Mel Gibson stood back at the end and took questions for about an hour, and he is -- he told me he's tired of Hollywood. That this is it. He's going to do it. He's going to do it his way, and this film, I tell you, is magic. It's a miracle. It's a miracle... (In an interview on MSNBC, July 23, 2003) *-Matt Drudge, Drudge Report*

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See the official website: <http://www.thepassionofchrist.com/>

and also: <http://www.thepassionoutreach.com/>

Kay Arthur's "Precept Ministries" web site has a link that encourages that you should, "show your support for this important movie by Mel Gibson."

Kay wrote in an email to her supporters:

"Oh precious one, loved of God — Last week I was privileged to see Mel Gibson's new movie, The Passion of the Christ. It was amazing. There were moments when the reality of the sacrifice of Jesus for the sins of the world just overwhelmed me. I love movies, and by far, this is the most moving and realistic movie I have ever seen concerning our Lord and Savior. I am urging everyone to see this movie. Bring your friends, bring anyone. This will strengthen the faith of Christians and will confront non-Christians with the truth of the Gospel. No one can watch this movie and walk away unchanged. There are some places where Mel Gibson uses creative or artistic license in setting the scene and creating dialogue, but overall, the movie is very true to the depiction of the last hours of the life of Christ as recorded in the four Gospels. Mel Gibson told me that this movie had been burning within him for 12 long years, and finally it is out. He said that he had been forgiven for so much, that he had a need to tell everyone about Jesus and what He endured to secure our forgiveness. Mel Gibson is very sincere about this movie; in fact he paid around \$27 million of his own money to produce it. He sees this as the major work of his life... it is his legacy. I want you to see this movie. It is being released on Ash Wednesday, February 25, in about 2000 theaters nationwide. Precept Ministries has been allowed to sell advance

purchased tickets to The Passion of the Christ in support of this movie. If there is a large response for advance sale tickets, the distributor will put the movie into even more theaters, thus expanding its impact."

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Calvary Chapel

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Many people have been blessed and edified by the teaching and fellowship in Calvary Chapel church organizations. Many people have testified to being saved at Calvary Chapel music concerts. I rejoice when Christ is preached. Even though there is a lot of good that people can point to about the "Calvary Chapel Movement", no organization, movement, institution, or individual, can be beyond critique. It is a cult-like mentality that says that all criticism or all dissent is division; or that anyone who criticizes a leader or an institution is necessarily a divisive person.

Most people do not realize that Calvary Chapel church organizations are not, themselves, affiliated with the original Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, California. It is the clergymen who are affiliated. They submit a request to become affiliated and then are supplied with a form to fill out. The form contains many questions about doctrine and philosophy of ministry. The form is submitted along with the recommendations of other Calvary Chapel clergymen. If the staff at Costa Mesa accepts the person, he becomes an affiliated clergyman in a global network led by Chuck Smith.

Chuck Smith is the founder of the mega-church, Calvary Chapel, in Costa Mesa, California. He exerts influence throughout the system via audio tapes, videos, radio programs, a website, printed material, and regular "Pastor's Conferences" in different regions of the country. Clergymen who have served on the Calvary Costa Mesa staff go on, in many cases, to have congregations of their own. Many of these have become mega-churches in their own right.

[Calvary Chapel Clergy & Moses Authoritarianism](#)

Hirelings - Pastor/Teachers - Elders

Jesus says:

" I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep." John 10:11-13

Jesus is that true shepherd. Paul and Peter both call elders to shepherd the flock. And a Biblical elder is not a hireling. One thing about any hireling is that he can always be hired away to bigger and better things!

Calvary Chapel clergymen have a tradition of saying that their position is not that of a hireling. But they speak against hirelings as those who are dictated to by a board of elders. They speak against hirelings to justify their view that a "Pastor/Teacher" is to be

["Some of my best friends" are Clergymen](#)

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an absolute ruler over the congregation. In his book called Harvest (co-written by Tal Brooke), Chuck Smith writes about an early experience of his in which he felt that the elders were quenching the Spirit in his congregation:

"But in my heart burned a quiet certainty that God had called me to be a shepherd, not a hireling, or a ministerial employee on the payroll of businessmen."

Of course the elders should not simply be businessmen. Whatever their occupation, they ought to be mature Acts 17:11 Bereans, disciples of Jesus, meeting the qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-11. Now, if you operate the congregation as if it was YOUR own business, then you're not on the payroll of businessmen... you ARE the businessman! The problem is you're still a hireling. You're just paying your own salary. Chuck Smith also writes in his booklet, "The Philosophy of Ministry of Calvary Chapel":

"If someone in the church comes to a board member about something they feel that the church ought to be doing, it is presented at the board meeting. The board will discuss it and pray about it together, and oftentimes the board will say, "Chuck, what do you feel that we should do?" The board recognizes that God has called me to be the pastor of the church, the shepherd. In Calvary Chapel the pastor is not a hireling. There are many churches in which the pastor is a hireling. He is hired by the board and can be fired by the board. He becomes a hireling and he's totally responsible to the wishes of the board as they govern the church. But these men are oftentimes businessmen and not the most spiritual men within the church. In that case, the church becomes governed by men rather than governed by Jesus Christ."

"There are dangers, though, in a theocratic form of government, primarily because there are some pastors who disobey what the Lord said concerning the one who is chief becoming the servant of all. There are pastors who have abused their powers. They do not make a clear accounting to the board of the financial aspects of the church. They do not seek the advice and counsel of the board before they make important decisions that are relevant to the function of the church. They try to be a one-man show."

It is good that Chuck Smith expresses concern about the dangers of a theocratic form of government and pastors who try to be a one-man show. But also in this same booklet he illustrates the absolute power that he teaches that a clergyman should have by telling about a time he helped fire all the elders of an associated congregation when they disagreed with the clergyman. (See the article on this site entitled, "Calvary Chapel Clergymen and Moses Authoritarianism".)

One-Man Show

But a one-man show is EXACTLY what the Calvary Chapel philosophy of ministry creates! A one-man show, celebrity, absolute ruler, businessman is a hireling who is dedicated to maintaining his empire at all costs by lording it over the congregation because he's convinced that the Lord is speaking mainly to him and not to the other elders.

I'm not questioning whether Calvary Chapel clergymen loves Jesus. And I'm not saying

they aren't knowledgeable teachers of the Bible. Many of them sincerely care about the people in their congregation. But all men are tempted. They are tempted by power, money, pride, women, and prestige. The more you raise up a man above his brethren and put him in a position of a lord, the more likely he will succumb to the corruption of the flesh. In fact, usurping such a role IS a corruption of the flesh.

Be the Body of Christ

I exhort followers of Jesus to be the Body of Christ together, according to the scriptures. If you are called to serve as an overseer, then be content to lead as a brother, being an example to the flock, side by side with the other elders, and the rest of the brethren. Be content with your wages as you work for a living. Serve in the Body of Christ as a brother, not as a lord or the CEO of a family business.

[Jon Courson: Applegate Christian Fellowship](#)

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A Recent Email

1/15/2005

*Representative of
others I get from time to
time:*

[Following Gurus](#)

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"Response to your page "[What I recommend](#)"

"Brother,

"Thank you for your web page. It is comforting to know that I am not alone in my thinking. My wife and I had attended a Calvary Chapel for eight years before we left. Even after leaving, it has taken years to understand just how much the authority structure has influenced us. In order to retain any friendships with those still part of the Calvary movement, we must not discuss any of our grief's and keep our relationships purely superficial. (which one could argue that they are not genuine friendships at all). We have attended many churches since, however, our experience has been very bad. We love Jesus and do not neglect our salvation, but it has become very apparent that the modern church is willing to sacrifice the individual and true fellowship for it's corporate structure. We are currently in the process of moving to a nearby small community to start a home group. The thing I fear the most is to become the very thing that I hate, that is, I fear becoming the same thing as a corporate church on a smaller scale. I would appreciate talking to you personally because the e-mail format is so difficult to communicate the complexity of the issues which I question."

A Discussion Board Posting

From: Tuppence
Date: 3/17/2005
Time: 2:45:47 PM

Comments

"I was saved at a Calvary Chapel sponsored concert back in 1978. I have had a "love-hate" relationship with Calvary ever since! Until I came across the information on this site, I couldn't really put a finger on what it was that didn't sit right with me. I know that not all CC's are the same but there does seem to be a similarity concerning the leadership of the church-and authoritarianism. Our Pastor seems to feel that he has the right to tell us where we should live, what and where we should go or do and really dislikes any autonomous thought on our part. (We recently relocated to the area and are just getting to know our co-paritioners, as well as the Pastor.) At any rate, this probably doesn't make much sense...don't think I explained it well....but if anyone out here has experience with Calvary that sounds like what we are experiencing I would love to hear from you. God Bless! Tuppy"

A Recent [Email](#)

4/8/2005

Representative of others I get from time to time:

Jim, my husband and myself are members of Calvary Chapel in _____, New York, and we are certain that the Lord has placed us here for a reason. Our pastor is _____, and we love him but do not put him above Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. We are happy and content with our teachings here, and enjoy great fellowship at Calvary.

We would like to know [who you are](#), and if you belong to a Calvary Chapel. Where do you get your information from, as it seems you are very critical of how Calvary Chapels operate. We feel that they are run very biblically, and we support them. (including Chuck Smith and Jon Courson)

God Bless you.

[Extreme Calvary Chapel](#)

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Machiavelli

and

How Rulers Think

Most professing Christians desire to be ignorant of the true nature of this [World System](#). It is comfortable for us to remain deceived with a "Pollyanna" wishful thinking view of the Political, Economic, and Religious rulers of this world. If it "steals our joy" to know about the true nature of the World System, then our joy and our hope is in this world. If we are to have true joy and true hope then we must be set free from worldly idolatrous deceptions and turn again to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as our only hope and joy.

I want to encourage you with the Truth which sets us free: forsake the [idolatry](#) of the world and turn to Jesus Christ and an eternal hope of being with him.

[Introduction](#) - [The Purpose of Political Power](#) - [Background](#)
[Morals, Ethics, and Religion](#) - [Manipulation, Deceit, and Murder](#)
[Opposites in Conflict](#)
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Introduction

Professing Christians are being prepared for the ultimate worldly ruler: [the Counterfeit Christ](#). Counterfeit Christians will worship him. They are being prepared for him by having been led to worship worldly rulers in society, whether it be in our political states and movements, our business enterprises, or our [church and religious organizations](#). The rulers of each function in a similar manner.

Machiavelli and his writings give us great insight into his worldly thinking and the thinking of worldly rulers. It is Biblical to examine what men have said, compare it with God's Word, and declare what men have said to be false when it is contrary to the Word.

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The Purpose of Political Power

Machiavelli wrote that the purpose of political power is to maintain itself and to extend itself. It has nothing to do with the welfare of the people. It has nothing to do with principles or ideology or right and wrong. The welfare of the people, principles, ideology, right and wrong: these are related to the means to the end, but the goal is power. **Do whatever it takes to keep your power and extend your power.**

"This is Machiavelli's most conspicuous quality. He writes almost wholly of the mechanics of government, of the means by which states may be made strong, of the policies by which they can expand their power, and of the errors that lead to their decay or overthrow. Political and military measures are almost the sole objects of his interest, and he divorces these almost wholly from religious, moral, and social considerations, except as the latter affect political expedients. The purpose of politics is to preserve and increase political power itself, and the standard by which he judges it is its success in doing this. Whether a policy is cruel or faithless or lawless he treats for the most part as a matter of indifference, though he is well aware that such qualities may react upon its political success. He often discusses the advantages of immorality skillfully used to gain a ruler's ends, and the most part he is not so much immoral as non-moral. He simply abstracts politics from other considerations and writes of it as if it were and end in itself." ¹

"Politics" is the endeavor of organizing and controlling people. Romans 13 tells us that God establishes worldly authority in [civil government](#) in order to restrain evil. But this is no endorsement of the men who serve in worldly positions of authority. It simply is a testimony to God's Sovereignty in working his purposes in spite of the evil intentions of men.

When men presume to rule over political, economic, and religious organizations they are setting about the business of organizing and controlling people. The New Testament teaches us [how leaders are to serve in the Body of Christ](#) - The Church of Jesus. The New Testament teaches followers of Jesus how we should relate to [civil government](#) authorities, no matter what their nature. The Bible teaches us that this world system is under the control of the evil one and in rebellion against God.

Machiavelli provides insight into the true nature of the thinking of worldly leaders. Followers of Jesus ought to acknowledge what the Bible says about this corruption and realize the patterns of the rulers' thinking and recognize these patterns in the leaders they have tended to worship in our day.

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The Background of Niccolo Machiavelli

Niccolo Machiavelli (1469 - 1527) served in government in the city state of Florence. He is considered a political philosopher because of his writings about political power. Many consider Machiavelli the "father of modern political science".²

His most famous work is [The Prince](#) written in 1513 and published in 1532. It was written to "ingratiate himself with powerful figures" who he hoped would return him to a position of power after his side had lost out in a political struggle.³

Machiavelli had great influence on the thinking of many that came after him, including [G.W.F Hegel](#) (1770-1831) one of the most influential of the German philosophers. Hegelian philosophy, in turn, was the basis for Marxism, Nazism, Fascism, and Western Progressive philosophy and social engineering.^{4, 5, 6, 7}

Hegel considered Machiavelli to be one of the most heroic figures of modern politics. "[The Prince](#) he called, 'the great and true conception of a real political genius with the highest and noblest purpose.'" ⁸

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Morals, Ethics, and Religion - Manipulation, Deceit,

and Murder

Machiavelli taught that it was good to promote morals and ethics and religious convictions among the people. These were important in order to keep them under control and productive. Morals and ethics maintained stability and order and peace.

"He had nothing but admiration for the civic virtues of the ancient Romans and of the Swiss in his own day, and he believed that these grew out of purity in the family, independence and sturdiness in private life, simplicity and frugality of manners, and loyalty and trustworthiness in performing public duties. But this does not mean that the ruler must believe in the religion of his subjects or practice their virtues... Machiavelli offers an extreme example of a double standard of morals, one for the ruler and another for the private citizen." ⁹

So the ruler, himself, was under no obligation to live by these same morals and ethics and religious convictions. The ruler was above these things. He was beyond good and evil. The ruler had the obligation to do whatever was necessary to maintain and extend his political power.

Machiavelli, "openly sanctioned the use of cruelty, perfidy, murder, or any other means, provided only they are used with sufficient intelligence and secrecy to reach their ends" ¹⁰

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Machiavelli promoted the idea that a ruler should be gentle most of the time, but when necessary the ruler must make use of any form of manipulation, deceit, and even murder to achieve his ends. Machiavelli writes:

"Alexander VI did nothing else but deceive men, nor ever thought of doing otherwise, and he always found victims; for there never was a man who had greater power in asserting, or who with greater oaths would affirm a thing, yet would observe it less; nevertheless his deceits always succeeded according to his wishes, because he well understood this side of mankind.

"Therefore it is unnecessary for a prince to have all the good qualities I have enumerated, but it is very necessary to appear to have them. And I shall dare to say this also, that to have them and always to observe them is injurious, and that to appear to have them is useful; to appear merciful, faithful, humane, religious, upright, and to be so, but with a mind so framed that should you require not to be so, you may be able and know how to change to the opposite. And you have to understand this, that a prince, especially a new one, cannot observe all those things for which men are esteemed, being often forced, in order to maintain the state, to act contrary to faith, friendship, humanity, and religion. Therefore it is necessary for him to have a mind ready to turn itself accordingly as the winds and variations of fortune force it, yet, as I have said above, not to diverge from the good if he can avoid doing so, but, if compelled, then to know how to set about it.

"For this reason a prince ought to take care that he never lets anything slip from his lips that is not replete with the above-named five qualities, that he may appear to him who sees and hears him altogether merciful, faithful, humane, upright, and **religious**. There is **nothing more necessary to appear to have than this last quality**, inasmuch as men judge generally more by the eye than by the hand, because it belongs to everybody to see you, to few to come in touch with you. Every one sees what you appear to be, few really know what you are, and those few dare not oppose themselves to the opinion of the many, who have the majesty of the state to defend them; and in the actions of all men, and especially of princes, which it is not prudent to challenge, one judges by the result.

"For that reason, let a prince have the credit of conquering and holding his state, the means will always be considered honest, and he will be praised by everybody because the vulgar are always taken by what a thing seems to be and by what comes of it; and in the world there are only the vulgar, for the few find a place there only when the many have no ground to rest on. One prince* of the present time, whom it is not well to name, never preaches anything else but peace and good faith, and to both he is most hostile, and either, if he had kept it, would have deprived him of reputation and kingdom many a time." * (Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor)

[The above is from CHAPTER XVIII of The Prince: CONCERNING THE WAY IN WHICH PRINCES SHOULD KEEP FAITH] From Machiavelli Online (This is not an endorsement of the website.) at www.sas.upenn.edu/~pgrose/mach/index.html 12/20/2001 This link is gone. Try the following link: [The Prince](#)

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Opposites in Conflict

Machiavelli advocated that it was actually good to have opposing forces in conflict within a society as long as they were kept in check by the power of the ruler.

"The rivalry of patricians and plebeians in Rome Machiavelli regarded as the secret of Roman strength. From it was born the independence and sturdiness of character that supported the greatness of Rome. When directed by wise rulers, having great but lawful authority, the virility that made turbulence possible became a chief reason why the Romans were a war-like, conquering people. For this reason Machiavelli stated again the ancient theory of the mixed or balanced constitution... The balance which he had in mind, however, was not political but social or economic - an equilibrium of competing interests held in check by a powerful sovereign."

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Manipulated or Set Apart?

How often in our day are professing Christians being manipulated and deceived by demagoguery? A "demagogue" is, "a popular leader who stirs up the people by appealing to their emotions and prejudices. The chief aim of most demagogues is to get power and money for themselves alone." ¹²

When someone observes a conflict in society, the tendency is to try to figure out which side is the good guys and which side is the bad guys and then jump on board the bandwagon of the "good guys".

But if a powerful ruler thinks like Machiavelli, what is the most powerful means by which to control the outcome of any conflict in society? Control both sides! If Machiavelli is smart enough to think of such deceptions then certainly Satan and his demons are even smarter. And certainly they have inspired worldly leaders in this regard for centuries. Consider how Joshua was also caught up in such worldly, fleshly thinking:

"And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, **Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?** And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the LORD's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so." Joshua 5:13-6:1

Our Lord Jesus calls us out of these worldly entanglements and deceptions. We stand on Holy ground, set apart unto Him, to be used for his purposes. We are called out of the world's philosophies and battles in order to represent Jesus to the world, to be an Ambassador from our sovereign Lord to this foreign land, to speak the Truth in Love.

We should submit to worldly authority according to [Romans 13 and Acts 5:28, 29](#) without worshipping those in authority and without allowing ourselves, by the grace of God, to be deceived and manipulated by those in authority.

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The True Nature of the

World System

...and the **whole world** lieth in wickedness.

1 John 5:19

...there is **none good** but one, that is, God...

Matt 19:17

As it is written, There is **none righteous**, no, not one:

Rom 3:10

And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have **imagined** to do.

Gen 11:6

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Satan: the god of this world ... deceives the whole world

But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom **the god of this world** hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which **deceiveth the whole world**: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Rev 12:9

Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the **prince of this world** be cast out.

John 12:31

Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the **prince of this world** cometh, and hath nothing in me

John 14:30

Of judgment, because the **prince of this world** is judged.

John 16:11

Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the **prince of the power of the air**, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience

Eph 2:2

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The Rulers of this world: Rebellion against God

Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The **kings of the earth** set themselves, and **the rulers** take counsel together, **against the LORD**, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt **dash them in pieces** like a potter's vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Ps 2

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against **principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.**

Eph 6:12

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The Heart of Man: Enemies of God

And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that **every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.**

Gen 6:5

And the LORD smelled a sweet savor; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for **the imagination of man's heart** is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done

Gen 8:21

This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is **full of evil, and madness** is in their heart while

they live, and after that they go to the dead.

Eccl 9:3

The **heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked**: who can know it?

Jeremiah 17:9

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their **imagination**s, and their foolish **heart** was darkened

Rom 1:21

And you, who once were alienated and **enemies** in your mind by wicked works...

Colossians 1:19-23

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Building towards a Global Government, Economic System, & Religious System

7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and **power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.**

8 And **all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him**, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

17 And that **no man might buy or sell**, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

Rev 13

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The World System will be Judged and Destroyed

The Lord at thy right hand shall **strike through** kings in the day of his wrath.

Ps 110:5

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, **the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.**

2 Peter 3:10

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What I Recommend

To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord

Ephesians 3:10-11

Our Lord brings Christian friends our way. He blesses us with Christian friendships and relationships.

I recommend that Christian friends meet together regularly to fellowship in Jesus' name: to pray together, to break bread together, to sing songs to the Lord together, to read, discuss, and teach the Bible together, to testify to God's faithfulness and God's grace in our lives, to discuss important things, to bear one another's burdens, to worship our Lord Jesus, to build up and encourage one another in our relationship with the Lord.

I recommend that adults, teenagers, and children, married couples and single people meet together.

When Christians meet together, Jesus is the center of attention and the Holy Spirit is the leader, and all things are done decently and in order. One can bring a hymn, one a testimony, another can read a scripture, another can bring a teaching from God's Word. Each can participate as led by God's Spirit, according to the Word of God. Each can contribute to the worship of our Lord and the edification of one another, according to the gifts and callings the Father puts on our lives. He works through our lives by his

sovereignty, by the Holy Spirit. Each ought to have the responsibility of encouraging all to be accountable to the Truth of God's Word, while motivated by God's Love.

Jesus builds his Church. Jesus leads his Church. In God's timing and by his choosing, some brothers will serve as elders, and others will serve as deacons. All will participate in the caring and ministering of the fellowship. All should submit to one another. All will have a heart to proclaim the Gospel to the lost and to serve the needy and to make disciples of Jesus. Some will be sent as evangelists and missionaries. The fellowship will baptize new believers.

Christian friends will meet together regularly and their lives will be intertwined day in and day out. We can rejoice together and mourn together. The fellowship can participate in weddings and memorials together. All can persevere together with one another in love.

Each can give generously to support evangelists and missionaries and to help anyone as they have need.

Each brother and sister ought to walk in trust and obedience in their relationship to the Lord Jesus. Each ought to be devoted to learning and applying God's Word. All should have a heart to understand the truth taught in the Old and New Testaments and the commandments for the Church taught in the New Testament.

Together the fellowship of the Saints can pursue being all that God has called them to be in the New Testament. The fellowship can seek together to apply what is taught so that meetings are conducted as the New Testament teaches and that lives outside of the meetings are lived as the New Testament teaches.

I would love to hear your comments and questions about my recommendations. Please email me and

please refer to the title of this page.

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Dove Awards on TBN

Whitney Houston

As I channel-checked through the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) station on 12/30/99, I noticed Whitney Houston singing. On TBN? I've never seen evidence that she claimed to trust in Jesus, "The Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." What I remember Whitney Houston for was her song, "The Greatest Love of All", which turns out to be "[Self-Love](#)" in the song! What a blasphemy. Houston, it turns out, was taking part in the Dove Awards ceremonies in which "Christian singers" are recognized by the "Christian Music Industry" for their talents and successes.

George Bush

After Houston's song, Michael W. Smith continued to introduce the Dove Awards program. In the December 17th "USA Weekend" magazine, Smith was asked if he planned to vote for [George W. Bush](#) for president. He answered, "I haven't decided, but he is a good friend of mine. I think he's a good candidate." Guess who the next guest on the Dove Awards was? Former President [George Bush](#) spoke via a video appearance! Both he and his candidate son are members of the Yale-based, Order of the Skull and Bones.

President Bush then introduced Amy Grant, who, he said, was a good personal friend. He recounted how, when he was president, Amy Grant came to sing at the Camp David presidential retreat and that she was an inspiration.

Amy Grant

[Amy Grant](#) sang a song in which she says, "I'll carry on for the Children of World". But in the first 15 minutes of the show I never once heard the name of Jesus. All the time I'm wondering why Amy Grant is singing at the Dove Awards and all the previous "Christmas" specials and whether she is doing everything she can to be reconciled to her estranged husband, Gary Chapman.

Yin-Yang

All the time during the show, on the background to the stage is the Dove Award logo. The logo is a Dove with outspread wings, on a pedestal, in a circle. The Doves wings and pedestal are drawn so that the circle is divided into the two tear drops of a Yin-Yang symbol. Some defenders of the Dove Awards may argue that I'm stretching my interpretation too far to insist on seeing a Yin-Yang symbol. But, at a time when the whole world is being united in counterfeit religious vision that is often represented by the occult Eastern mystical Yin-Yang symbol... why would Christians create a logo that even comes close? But, as if to take away any doubt, in the second half of the show, for a short time, the logo was transformed into a clear cut Yin-Yang symbol made of two shades of green.

Chuck Colson

Rebecca St. James spoke of "Life affirming music". Steven Curtis Chapman hosted a video presentation in which [Chuck Colson](#) is saying, "Our hope is in the power of God working through his people." Of course, that is NOT our hope. Our hope is in Jesus and what Jesus has done for us and is doing in us.

The Pope, Billy Graham, & Celebrity

Jaci Velasquez introduced Kirk Franklin, saying that he had performed for Pope [John Paul II](#) and [Billy Graham](#). Michael W. Smith came back on stage to the screams of young girls, just as one might have seen the week before, for the worldly celebrity singing groups, 'nsync or 98 degrees.

A "Gospel" & Candles

Steven Curtis Chapman spoke about the message in Christian music as being that “God is, God loves, God can be found”. This was the closest anyone came to preaching the Gospel... but this is NOT the Gospel! Point of Grace, a singing group, sang a song about “Keep the candle burning” to a huge audience that appeared to be holding hundreds of candles. Lighting candles is a ritual of growing popularity among evangelicals that is derived from the mysticism of Roman Catholicism and the occult.

Amy Grant's (ex?) Husband

Then, believe it or not, the estranged husband of Amy Grant, [Gary Chapman](#), sang a song! Something is wrong here. Where divorce is concerned, one or both must be in sin. What are they BOTH doing trying to represent the Lord Jesus if they have not reconciled their marriage! Is there any Godly “adult supervision” in the Gospel Music Association, which sponsors this event? Are there any Godly men who are called to be elders or overseers involved in this “Christian ministry”? Or do they consider it a Christian ministry? Is it just entertainment? Is it just marketing and profits? Is it part of the work of the Church? Is it auxiliary to the Church? Is it “parachurch”?

Twila Paris

Twila Paris sang. She wrote the foreword to a 1996 book by Youth With A Mission's (YWAM) [Ron Boehme](#). The book was called [Restoring America's Conscience](#) which included chapters called, “Free to [Love Yourself](#)”, “Free to Change the World”, and “Holy Living and the Coming Revival”.

Sandi Patti, the Logo, & Closing

Then a video was shown of Sandi Patti singing at a previous Dove Awards, followed by the Dove Awards logo morphing into a Yin-Yang symbol during a subsequent act.

Eventually there was a tribute to [Billy Graham](#). And the show ended with an Amy Grant song and a Steven Curtis Chapman closing.

False Gospel of Keepthefait.com

During the Dove Awards a website called "Keep the Faith" was endorsed. It has a button on it called, "Secrets of Eternal Life" That link leads you to a page with the following: "We all have personal habits or behavior that we're not particularly proud of and would like to change. But how often do we think about that in relationship to eternal life in the Kingdom of God? If we don't feel good about those things while we're here in this world, how would we feel in the presence of our Heavenly Father in His Kingdom? With God's help, through faith and the power of prayer, and by taking responsibility to make significant change in our lives, we can look forward to a life that fills the heart with joy...forever."

This is a false gospel! It doesn't even mention Jesus Christ our Savior!

Gospel Music Association

The Dove Awards are sponsored by the Gospel Music Association (GMA). On their website is the following:

"The Gospel Music Association is dedicated to educating the public and the music industry concerning the mission and role of gospel music in today's world. Founded in 1964, the Gospel Music Association represents more than 5,500 members, including the industry's foremost vocalists, musicians, songwriters, producers and record company executives".

A group associated with the GMA is the Christian Music Trade Association who says on their website, "Our goal is to create and maximize opportunities for growth and penetration of the marketplace for music-related products, services & activities which creatively and faithfully communicate the grace and truth of the gospel throughout the world."

There is so much that could be said about the Dove Awards, The Gospel Music Association, the "Christian Music" industry, the celebrity singers, their message, their example, their influence; and the ties of all of these to the global trends uniting the world in a common religious vision. I've made some comment in this article. There are other related articles on my website. And so much more must be said to warn Christians.

Feel free to [comment](#) on my observations and conclusions.

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The Evangelical Subculture

Shall we be disciples of Jesus together? Or would you rather just participate in a Religious System?

[*Two Different Conversions*](#) - [*Like Joining a Club*](#) - [*The Subculture, Institutionalism, & Deception*](#) - [*Articles*](#)

Two Different Conversions

When I became a follower of Jesus Christ I underwent two different conversions, although I didn't realize it at the time. First, I was converted from my old life into the Body of Christ by reconciliation with God through Jesus. Hallelujah! At about the same time I bought into the Evangelical Subculture under the false impression that it WAS the Body of Christ. It took me years to realize the difference between the two.

I had been aware of "Christendom": that worldly religious structure consisting of political and economic empires and bureaucracies, both Protestant and Catholic, that had fought religious wars and undertaken crusades to retake the "Holy Land", that had burned people at the stake, that continued to preach false Christs and false gospels of works, and that continues to talk about the counterfeit unity called Ecumenicalism.

But I had not understood the nature of the Evangelical Subculture, that is a part of the worldly structure of "Christendom". This subculture has its own organizations and institutions, denominations, parachurch organizations; its own magazines and radio stations and TV networks; its own schools and colleges and universities; its own celebrities; its own music industry and book stores; its own marketing and advertising worlds.

Like Joining a Club

The tragedy of the Evangelical Subculture is that people who have a sincere desire to follow Jesus get side tracked into a zeal for being a part of this worldly system. It is like joining a club. The club member begins to wear the clothes and trinkets bought at the "Christian" book stores; watch "Christian" TV and listen to "Christian" radio; buy the latest fad books that sweep the "Christian media"; subscribe to the "Christian" magazines; worship the "Christian" celebrities; use all the latest jargon promoted in the latest books by the celebrity authors.

A cult-like mentality develops among people who see this Evangelical system as identical to the Body of Christ. Their zeal is for the trappings of the subculture. It is its own religion. If someone tries to point out the unbiblical nature of some aspect of this subculture people will take offense because you are criticizing their religion. The subculture becomes the message. The "gospel" that people preach is for conversion to [the system](#), not really to Jesus Christ.

The Subculture, Institutionalism, & Deception

The pop culture of Evangelicalism feeds on institutionalism, denominationalism, "non-denominational" institutional church organizations, and the professional clergy system. The professional clergy and their church organizations, in turn, find an indoctrinated constituency to fill their pews and programs. Both the subculture and the institutional churches turn a relationship with Jesus and his people into a participation in a religion and a lifestyle.

This Evangelical subculture has played a major role in setting professing Christians up for deception. It seduces people to think and act like the subculture instead of reading the Bible for themselves and deriving their understanding from the Bible. It has been this subculture that has infected the Evangelicals with psychology, self-esteem, political action and social activism, unity at the expense of sound doctrine, mysticism, and cult attachments to gurus, movements, and organizations. Ultimately, the end of this deception is a merging of the Evangelical Subculture with the global counterfeit religious vision.

We ought to be content with the simplicity of following Jesus and being the Body of Christ together with those the Lord provides for fellowship, according to the teachings of the Apostles in the New Testament.

Please consider the following articles that explore this issue of the Evangelical Subculture vs. the true Bride of Christ.

[Churchianity - Dictionary Definition](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[Questions About Churchianity vs. The Church](#)

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

[What is the Church?](#)

[The True Nature of the World System](#)

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[Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism](#)

[Dove Awards on TBN](#)

[The World Christian Movement](#)

[Counterfeit Christs: Is your pastor a one-man show?](#)

Professing Evangelical Christians are effectively becoming [Unitarians](#).

[THE BIBLICAL WARNING OF WORLD-WIDE DECEPTION](#)

Please consider asking those you care about, "Shall we be disciples of Jesus together? Or would you rather just participate in a Religious System?"

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Music in the Assembly

9/9/03

I was recently asked by a brother-in-Christ what my views about music were. The following was my reply.

I'm grateful for many of the older hymns and choruses and also for some of the newer ones. Some of the older ones, and probably more of the newer ones, have some lyrics that are not sound, doctrinally. Many of the newer ones might fall into the area of vain repetition. The hymns and choruses and music that you and I are likely to be familiar with are at most 500 years old, I would think, and originate in Europe and North America. I would love to hear what followers of Jesus sang to the Lord 1500 years ago in Asia minor, or even 40 years ago in China!

I strongly recommend that we be dogmatic about the clear teachings of scripture and that we are not so dogmatic about things that are not taught in the scriptures. We ought not take away from scripture or add to scripture. In areas that the word does not explicitly speak to, we are to apply the principles of scripture in that area. Such areas are disputable matters, and we must give one another the freedom to disagree.

All things we think and do should be edifying.

Styles of music and the types of instruments that are used are not dealt with explicitly in the Bible. If, for example, drums are considered not edifying to a brother, he has the freedom to live out that conviction, but he should not place his conviction on the level of the word of God and try to enforce that on other believers.

I recognize that there are many convictions and opinions and preferences about music among Christians. I'm open to discuss with anyone who would like to. [Email me](#)

[What I Recommend](#)

[Walking in the Spirit](#)

[The Freedom to Disagree](#)

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From James Sundquist

James Sundquist is founder of Rock Salt Publishing and is very devoted to contending for the faith. Pray for this brother that he, and each of us, would speak the truth motivated by love. I have greatly appreciated the encouragement of getting to know James as an internet co-worker in Christ.

[RICK WARREN'S GLOBAL P.E.A.C.E. PLAN vs. SCRIPTURAL TEACHINGS ON PEACE](#)

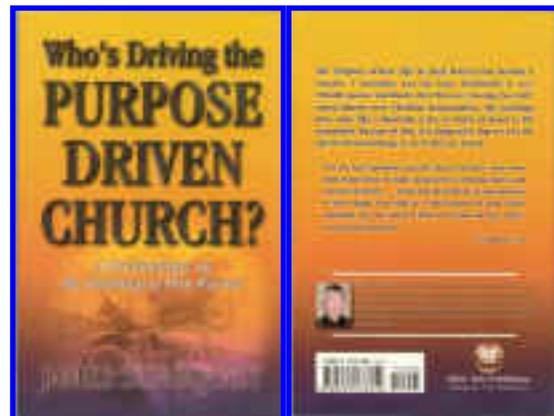
(PDF file 177 kb)

BY JAMES SUNDQUIST

Who's Driving the PURPOSE DRIVEN CHURCH?

A Documentary on the Teachings of Rick Warren
By James Sundquist

[About this Book](#)



**RICK WARREN'S
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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES WHICH ADDRESS RICK WARREN'S GLOBAL P.E.A.C.E. PLAN

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**RICK WARREN'S
GLOBAL P.E.A.C.E. PLAN**

vs.

**SCRIPTURAL TEACHINGS ON PEACE
BY JAMES SUNDQUIST**

DEDICATION

Dedicated to the churches of Jesus Christ our Savior in the 67 countries in which Rick Warren has tested his pilot P.E.A.C.E. Plan in 2005, the 131 countries¹ he has been working on for the last two years, to those who speak the 56 languages in which *Purpose Driven Life* has already been translated, and to rest of the nations throughout the uttermost parts of the earth that he has targeted to consummate the roll-out for his plan in 2006. This is also dedicated to the tens of thousands of churches which have already been stolen by Rick Warren's teachings and to the saints who were purpose-driven from those churches for opposing his teachings and covenants, many of whom now have no church and to all of those pastors and church members still on the fence about Rick Warren's teachings.. We hope this will help alert you to the magnitude and scope of this religion and movement and sound an alarm to those Christians who have never heard of Rick Warren.

INTRODUCTION

The following documentary compares Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan to Scriptural Teachings. (See section on New Reformation in this document for description of Rick Warren's P.E.A.C.E. Acronym.) Warren announced his Global P.E.A.C.E Plan on April 17, 2005 at Angel Stadium in Anaheim, California to an audience of 30,000 people, during a church service marking the 25th Anniversary of Saddleback Church. Earlier in 2005, Warren had previewed it when he disclosed on CNN's *Larry King Live*:

“And we're right now doing a test pilot of the PEACE plan in 67 countries. We're about a year and a half into it. It's a two-year test plan. We plan to go public with it -- well, now, it's going public on LARRY KING -- but **we plan to go public with it in 2006**, which is **to mobilize hundreds of thousands of small groups that have done the 40 days of purpose in churches and communities** and civic groups and corporations -- **churches that have done 40 days of purpose in groups to do these five things around the world**. And that's really why I was in Rwanda, Uganda and Kenya, to test that.”²

1. OPENING SONG AT RICK WARREN'S Global P.E.A.C.E. PLAN INAUGURATION

PURPLE HAZE

Rick Warren launched his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan April 17, 2005 during Saddleback Church's 25th Anniversary celebration. During the unveiling he sang the *Purple Haze* song, written by Jimi Hendrix about the psychedelic drug LSD and demonic visions. Here are the lyrics:

Jimi Hendrix - Purple Haze Lyrics

*Purple haze all in my brain
Lately things just don't seem the same
Actin' funny, but I don't know why
'Scuse me while I kiss the sky
Purple haze all around
Don't know if I'm comin' up or down
Am I happy or in misery?
Whatever it is that girl put a spell on me
Purple haze all in my eyes
Don't know if it's day or night
You got me blowin', blowin' my mind
Is it tomorrow, or just the end of time?*

(c)1967 Jimi Hendrix, *Smash Hits* album³

“The cause of death [of Jimi Hendrix] noted on the coroner's report was inhalation of vomit after barbiturate intoxication.”⁴

David Cloud's research about Jimi Hendrix reveals:

Music was Jimi Hendrix' god. Apparently Hendrix attended church some in his youth, because he later testified: "I used to go to Sunday School BUT THE ONLY THING I BELIEVE IN NOW IS MUSIC" (Hendrix, cited by Curtis Knight, Jimi).

Hendrix and the occult

Hendrix was deeply involved in occultism and mysticism and these themes permeated his music. His song "Voodoo Child" glorified voodoo practices such as out of body experiences.

"Well I'm a voodoo child/ Lord I'm a voodoo child/ The night I was born/ Lord, I swear the moon turned a fire red/ ... My poor mother cried out now the gypsy was right/ And I seen her fell down right dead/ ... 'Cause I'm a voodoo child/ Lord knows, I'm a voodoo child..."

In fact, Hendrix believed he was possessed by the devil. Girlfriend Fayne Pridgon said:

"HE USED TO ALWAYS TALK ABOUT SOME DEVIL OR SOMETHING WAS IN HIM"...and having some root lady or somebody see if she could DRIVE THIS DEMON OUT OF HIM" (sound track from film Jimi Hendrix, interview with Fayne Pridgon, side 4, cited by *Heartbeat of the Dragon*, p. 50).⁵

Pharmaka (pharmakeia)

Scripture is very clear about *pharmaka*, the Greek term for "drugs." The *King James Version Study Bible* states the following about *pharmaka*:

"Witch (*mekashep*) denotes a form of magic. The root means "to cut up," and thus may refer to one who cuts up herbs and brews them for magical purposes (Gr. *Pharmaka*, drug). The term is used in Micah 5:12 for some such material as drugs or herbs used superstitiously to produce magical effects. The noun therefore means enchanter or sorcerer (Ex. 7:11; 22:18; 2 Chr. 33:6; Dan. 2:2; Mal. 3:5). (*KJV Study Bible*)"

Also see:

"And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; **for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.**" Revelation 18:23 Note: the word "sorceries" is rendered "pharmakeia" in *Strong's Lexicon*.



Is this the example Rick Warren wants to set in leading his sober and vigilant billion-man Christian army? Even if Rick Warren sang *Purple Haze* in jest to inaugurate his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan, it still has the appearance of evil and is a bad witness for a Christian. Rick Warren's justification for defending the singing of *Purple Haze* before his congregation, is like saying "Well, I just did a séance with all of my friends just for the fun of it and to help set the tone and stage for the **New Reformation.**" What a song to pick; one whose author regularly took LSD and promoted a psychedelic culture! Is *Purple Haze* the type of song Jesus would ever sing? Is this the kind of song Jesus will sing when he launches his Global Millennium Peace Plan? It is astonishing that Rick Warren would choose a song which glorifies drugs used to produce magical effects. This is not the way to attain either personal perfect peace or the Global Peace that Jesus Christ himself will usher in with the Millennium. It was commonly known to all of us who grew up in the '60s that this song was identified with LSD. This song should be a red flag for any Christian that grew up then. But for the children of the children of the '60s who do not know to what the song was originally referring, it is a clear stumbling block and brings to mind the following Scriptural warning:

"And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea." - Mark 9:42

Promoting a song which glorifies evil, and/or is well known and identified with the drug culture, and the fact that he has not publicly repented for it, should disqualify Warren from being a pastor at all, let alone 'America's Pastor' - the title *Time* Magazine bestowed upon him:

“When *Time* magazine comes out and calls me, quote, "America's pastor," I can't tell you what that does in my life because it's something that I really didn't want. And some people say, "How could he be America's pastor when we're not all Christians?" Well, I can't, okay? You know, somebody has got to be America's rabbi, somebody has got to be America's imam, right? But if that is a role that I'm going to play for one segment of our society, then I want to represent them and the things they value – humility, integrity and generosity – with intelligence and integrity. Those are the three important values to me.”⁶

If Rick Warren actually accepts the mantle of 'America's Pastor' he should be held to an even stricter accounting as an elder of elders. In actuality, there is no such biblical mandate for any single man having the authority to be any nation's pastor. NOBODY needs to be 'America's Pastor' and nobody should be! (See article: *Pastor is Master, Isn't He?* Below which demonstrates that Jesus is our ultimate shepherd/pastor.)

Now, Rick Warren seems to have assumed upon himself the role of the world's pastor, or as he puts it, the leader of a billion-man Christian army. Didn't the first Reformation teach us anything? Have we forgotten what Lord Acton said, “power corrupts and that absolute power corrupts absolutely?”⁷ Not even the Apostles Paul or Peter possessed final authority over the whole early church. In fact, they taught against it! For an in-depth study why the Bible does not support the absolute sovereignty of a single pastor in a church, see: *Pastor is Master, Isn't He?, The PZ Insider Report – Where has all the discernment gone?* © Sunday, November 6, 2005,⁸

Music, particularly in the context of a church service, needs to conform to the following Scriptural criteria – qualities completely lacking in *Purple Haze*.

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things [are] honest, whatsoever things [are] just, whatsoever things [are] pure, whatsoever things [are] lovely, whatsoever things [are] of good report; if [there be] any virtue, and if [there be] any praise, think on these things.” Philippians 4:8

The Scriptural criteria found in Philippians, to be sure, is exactly what we find in the kind of song Jesus Christ has in mind for *His Global Peace Plan*:

THEME SONG(S) FOR SCRIPTURAL GLOBAL PEACE PLAN

SONG OF MOSES

“And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the **song of the Lamb**, saying, Great and marvelous [are] thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true [are] thy ways, thou King of saints.” Revelation 15:3

“And **they sang a new song**, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;” Revelation 5:9

“And **they sang as it were a new song before the throne**, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred [and] forty [and] four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.” Revelation 14:3

2. WHAT IS MISSING

What is startling about Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan is not so much what it contains, but what it does NOT contain.

There is no mention of our Adversary in spiritual warfare. There is no mention of the Holy Spirit in Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan. Bob DeWaay exposes this fatal flaw in his new book *Redefining Christianity, Chapter Nine, Understanding the Purpose-Driven Movement*, 21st Century Press, 2006.

Where is the Prince of the Power of the Air described in Scripture, which any Biblical Peace plan must take into account?

“Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:” Ephesians 2:2

Satan still has temporary possession of the kingdoms of this earth; he offered them to Jesus as a temptation in the Wilderness at the Lord's First Coming. In fact, Satan will usher in a Global Peace with signs and wonders that will appear to defeat the giants of Rick Warren's P.E.A.C.E. Plan.

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high [places].” Ephesians 6:12

Warren's plan implies we can simply restore the earth to its Garden of Eden status *before* Christ returns, but no temporal worldwide peace plan can ultimately succeed until these principalities are conquered and defeated. This will be done by Jesus Christ himself on the Day of the Lord; when his enemies will be destroyed at the brightness of his Second Coming. Where are the principalities in Rick Warren's Peace Plan? Where is the war? When has the strong man been bound for good?

“Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? **and then** he will spoil his house.” Matthew 12:29

3. WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF EVIL?

If anyone on the earth should be able to define “evil”, it should be “America's Pastor,” but this is not the case. Here are some excerpts of what Rick Warren said at the July 2005 **Aspen Institute**, an organization that promotes the New Age [more accurately, the New World Order], where he was a featured speaker on the panel entitled: *The Problem of Evil*.⁹

“In fact, I don't think evil and sin are the same... We don't know the answers...we really don't...none of us are going to come out at the end of the day and say 'got that one figured out.' If you do please write the book on it and I will buy it....I don't think it [evil] is the same thing as sin...I don't consider myself an evil person because I sin...I think you have to reserve the word 'evil' for 'evil'....I haven't yet found a good definition of it...maybe Peter has. I was the one who suggested this topic by the way because I wanted to hear what Alan and Peter had to say about it because these are two men I have respected for years read all their stuff and I really came to take notes....We can become an evil person by making bad choices....I think evil is metastization where it just takes over....”

Later on in this panel discussion, Rick Warren continued...

“You're a good man (referring to Alan Wolfe)...**when we begin to compartmentalize our lives we're headed for evil [emphasis mine]**...I don't act one way with Alan and another way over here with Mrs. Resnick and another way over here with Alan Simpson...OK...I am the same no matter where I am. What you see is what you get. Rick Warren has integrity because he doesn't act one way with one crowd and another way with another crowd. He is integrated...and when what I see in our society today is a misunderstanding of character that thinks I can compartmentalize this area of my life and then go do this the next day and that's how they would justify it. And I think that total compartmentalization is a myth and moves us towards more and more evil.....as I pointed out yesterday, Abraham Lincoln and Washington said things that President Bush could never get away with today. There was far more God talk. Go to the Second Inaugural Address of Lincoln. Read it in the Lincoln Memorial. And it is full of God is on our side talk.”

I can't imagine any Christian wanting the pastor of their own church, let alone following him globally as the leader of hundreds of thousands of churches, to be someone who is still looking for a good definition of “evil.” Scripture tells us that “God's people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.” (Hosea 4:6a) We already have the ultimate authoritative book which defines “evil” and good: the Bible.

Rick Warren proceeds to remark that he doesn't know objectively what evil is, but that he would recognize it if he saw it. Are we to depend on his subjective assessment of what constitutes evil? We don't need Rick Warren's subjective assessment of what constitutes evil because we have the objective criteria. The word “evil” occurs 613 times in the Bible (KJV) and Scripture goes into elaborate detail defining and describing not only what evil is but *who* is evil. Subjective definitions of evil produced gnosticism and mysticism, Christianity's earliest heresies, as evidenced by the teachings of the Desert Fathers, now being imported into the church by Rick Warren and the Emerging Church Movements.¹⁰

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Contradicting his earlier statement that he could not find a good definition of evil, Rick Warren then goes on to define it by telling us that sin doesn't become evil until it *metastasizes*, that sin in and of itself is not yet evil. This may sound right, but is it? My father was a physician and often talked to me about the word *metastasize*, particularly as it corresponded to whether cancer was malignant. So when I heard Rick Warren describe the process and meaning of "metastasize," I knew he was wrong. Medically, **metastasize** is defined:

"To spread to another part of the body, usually through the blood vessels, lymph channels or spinal fluid."¹¹

This definition virtually echoes the Scriptural process of unholy leaven in a lump, i.e., it spreads until the entire loaf is leavened. When Jesus warns us of the leaven of the Pharisees and Herod, and when the apostle Paul cautions that a little leaven leavens the whole lump, they are not saying that leaven is not evil or wicked until it spreads (i.e., while it is still little), but it is already evil at the beginning *before* it spreads throughout the entire lump.

"Your glorying [is] not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?"
1 Corinthians 5:6

"A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Galatians 5:9

From Rick Warren's analogy, we would be led to believe that sin is not evil until it spreads. But sin is evil, period! It does not need to spread (metastasize) to become evil. Even if this were true, who decides at which point of sins' spread now qualifies as evil? Rick Warren? Scripture? It is supremely ironic that Rick Warren would give us this definition of evil because later on in the panel discussion Rick Warren warns of the danger of absolute power. He describes why there are three branches of government, to balance power and keep each branch in check (i.e., to keep it from fully metastasizing to become completely evil). Yet he retains absolute sovereignty in his own church and trains thousands of Purpose Driven Churches to vest a single pastor with the authority to cast the vision for the church through his surrogate Dan Southerland's Church Transitions organization, which has already trained 100,000 church leaders. Warren should heed his own advice given on *Larry King Live*: "You give a guy a little bit of power and they turn into Stalin."¹² And yet Rick Warren is quite forthright in announcing that he is going to be THE general of his billion-man Christian Army.¹³ Warren tells us Abraham Lincoln said that God is on our side, but that is not what Lincoln actually said. Here is Lincoln's comment from a conversation in the White House during the Civil War. Note that, in fact, Lincoln says quite the opposite of what Warren alleges:

"Sir, my concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God's side, for God is always right."

Warren also referred to Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address where we can read just how much God was on our side.¹⁴ (I did as Rick Warren suggested at the Aspen Conference...I looked up and read Lincoln's Second Inaugural address.)

Nothing like what Warren states is in this address. Lincoln did quote Jesus Christ from Matthew 18:7:

"The Almighty has His own purposes. 'Woe unto the world because of offenses; for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh.'"

A Christian leader or pastor should be able to discern evil and be a discerner of spirits. Otherwise, how does he detect doctrines of demons, false teachings, or when a wolf is in the sheepfold? But believers don't necessarily need to have the Holy Spirit Gift discernment to spot a false teaching or teacher. If we are good Bereans, we can ferret out a false teacher using the objective criteria of Scripture.

Rick Warren, by his own testimony, can't do that, and so why would we want him as "America's Pastor" as *Time Magazine* has dubbed him? I don't think so!

Further, it is clear Rick Warren does not recognize a false teacher or evil in his own midst (or at least does not mark him as such), Rev. Peter Gomes, his co-panelist, is openly gay¹⁵, and is a universalist (confirmed by him at the Aspen Conference when Rev. Gomes was asked about his new book). He is a Professor and Chairman of Christian Morals at the Harvard University -- what a mockery of God! But Warren proclaims that he is a great admirer of Gomes and has read *all* his works.

Rick Warren's effusive praise of Peter Gomes is quite ironic, given that Warren now distances himself from Dr. Robert Schuller, who is also a universalist.¹⁶ It is difficult to believe that Warren would discover that Schuller is a false teacher in only the last few years, when his full-blown heresies were in full public view in 1990 as he took his "self-esteem" gospel to Russia (a message mirrored in Warren's *March 2005 Ladies Home Journal* article). Schuller's departure from Orthodox Christianity can be documented as early as 1982 when he published his well-known book entitled: *Self-Esteem the New Reformation, Word, 1982*. (See the section in this document on "New Reformation.")

Rick Warren further states at the Aspen Conference that he does not compartmentalize, that he is the same before all audiences, and that he is not duplicitous. This statement is the height of absurdity! According to Warren's definition of evil, one who increasingly compartmentalizes his life, would then render Warren evil by his own definition as we read the doctrinal position statements of his Saddleback Church then compare it to his *March 2005 Ladies Home Journal* Column and you will clearly see how double-minded Rick Warren is.¹⁷

Who's Laughing?

Upon being informed of Neal Donald Walsch's New Age PEACE Plan, during an interview, **Rick Warren laughs**, then laughs again louder.¹⁸

Warren, who has been dubbed "America's Pastor" and who is continually voted one or two in polls as to who is the most influential evangelical leader in America, should GRIEVE at the many who will be led away from God by Neal Donald Walsch. Woe unto you who laugh now; blessed are those who mourn at the state of the world. Christian leaders and all Christians should following the example of Jeremiah. He did not think what the leaders of Israel were doing to his people was very funny. There is not one single example of Jesus or any of his Apostles laughing in the face of false teachings or false Peace Plans. Instead, they gave the strongest warnings. Did the Apostle Paul laugh when false teachers were threatening the Church of Ephesus?

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. **Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.**” Acts 20:28-31

Also see: *Another Possible Gospel of Robert Schuller's*¹⁹

James 1:8 says that a “double-minded man is unstable in all his ways”. Rick Warren does not and apparently can not discern good from evil, which may explain why he promotes false teacher after false teacher, as outlined in this document and the referenced resources. His own SHAPE program, based on the teachings of occultist Carl Jung who believed good and evil should be balanced and reconciled, belies the claim that Warren knows what he is talking about regarding the definition of evil, let alone the idea that he can be trusted to run a Christian Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan. When he does not blur the line between good and evil, he obliterates it.

"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" Isaiah 5:20

If the Lord Himself through Isaiah gives such a dire warning about calling evil good and good evil, wouldn't it be wise for all Christians to heed this warning? And how are we to heed it if we “we don't really have any good definition of evil?” Most assuredly, we don't want a pastor who doesn't have a handle on the definition himself, let alone seek to anoint him “America's Pastor.” A host of Christians do not abide with this title.

For an excellent chart on Rick Warren's leaven, see Greg DeVoignes *Hidden Leaven In The Church Growth Movement: How it got in* by Christian Research Ministries.²⁰

For a list of churches in your State or Country which have ALREADY imported the Purpose Driven leaven, go to the *Simplicity In Christ* website.²¹

4. WHO'S LEADING?

Rick Warren expects to train and lead a billion-man Christian army.²²

The obvious fuzzy math problem with this proclamation is that there aren't that many true Christians on the earth -- the majority will choose the wide highway to Hell:

“Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” Matthew 7:14 also see Matt. 20:16 and 22:14

“I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” Luke 18:8

Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan contains no enforcement clause or declaration of who will enforce it whereas in Jesus Christ's worldwide peace, Jesus himself will rule with a rod of iron:

“And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.” Revelation 12:5

It is Jesus Christ who will enforce the rule of ALL the nations, including the global governing of his worldwide plan of Peace (i.e., the Millennium). He will not be initiating Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan; he will be enforcing his own.

5. NEW REFORMATION

Rick Warren says his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan is the New Reformation.²³ However, Robert Schuller already said his Self-Esteem gospel is the New Reformation. He even wrote a book about it nearly 25 years *before* Rick Warren's plan²⁴

What does Rick Warren mean? As Christian author Warren Smith points out:

“The problems weren't new, but... his P.E.A.C.E. Plan methodology of confronting these 'Giants' would be a revolution”.²⁵

In Rick Warren's plan, P.E.A.C.E. is an acronym for: Planting Churches, Equipping Leaders, Assisting the Poor, Caring for the Sick, and Educating the Next Generation. The five 'Giants' he refers to which he plans to obliterate are: Spiritual emptiness, egocentric leadership, Extreme poverty, Pandemic Diseases, and Illiteracy and education.

“Even in villages where you cannot find a clinic, a store, a school, or a post office, you can often find a church. The PEACE Plan will address these five "giant" problems by Planting new churches... Equipping leaders... Assisting the poor...Caring for the sick... and Educating the next generation....I now believe that I know why God is blessing this book [his Purpose Driven Life] in such an unusual way. It is more than just a message that God wants to get out to everyone (which is huge). I now also see that God is using this phenomena to expand the platform for us to mobilize thousands of local churches for **global world missions through the PEACE plan.**”²⁶

From a Christian biblical perspective, global evangelism has always been the mission of the true church. However, this must be qualified. The church is led by elders who then equip the saints. In addition, the biblical references to the poor and sick refer first and foremost to saints of the household of God, and then to our enemies.

In promoting his Plan, Warren is redefining the mission of the church. His idea is that we are to wipe out world problems and make the world a better place to live in before Christ returns. His program screams of Dominionist Theology²⁷ which teaches that Christ can't return until the Church takes over the earth. And his billion man army reminds me of two other "army" movements in the name of Jesus: The **Army of Joel** and the **Manifest Sons of God** who promote the false teaching in which they think the Lord has given them a mandate to take over the earth for Jesus so that he can return.

Though "P" for Church Planting can still be found on Rick Warren's website describing his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan, he changed the acronym to have "P" stand for "Participation" in his keynote speech at the Religious Newswriters convention on Sept. 29, 2005,²⁸ where Warren states that he is getting 400,000 churches to participate in his plan. The mission of the church as defined in Matthew 28; Luke 24; and Acts 1 is to preach the gospel and CALL PEOPLE OUT OF THE WORLD. Once converted, people are taught to "obey everything that Jesus taught." Part of this teaching is giving alms, but that is hardly the key mission of the church, as Warren claims. In fact, Christ tells us NOT to give alms before men to be seen by men; Warren brags about his almsgiving to the whole world.

From a worldly perspective, history is replete with peace plans and men of peace...even those claiming the name of Jesus. Rick Warren thinks Muslims can help his peace plan with "spiritual lostness" (see Section on Islam for reference) in spite of the fact that they themselves are totally lost. Warren's plan is not new; it is simply revisionist history.

Rick Warren:

"GOD'S DREAM FOR YOU—AND THE WORLD" October 27, 2003 Email to Saddleback Church.²⁹

God never sleeps, so God doesn't dream (who could give God a dream?)! But even were God to have given Rick Warren his dream, God gives instructions which are 100% truth, not falsehood or any percent falsehood! One should also note that the dreams God does give even to non-believers in God, primarily are warnings and deal with judgment.

6. GUARANTEES SUCCESS

Rick Warren:

“The Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan IS GOING TO HAPPEN”³⁰

“You are not a part of Saddleback Church by accident...I say this without fear of exaggeration—God is going to use you, and all of us together at Saddleback, to change history!”³¹

Boasting about tomorrow:

“Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”
Proverbs 27:1

"Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what [shall be] on the morrow. For what [is] your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” James 4:13-14 KJV

“For that ye [ought] to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil. Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth [it] not, to him it is sin.” James 4:15-17

Other Scriptural warnings against Presumption:

Num 15:30, Dt 6:16, 18:20, Isa 45:9, 1Co 10:9, 2Peter 2:10, Gen 11:4, Num 14:44, 20:11; 2Ch 26:16, Luke 12:19

7. HOW IS IT FINANCED?

Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan's initial funding is generated by the royalties he receives from his book *The Purpose Driven Life* and tithes and offerings from his Saddleback Church in California. He also promotes reverse tithing.³² Additional income is derived from his companion books and study guides and the 115,000 pastors who subscribe to his Pastors.com Rick Warren Ministry Toolbox and pay to download his sermons. However, this is just seed money; his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan will require funding vastly exceeding what has currently been financed, if it is to transform every nation on earth.. To fully succeed, Rick Warren is going to have to forge alliances with Heads of State, Corporations, and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs).

I am utterly astonished that someone could write a book saturated with false teachings, promotion of false teachers, false translations, and even blueprints for how to practice psychology, then validate his own righteousness by declaring repeatedly how he is going to give 90% of the royalty income from his sales back to the church, charities, and of course, to finance his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan. Rick Warren has made his fortune by “causing my little children to stumble,” deceiving 30 million readers of his Purpose Driven Life book, leading astray 20,000 members of his own church, 400,000 church leaders he has trained, 20,000 churches in a host of denominations and 165 countries, which he hopes to turn into purpose-driven countries under the banner of his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan.³³

We also constantly hear of how modestly Rick Warren lives. This reminds me of the Vatican. The Pope isn't rich; the wealth is held by the Roman Catholic Church. However, as the absolute sovereign authority over its assets and distribution of funds, does he need to technically own anything? Likewise, Rick Warren has absolute authority over Saddleback Church and his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan. He is simply taking money from one pocket and putting it in the other; it is still in the same pair of pants. It would not matter if Rick Warren gained the whole world from the sales of his book and gave all of it to finance his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan, if his fortune was made from a book of false teachings. Warren should refund the money from his books sales, and his publisher Zondervan needs to remand and recall his book! Further, Christians and churches who bought his book should strongly consider having a bonfire and pitching his books into it, as the early Christians did in Acts 19:19 when they burned all of their magic arts scrolls.

Rick Warren has rejected correction and refused to make restitution -- the fruit of repentance. Even if there were such a person as “America's pastor,” Rick Warren has not met the first essential criteria: being faithful to God's Word. As a pastor, he must meet the requirement of an elder, to be able to rightly divide the truth. (For elder qualifications, see 1 Timothy 3.2-7 and Titus 1: 6-7, and the *Pastor is Master, Isn't He?* article³⁴. A true elder must defend, contend and confess The Faith without equivocation or waffling. It is bad enough that much of Warren's income was received from unsuspecting non-believers who could not discern the falsehood of his teachings. Even worse, he has plundered from tens of thousands of church treasuries and individual Christians who bought his book.

Some prominent Christian leaders who should know better say that before Jesus ever criticized anyone, he always found something good to say about them. This is inaccurate. Jesus did this with individual churches, as with five of the seven churches in Revelation, but he never did this with a false teacher. Neither did any of the prophets of the Old Testament nor any of the Apostles in the New Testament. NEVER! Christian leaders who defend Rick Warren think that giving profits to charity somehow sanctifies Warren's false teachings in the book which generated the royalties. Furthermore, even if the income came from honest gain, tithing should be voluntary. Warren forces members of his own church to sign tithing covenants,³⁵ putting Christians back under the law. The Apostle Paul condemned the Galatian church for doing that.

Paul teaches that we are NOT to give out of compulsion, but this doesn't stop Rick Warren. It would be bad enough were he to require this only of his own megachurch, but he trains leaders in his Purpose Driven Church franchises to do the same.

This still doesn't take into account the destruction left in Warren's wake in all of the churches who paid for his Purpose Driven Life book and materials, to facilitate transition from a New Testament church model to Purpose Driven church polity. Many members of these churches did

not just lose \$20 paying for one of Warren's books, they lost their church or were purpose-driven out. In many cases, these were senior members or charter members who had helped build their church. I wonder what all those saints forced out of their churches thought when Rick Warren had the audacity to state the following on *Larry King Live* on CNN:

“One is a reformation of the church in America and the other is a return of civility to society when people who disagree can still get along and like each other even if they disagree.”³⁶

For documented case studies of the consequences for Christians who opposed Rick Warren's teachings and refusal to sign his covenants, see *Spiritual Euthanasia*³⁷

Also see Bob DeWaay *Redefining Christianity, Understanding the Purpose-Driven Movement*, 21st Century Press, 2006, and Dr. Noah Hutchings, *The Dark Side of the Purpose Driven Church*, Bible Belt Publishing, Southwest Radio Church, p. 8. 2005.

Rick Warren tells us how much he is giving to the church and repeatedly advertises this in the market place. So let's see what the Lord commands regarding this practice:

"Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest [thine] alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly." Matthew 6:1-4

As bad as it is how Rick Warren made his fortune in the first place, as bad as it is that he touts it before men, as bad as it is what happened to a host of saints who resisted his teachings and takeover of churches, and as bad as it is that the unholy leaven of Warren's teachings has virtually if not permanently taken over once God-fearing sound doctrine churches, imagine the greater consequences for using the income from his false teachings and spiritual abuse of authority to finance components of his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan outlined in this document. Warren may succeed with his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan; after all, he has guaranteed it. But what will be the cost? Who will pick up the pieces of the dismembered Christians left chewed up by the propeller in the wake of his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan once it is consummated? There is no room at Rick Warren's table for those Christians he calls “resisters.” His co-conspirator Dan Sutherland of Church Transitions calls leaders who oppose or question this movement 'Sanballats,¹³⁸ but there will be room at the table for all true saints who will take their place when they sit at the Wedding Supper of the Lamb. See Matthew 26:26-29 and Revelation 19:19

8. FEAR OF THE LORD

It is not surprising that there are no published statements by Rick Warren mentioning the fear of the Lord in his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan, because he does not teach it in his *Purpose Driven Life* book, the trunk from which the branch of his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan grew. In fact, he teaches the opposite:

“We give ourselves to him, **not out of fear or duty**, but in love.” *The Purpose Driven Life*, page 77, Zondervan, 2005.

It is not surprising that Rick Warren leaves out the fear of the Lord, as later he states:

“We obey God, **not out of duty or fear** or compulsion, but because we *love* him and trust that he knows what is best for us.” *The Purpose Driven Life*, page 95, Zondervan, 2005.

And a third time:

“**We don't serve God out of guilt or fear** or even duty, but out of joy, and deep gratitude for what he's done for us.” *The Purpose Driven Life*, page 228, Zondervan, 2005.

Warren quotes Psalm 147:11 (CEV):

“The Lord is pleased only with those who worship him and trust his love.” *The Purpose Driven Life*, page 64, Zondervan, 2005.

In the spirit of omission so prevalent in Warren's publications, this mangled translation takes away the most important qualifier—the most important phrase—“**for those who fear him.**”

“**The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him**, in those that hope in his mercy.” —Psalm 147:11 KJV. According to *Strong's Lexicon*, the Hebrew word for “fear” is 'yare' which means reverence and fear.

But of course we obey and give ourselves to Him out of the fear of the Lord. For more documentation on the fear of the Lord, see the article *Fear of the Lord* (Rock Salt Publishing) and *Who's Driving the Purpose Driven Church?*, Chapter 3, p.34, Bible Belt Publishers, 2004.

Scripture says much about fearing the Lord:

“The fear of the LORD [is] the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy [is] understanding.” Proverbs 9:10

"There is no fear of God before their eyes" Romans 3:18. According to *Strong's Lexicon*, the Greek for “fear” here is “phobos” which means “fear, dread, terror, reverence”.

“Let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and *godly fear*. For our God is a consuming fire.” Hebrews 12:28-29

Without this critical ingredient, Rick Warren's P.E.A.C.E. Plan does not have a legitimate beginning or foundation.

There is no expiration date on the fear of the Lord (it will be present even during the Millennium, Jesus Christ's Global Peace Plan on earth); any true peace plan for the earth must contain this pillar. The Antichrist's peace platform certainly won't contain it. At the end of the Age, an angel from Heaven affirms that fearing the Lord is an everlasting command which therefore must extend it through the Millennium:

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the **everlasting gospel** to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, **Fear God, and give glory to him**;.....” Revelation 14:6-7

9. BLOOD OF JESUS

Rick Warren quotes 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 (he doesn't cite translation, but it is from the CEV):

“God sent Christ to make peace between himself and us”³⁹

A sound and complete version of these verses will say:

“And all things [are] of God, who hath **reconciled** us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of **reconciliation**.” 2Corinthians 5:18 KJV

“To wit, that God was in Christ, **reconciling the world unto himself**, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.”
2Corinthians 5:19

Reconciling all mankind to God requires exclusively the applied shed blood of Jesus Christ. As that discerning old lady in that old hamburger commercial asked 'Where's the beef?', we need to be asking of Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. plan: “Where's the 'blood' (of Jesus)?”

“And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood there is no remission (forgiveness)” Hebrews 9:22

10. PEACE AS THE WORLD KNOWS

Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan is peace as the world knows it. The World loves his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan because it prescribes a peaceful kingdom *now* for the earth rather than “Thy Kingdom Come” (when Christ returns). Warren seeks to prepare a place for us that where we are, Jesus may be also. **But Jesus has gone to Heaven to prepare a place for us that where he is, we may be also.**

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: **not as the world giveth**, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” John 14:27

“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.” Matthew 10:34 (Luke 12:51)

“For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.” I Thessalonians 5:3

“They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.” 1John 4:5-6

For an in depth study of how this applies to Rick Warren's teachings, see: See Bob DeWaay's book *Redefining Christianity, Understanding the Purpose-Driven Movement*, 21st Century Press, 2006.

The world hates true Christians because their message is that God's peace plan requires repentance and reconciliation to Christ alone:

“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before [it hated] you.” John 15:18

“Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.” 1John 3:13

“Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.” Luke 6:26

11. WRATH OF THE LAMB

Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan is a Dominionist⁴⁰, "Kingdom Now" Peace Plan. He completely turns eschatology upside down and what isn't upended has glaring omissions of critical Biblical End Times passages!

Only until the Captain of the Hosts, the true leader of the billion-man (or more) army, the Lord himself descends, will the real Global Peace Plan (The Millennial Kingdom) be inaugurated. See Revelation 19-21. Also see Dr. Noah Hutchings, *The Dark Side of the Purpose Driven Church*, Belt Publishing, Southwest Radio Church, p. 8. 2005.

Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan contains no plan for destroying the Antichrist, False Prophet, and binding Satan.

Jesus Christ will destroy Antichrist and False Prophet with the breath of his nostrils at (AND NOT BEFORE) his return and cast Satan into the bottomless pit for the thousand year reign of His Millennium.

If Warren's plan succeeds, it will leave most of the population on the earth intact, absent the wrath of the Lamb.

Just prior to and in conjunction with the Lord's return, "There will be wars and at least one-half the world's population will be killed..."⁴¹

Rick Warren consummates his final peace plan for the earth without war. But this is impossible because the global peace that the Lord will personally bring to the earth when he returns will not happen until the Lord first sends the Four Horses of the Apocalypse, in particular the red horse who will take peace from the earth:

"And there went out another horse [that was] red: and [power] was given to him that sat thereon **to take peace from the earth**, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword." Revelation 6:4

When the Lord returns, he will first make global war before he inaugurates his Global Peace plan, better known as The Millennial Thousand Year Reign of Christ.

"And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from **the wrath of the Lamb**: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Revelation 6:15-17

Even if the saints as the church could take dominion of the earth before the Lord's return, they could not do so until after the Antichrist is temporarily given power to make war against them and conquer them!!

“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.” Revelation 13:7

So there will be no permanent final global peace until these things be fulfilled. Then and then only will the Scripture be fulfilled:

“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, **The kingdoms of this world are become [the kingdoms] of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.”** Revelation 11:15

See Revelation Chapters 19-20 for more details.

12. ISRAEL

Warren has already approved of his *Purpose Driven Life* book to be translated into Hebrew by MAOZ Ministries to soon be distributed in Israel.⁴²

The long term impact of MAOZ Ministry in Israel presenting and translating Warren's *Purpose Driven Life* book into Hebrew to distribute to Israel:

Warren is already in the process of turning Rwanda into a Purpose Driven Country with his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan, and he now has his sights set on Israel. His idea of a Global P.E.A.C.E. plan is to go into a village and form an alliance with a “man of peace.” This could be a Muslim Cleric in charge of the Temple Mount. Were Arafat still alive, the winner of the Nobel "Peace" Prize, he would have been “the man of peace” for the Palestinians. He would not sign the last peace plan because he said he would be assassinated for giving up absolute rule of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, which he said belonged in total to all Muslims. This book campaign by MAOZ will help pave the way for Warren to get Israel to sign one of his Peace Plan Covenants to convert Israel into a Purpose Driven Country. (Remember, Rick Warren's plan is global, so it must include Israel).

Warren has already formed an unholy alliance with the United Nations and even brags how they are interested in his P.E.A.C.E. Plan. Here is some recent proof that the United Nations is the enemy of Israel;

“The United Nations held a "Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People" last week. A large map of “Palestine,” with Israel literally wiped off the map, featured prominently in the festivities. The ceremony was held at the UN headquarters in New York and was attended by Secretary General Kofi Annan and the Presidents of the UN Security Council and the General Assembly....During the festivities, a map labeled a "map of Palestine" was displayed prominently between UN and PLO flags. The map, with “Palestine” written in Arabic atop it, does not include Israel, a member of the UN for 56 years.”⁴³

Let us take warning about The Man of Peace who will sign a covenant with Israel with this Scripture prophecy:

“And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and **he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many**; he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.” Daniel 8:25

“**And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week**; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make [it] desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.” Daniel 9:27

Also see Psalm 83,⁴⁴ which describes what the Lord is going to do to the surrounding nations who will come to take plunder of Israel.

Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan is a plan put in place without addressing *Jacob's Trouble*(see Jeremiah 30:7), which must FIRST come before the Lord's Global Kingdom of the Prince of Peace is established on earth!

Take warning! We must be on guard against THE man of peace who will destroy many with peace...a man who loves covenants and enforces them...will it be The Covenant with Israel? This man of peace will do away with resisters to his peace plan and those who refuse to sign his covenant. Rick Warren has already trained tens of thousands of pastors how to get rid of what he calls "resisters" and "pillars" who would refuse to sign his covenants. We have already witnessed what happens to saints in a host of denominations who dare to oppose his teachings and refuse to sign his covenants.⁴⁵ Also see Dr. Noah Hutchings, *The Dark Side of the Purpose Driven Church*, Belt Publishing, Southwest Radio Church, p. 8. 2005.

13. INCLUDES MUSLIMS

In an interview at **The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life**, describing his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan, Rick Warren states in reference to “they” in referring to leaders in any village in the world that Rick Warren will recruit to participate in his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan:

“They don’t have to be a Christian. In fact, **they could be a Muslim,**”⁴⁶

Here are two more quotes regarding his position on Islam:

“**I would trust any imam** or priest or rabbi to know what is going on in a community before I would any government agency.’

But, powerful as churches can be in working for the powerless, they can't succeed without governments and nongovernmental organizations, Warren said.

Warren predicts that fundamentalism, of all varieties, will be 'one of the big enemies of the 21st century...Muslim fundamentalism, Christian fundamentalism, Jewish fundamentalism, secular fundamentalism - they're all motivated by fear. Fear of each other.’⁴⁷

One of the pillars of Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan is to “Plant Churches” (i.e., it is the “P” in P.E.A.C.E.) even though, depending on his audience, he says the “P” stands for *participation*). But it should be obvious to every Christian that **MUSLIMS DON'T PLANT CHURCHES**. They wouldn't plant churches any more than they would build a Jewish Temple or synagogue. Though there are Christian churches in some Arab countries, there are none in Saudi Arabia, the center of Islam. In fact, the Islamic “Global Peace” Plan is to destroy churches. In Islamic Law, according to the Koran and the Haddiths, there is no room for Jews, Christians or a Jewish nation. Their global peace plan divides the world into two spheres: the House of Peace (Submission) and the House of War. Once all infidels (yes that's us) are destroyed, there will only be the House of Peace (submission). It won't contain the Nation of Israel, and it won't have Jesus sitting on David's Throne. Matching the Apostle John's own definition of the spirit of the antichrist, Islam does not believe that Jesus Christ is God who came in the flesh. Rick Warren is proposing unholy alliances with not just Islam, but any religion which qualifies as a candidate according to these Scriptures:

“Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is **antichrist**, that denieth the Father and the Son.” 1John 2:22

“And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that [spirit] of **antichrist**, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.” 1John 4:3

“For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an **antichrist**.” 2John 1:7

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in [them]; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean [thing]; and I will receive you,"
2Corinthians 14-17

Rick Warren bases this component of his Peace Plan on this Scripture:

“And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.” Luke 10:6

However, this Scripture actually refutes Warren’s contention. Even if this “man of peace” were a Muslim, he would have to repent of being a Muslim and be born again as believer in Creator/Messiah Jesus Christ and renounce Islam.

“Thou wilt keep [him] in perfect peace, [whose] mind [is] stayed [on thee]: because he trusteth in thee.” Isaiah 26:3

A Muslim's mind certainly is not stayed on Jesus Christ, our only Lord and Savior, but on Allah! Yet Rick Warren believes a Muslim in any village could help him build his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan.

For more information and Scriptural support describing Islam's Plan for Global Peace and worldwide domination, see *Islamic Jesus vs. Biblical Jesus*.⁴⁸ Here is a list of twenty comparisons addressed in this article between the Islamic Jesus whom Muslims call “Isa” and the Biblical Jesus. The Islamic position on the identity of Jesus is taken from the Koran and Haddiths, which together comprise the ultimate authority in Islam. Most Muslims are not aware of most of these texts. Likewise, most Christians are not thoroughly versed in their own Biblical Scriptures defending or describing the identity of Christ, let alone the Islamic Scriptures describing Christ.

Muslim Jesus vs. Biblical Jesus: Twenty Scriptural Reasons Why They Are Not the Same Jesus

A Compilation and Comparison by James Sundquist

1. Islamic Jesus was created and not eternal
2. Islamic Jesus is not the Lamb of God who was slain
3. Islamic Jesus will not return until Judgment Day
4. Islamic Jesus prophesied (but did not send) the coming of Mohammad

(Islamic Jesus did not send the Holy Spirit)

5. Islam says Salvation is found only in the Five Pillars of Islam
6. Islamic Jesus is an involuntary Slave to Allah
7. Islamic Jesus was never crucified and therefore was not resurrected
8. Islamic Jesus is not the God in the flesh as the Messiah
9. Islamic Jesus can not be worshiped
10. Islamic Jesus not fit to be intercessor
11. Islamic Jesus will judge by the Law of the Quran and not by the Gospel
12. Islamic Jesus is simply another prophet
13. Islamic Jesus lands on a Minaret in Damascus, Syria
14. Islamic Jesus returns on the wings of two angels
15. Islamic Jesus destroys Antichrist at Lydda (in Israel)
16. Islamic Jesus who returns will not be pierced
17. Islamic Jesus will marry a woman and have children
18. Islamic Jesus will break every cross
19. Islamic Jesus will die forty years after his return
20. RE LOVE: (There is no concept of Agape Love found in either the Koran or the Haddiths).

See full article for the scriptural truth compared to the lies from the writings of Islam. (Courtesy *BE ALERT* Newsletter, Moriel Ministries, November 5, 2005)⁴⁹

I strongly encourage you to read Simon Altaf's new book entitled *Yeshua or Isa?* Simon Altaf is a former Sunni Muslim, now a devout Christian and scholar. He concurs that it is impossible for any Muslim to be a candidate for Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan.⁵⁰

Islam also has a completely different Angel Gabriel than the Bible teaches. Islam teaches that Gabriel said that Mohammad is The Comforter referred to in our Scripture. The Bible teaches that Gabriel announces the birth of Jesus our Messiah. But it was Jesus who then said that the Holy Spirit is the Comforter that Jesus alone would send. This was confirmed and fulfilled in the Book of Acts at Pentecost, several hundred years before Mohammad was even born.

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another **Comforter**, that he may abide with you for ever;” John 14:16

“But **the Comforter**, [which is] the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John 14:26

“But when **the Comforter** is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, [even] the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.” John 15:26

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, **the Comforter** will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.” John 16:7

“ But ye shall receive power, after that the **Holy Ghost** is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. Acts 1:8.

Muslims have beheaded Christians and Jews for fifteen hundred years and will be responsible for beheading of Christians in the Antichrist's Global Empire, believing they are doing God a favor:

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and [I saw] the souls of them that were **beheaded** for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received [his] mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” Revelation 20:4

Islam has a different Jesus, a different Gabriel, a different Comforter, and a different Peace Plan. Yet Rick Warren wants to form alliances with Muslims to implement his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan?

14. NEHEMIAH COVENANT

Rick Warren uses the fact that Nehemiah invoked a covenant in Israel in the Old Testament as a rationale that he has the right to invoke them in the church. In the following interview, Richard Abanes asks Warren:

“Why do you have covenants? Some people say they're cultic.”

Rick Warren:

“Is the **Nicene Creed** cultic?”⁵¹

“This weekend, I'll unveil our Global P.E.A.C.E plan”⁵²

So was this P.E.A.C.E. Plan of Rick Warren's like the Council of Nicea for the whole world, where many Christian leaders met to represent all Christians? Surely a key difference is that the Nicene Creed isn't a covenant. It is a statement of faith, a summary of beliefs and doctrines outlined in Scripture, reflecting Orthodox Christianity, not a promise about certain church ordinances. This can't be compared to Rick Warren's covenants. Warren has made a false analogy. Ironically, the Nicene Creed was the product of an ultimatum set down by the Emperor Constantine (another example of the Leaven of Herod) in 325 A.D. In like manner, Rick Warren forces compliance with his own covenants.

Nehemiah's Covenant was a renewal of an existing covenant, not a new one. In addition, the existing covenant was God's, not man's. The laws enumerated in chapters 9-10 in Nehemiah were laws already given by God to the Israelites through Moses. Note in verse 29 of Chapter 10 that the covenant was also a curse, and the oath was to bind themselves back to the Law of Moses and back to its curses. Warren is seeking to put his congregation back under the Law; the very thing Paul condemned the churches in Galatia for attempting to do! What was Rick Warren thinking? His list of requirements were NOT given by God to the Church but by Rick Warren himself. In fact, they defy Christ's own commands regarding oaths. Even Nehemiah did not take the draconian measures against the Israelites who did NOT sign the Covenant that Rick Warren has trained Purpose Driven Church pastors and Purpose Driven Churches to do with members who refuse to sign his covenants. Imagine what Nehemiah would think of Rick Warren holding negotiations with an Islamic leader in Jerusalem regarding the desirability of Nehemiah building a wall around Jerusalem. Israel should mark Rick Warren as a national security threat!

In defending covenants, Rick Warren compares the relationship of a Christian and the Church to a marriage. Such a comparison would lead us to believe that Christians are the Bride of Christ and the Church is the Groom. This violates every passage in Scripture which clearly states that Christ is THE GROOM. The Church is simply the collection of individual Christians who comprise the as-yet-unconsummated Bride of Christ. This false analogy is one of the most important keys to see how Rick Warren has deceived the church into swearing loyalty to him and the pastors he recruits in churches throughout the world. Warren's mandatory covenant creates misplaced loyalty and a false foundation for church government, completely corrupting the church and those who sign on to Warren's form of government. For more information exposing the fatal flaws of this type of church government and polity, see: ***Pastor is Master, Isn't He?***, **The PZ Insider Report – Where has all the discernment gone?** © Sunday, November 6, 2005.

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You can also listen to Rick Warren's interview on the *Drew Marshall Show* and James Sundquist's interview response to Rick Warren (scroll down to July 2).⁵³

There is only one New Covenant for Christians! See Jesus Christ's and the Apostle James' warnings about more oaths and covenants beyond the New Covenant! Matthew 5:33-37, and James 5:12. Also see *Who's Driving the Purpose Driven Church?* Chapter Two, Bible Belt Publishing, 2004.⁵⁴

15. ABUSE OF AUTHORITY

Documentation and case studies of the consequences of refusing to sign Rick Warren's covenants and opposing his teachings can be found in the following:

Spiritual Euthanasia

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT • VOL. 28 - NO. 3 SUMMER 2005 PAGE 13, **Al Dager Director**

Bob DeWaay, *Redefining Christianity, Understanding the Purpose-Driven Movement*, 21st Century Press, 2006

&

Dr. Noah Hutchings, *Dark Side of the Purpose Driven Church*, Bible Belt Publishing, Southwest Radio Church, 2005.⁵⁵

In spite of the pandemic abuse of spiritual authority documented above, the **Council for Christian Colleagues and Universities** is now adding insult to injury...a reproach to all of these victims, by awarding Rick and Kay Warren the Mark O. Hatfield Award for Christian Leadership at the 2006 CCCU International Forum on Christian Higher Education.⁵⁶ The CCCU, to date, is still going through with this award, in spite of all of the documentation I sent them on Rick Warren. There has been no response to my subsequent follow-up sent them on Rick Warren.

16. FALSE TEACHINGS AND FALSE BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan is built on the foundation of his *Purpose Driven Church*, *Purpose Driven Life* (now sold over 30 million copies), and his Discovery 101, 201, 301 (SHAPE), and 401 Classes. His Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan is the outgrowth of his Discovery 401 Class which is the global component, though everything he teaches has already gone global, Discovery Class 401 is a more detailed blueprint involving the nations of the world.

“God accepts me as I already am,” according to Rick Warren's March 2005 *Ladies Home Journal* column...and in his series every month after that first article. See Paul Proctor's article: *It's Your Choice*.⁵⁷

This is diametrically and diabolically opposed to Scripture:

“He that hath the Son hath life; [and] he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” 1John 5:12

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the **wrath of God abideth** on him” John 3:36

For more information documenting Rick Warren's own false teachings, see Chapter Four of *Who's Driving the Purpose Driven Church?* Chapter 4,⁵⁸ see also sites documenting Rick Warren's false translations of the Bible⁵⁹ and *Who's Driving the Purpose Driven Church?*, Chapter Three, Bible Belt Publishing, 2004.⁶⁰ and *What are the Roots of Purpose Driven Church* color chart.⁶¹

17. SECRECY

Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan is built on the foundation of his Purpose Driven Church teachings which include secretly introducing heresies into the church by training leaders (while not telling the congregation) how to remove “resisters” and “pillars” in the church and forcing members to sign his covenants. Here is an example from a long-time member of a church in Michigan:

“The pastor and the rest of the 'staff' disappeared for a week to some secret Southern location and none could 'disclose' the reason. Top secret,” without the congregation knowing anything about where they went or why they went, but it was to obtain training in Rick Warren's leadership principles on how deal with anyone opposing Rick Warren's teachings.”

Location:

Safe Harbor Church
3552 South Pipestone Rd.
Sodus , MI 49126 , a Church of God Prophecy Church

And here is what has been going on at Grace Assembly in Wake Forest, NC:

“Resisters were pushed out not just for opposing Rick Warren, but for merely asking what was going on, or for pointing out error. It is now evident that some were removed because they actually resisted the "Transitioning" methods. Many left on their own, not really understanding the undercurrents, but after being hurt by being removed from their positions, sometimes learning about their removal from someone else, or even in the church bulletin! If covenants were required, it was only on staff. I have been told that staff members were not to talk about certain things. My estimate of departed members/attendees is between 45 and 60, most of them staffers or leadership and/or volunteer workers from a church of 150 to 200. There are many more who came and left quickly, before becoming involved.”⁶²

And here is what Scripture says about secret things:

“The secret [things belong] unto the LORD our God: but those [things which are] revealed [belong] unto us and to our children for ever, that [we] may do all the words of this law.” Deuteronomy 29:29

The secret things belong to God, not to Rick Warren, who privily (secretly) introduces these heresies in churches just like Safe Harbor (which is no longer a safe harbor). The saints there couldn't defend themselves until it was too late!

“And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in **privily** to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:” Galatians 2:4

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who **privily** shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.” 2Peter 2:1

“Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, **neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth [them] out of the church.**” 3John 1:10

“I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.” 3John 1:19

18. PERFECT PEACE OR IMPERFECT PEACE?

Rick Warren said that as his plan was developed and perfected, it would be shared with all of the other churches around the world. Warren's 5-Step P.E.A.C.E. Plan format is similar to one proposed by New Age leader Neale Donald Walsch, who also claimed to be inspired by God.⁶³

Rick Warren's Peace Plan and other teachings copied from others

- SHAPE (was already created by Joe Weider, fitness giant)
- Purpose-Driven already published by Tony Robbins (search Amazon for details)
- Personality Profile ("P") in SHAPE already conceived by Carl Jung
- 5 Point PEACE Plan already conceived by Neale Donald Walsh
- God's Dream (Robert Schuller and Bruce Wilkinson)

God's Peace Plan and Blueprint is original and perfect and already given by Divine Revelation of Scripture. By contrast, Rick Warren first gets input from non-Christians and pagan leaders to formulate his peace plan, THEN he tells the churches. He will share it with them after seeking counsel from the ungodly, without even having received the churches' input, accountability, or correction from fellow elders at his own church or churches all over the world?

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James 1:17

Christians certainly can use the word peace. However, to claim a blueprint is directly from God when it can easily be confused with a New Ager's Global P.E.A.C.E. plan raises a concern. God is not the author of confusion; a clear and DISTINCT signal would be sent by him:

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? I
Corinthian 14:8

"For God is not [the author] of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." I
Corinthians 14:33

If Rick Warren's P.E.A.C.E. Plan is really inspired from God as he claims, it should already arrive perfect. It wouldn't need perfecting! Furthermore, Jesus Christ's Global Peace Plan is inaugurated at his return, not before. When it begins, there will be NO wicked on the earth, only mortal believers and immortal glorified saints, for he will have destroyed the wicked, the AntiChrist (and his peace plan), and bound Satan!

"[There is] no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Isaiah 57:21

19. WHAT ABOUT THE CURSES?

I have already addressed some of the glaring omissions in Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan, but there are two contingencies which he fails to account for which would also prevent his plan from succeeding. First, he does not mention that the reason the five “giants” he identifies exist in the first place is because of the curse in the Garden of Eden due to the Fall of Adam. The whole earth is under judgment and will remain so until Christ returns to reverse the curse. It is not a question of what we can do to reverse the curse in an attempt to usher in Global Peace but of who must reverse it. It can't happen until Christ returns to set up his kingdom. Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan is just another human potential movement. Second, Warren does not mention the curse at the Tower of Babel where God confounded the languages. Prior to that time, the world spoke one language; an impostor peace plan is one which still retains the confusion of languages. This still remains yet another still-binding judgment of God on mankind.

Rick Warren touts human potential, but human potential was at the core of why God destroyed the Tower of Babel. Had God not destroyed the tower, the people desired could have achieved anything, including a global man-made peace plan. The real global peace plan will be Christ's kingdom he sets up on earth when he returns, and when he does, he will reverse this curse as well. The Antichrist may attempt to do this, but anyone other than Christ himself who tries doing it is a pretender.

Even if Rick Warren were to succeed in slaying his five giants (which he has guaranteed), his P.E.A.C.E. plan is still inferior to the peace plan the Lord himself will set up. However, it lines up perfectly with Satan's peace plan. The counterfeit peace plan must first come, ushered in by the Antichrist, before the Lord's global peace will be ushered in by the Lord himself. Christians should not buy into any global peace plan that will precede the Lord's worldwide peace plan.

The Lord's Prayer tells us “thy kingdom *come*,” Rick Warren promises us kingdom *now*! Jesus Christ told us that the time when he will set up his kingdom on earth is determined by the Father. Jesus Christ's Global Kingdom of Peace can not be set up until he restores the kingdom of Israel when he returns. Jerusalem will be the capital of the world, and Israel will be the preeminent nation on earth. It will not determined by Rick Warren.

“When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, **It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.**” Acts 1:6-7

20. ALLIANCES

Rick Warren had been talking to world leaders over the last year, getting their opinions and factoring them into his 5-Step P.E.A.C.E. Plan⁶⁴ He recruits Soldiers from the Enemy Camp, or promotes them, or votes for for enemy camp, including those who endorse Rick Warren's teachings:

Here are just a few examples of the unholy alliances Rick Warren has formed leading up to the launch of his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan:

August Turak (New Ager) Warren voted \$100,000 Grand prize (unanimously) **Templeton Foundation *Power of Purpose*** Awards, 2004

Peter Drucker

Philip Yancey⁶⁵

Richard Foster⁶⁶

Rwanda: First Purpose-Driven Nation; President Paul Kagame, Summer 2005.⁶⁷

Bill Hybels who promotes occultist Carl Jung (MBTI) and gave Muslim Cleric a platform and spoke with Rick Warren and Blanchard at Willowcreek Sumulcast Summit, August 2005

Richard Abanes, *Rick Warren and the Purpose that Drives Him* [Harvest House] book which promotes Rick Warren and slanders critics. Rick Warren promotes this book. James Walker, President, **Watchman Fellowship**, endorses Richard Abane's book on Rick Warren.

Youth Specialities⁶⁸

Nicky Gumbel (ALPHA COURSE)⁶⁹

Ken Blanchard⁷⁰

Ken Blanchard was the featured speaker at First Assembly of God Church in Phoenix on November 27, 2005. I listened to this sermon on compact disc. I was so shocked and dismayed at the list of false teachers he embraced in this speech, I was compelled to write Tommy Barnett, their Senior Pastor, who had invited him. To date he has not responded to any of my emails or follow-up inquiries. Here are some excerpts from that letter:

December 9, 2005

Dear Pastor Tommy Barnett,

I just finished hearing the CD of Ken Blanchard speaking at your church recently.

I can only hope you are simply not aware of Ken Blanchard's teachings and endorsements, including many he touted in his sermon to your congregation.

The most startling of all was his glowing view of Nelson Mandela. Are you aware that Mandela is a devout Marxist? Here is a quote from Mandela...can you possibly think this is Christian that Blanchard would be his devotee?

NELSON MANDELLA:

“When you don’t feel good about yourself, it is hard to feel good about anything or anyone else... The only way to get out of this vicious cycle is to begin to believe in ourselves... You are a child of God... We are all meant to shine as children do. We are born to manifest the glory of God that is within us. It’s not just in some of us it’s in everyone...

Don’t wait therefore for someone to tell you how wonderful you are. Just simply believe it, know it! Look deep within yourself. As we get to know and affirm ourselves for who we are, we become aware of the divinity that we share. What better place to find God than within ourselves.”⁷¹

I find it equally astonishing that you or at least one wise among your congregation would not stand up and challenge Ken Blanchard's glowing endorsement of Norman Vincent Peale, a mentor to Robert Schuller, whose heresies are well-known. Blanchard further endorses, in his sermon to your congregation, Rick Warren (SHAPE), Bill Hybels and Zig Ziglar, who all three promote occultist Carl Jung's Temperament Divination and Personality Profiling. I proved that Warren is a false teacher in my last email to you. Blanchard also promotes Jung via DISC Profiling, invented by Wonder Woman comic strip author William Moulton Marsden who used Jung archetypes to create a female heroine who put men in bondage).⁷²

Blanchard also spoke glowingly of John Ortberg, who signed a letter⁷³ to President Bush appealing to him to give some of the land of Israel to the Palestinians, bringing a curse upon himself from God to anyone who tampers with Israel's God given boundaries. (God has married ["Beulah"] that land to Israel...no one else has a right to divide it up...read Psalm 83 if you doubt what God will do to those who dare to carve up the Land of Israel). Blanchard also commends Bob Buford whose account and defense of Mother Teresa (95%) [Percent represents Buford's idea that she only need 5% to close the gap to 100% between her and the Lord]*, who saw no reason to convert a Buddhist, is beyond the pale.

I remain shocked and saddened that you would not know about at least some of these false teachers that Blanchard promotes and endorses. I was compelled to bring this all to the attention of the listeners of Sonlife Radio Network (72 stations), and will continue to do so in the upcoming national radio interviews I will be doing in 2006 exposing Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan vs. Scripture.

I hope and pray that you take heed to my words and those of Dr. Opal Reddin [in her October 27, 2005 open letter of appeal and warning to all Assembly of God Churches, which she wrote on her deathbed, one month before she was promoted to Glory. [Dr. Reddin was a matriarch in the Assemblies of God denomination]**. I have spent thousands of hours researching these men's teachings. I also hope that you go before your own congregation and repent for having brought Ken Blanchard to speak to and mingle with your flock.

Kindest regards in Christ,

James Sundquist
Director
Rock Salt Publishing

*Brackets added since this letter was sent in order to explain 95% reference to Mother Teresa.

**Brackets added since this letter was sent in order to identify Dr. Reddin for the reader.

Faith Based Initiative which will dock neatly with Rick Warren's SHAPE Program and his databasing his members

President Bush who has said Islam is a religion of peace and thinks surrendering the Land God gave to Israel will bring peace.

Chuck Colson (ECT signatory)

Hugh Ross (astronomer)

For documentary expose on Dr. Hugh Ross' false teachings see; James Sundquist, *DOES GOD EXPECT MAN TO BE ABLE TO TELL TIME? THE AGE OF THE EARTH & THE FUTURE OF THE EARTH*⁷⁴

Roman Catholic Church

Here is a quote from Rick Warren, who addressed 2,400 theologically conservative Anglicans on November 12, 2005 at *Hope and A Future* conference of the Anglican Communion Network, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, during an interview:

Rick Warren: "I really do feel that these people are brothers and sisters in God's family. I am looking to build bridges with the Orthodox Church, looking to build bridges with the Catholic Church, with the Anglican church, and say 'What can we do together that we have been unable to do by ourselves?' "⁷⁵

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For extensive documentation on Roman Catholicism and Rick Warren's alliance, see Richard Bennett's (former Roman Catholic priest) Berean Beacon site.⁷⁶

&

Roger Oakland's, **Understand the Times** site, particularly *Upon This Rock: Biblical Christianity and Catholicism* - 7 DVD's 12 presentations.⁷⁷

I also refer you to **Factnet** for more information on Roman Catholicism.⁷⁸

Nonbelievers Too Can Be Saved, Says Pope Benedict XVI:

“Whoever seeks peace and the good of the community with a pure conscience, and keeps alive the desire for the transcendent, will be saved even if he lacks biblical faith, says Benedict XVI.”⁷⁹ (Special thanks to *BE ALERT* Newsletter)

This is a supremely ironic a hypocritical statement, given that when this pope was Cardinal Ratzinger, as guardian of Doctrine for Roman Catholicism issued the following instructions:

The Vatican told Roman Catholic theologians that it will not tolerate public dissent from church teachings.⁸⁰

It should not come as a surprise to pastors promoting Rick Warren's programs, is that dissent is not tolerated in Purpose Driven Churches either, as I point out in my *Spiritual Euthansia* article.

The irony of Pope Benedict's statement is further compounded by the fact that the Council of Trent, which is still binding, anathematizes everyone who is not Roman Catholic wherein no one can be saved unless they are Roman Catholic. This contradiction could not be more clear. Why then is Rick Warren going to build a bridge to this religion to advance his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan?

Bono (Rock Star) who leads the multitudes in singing his lyrics:

*Jesus, Jew, Mohammed - all true. Jesus, Jew, Mohammed - all true...*⁸¹

Christian & Missionary Alliance

National Association of Evangelicals aka NAE

(Ted Haggard, President, 45,000 churches, 30 million members)⁸²

General Baptist Convention

Evangelical Covenant

Assemblies of God denomination

Southwest Baptist Theological Seminary

Baptist World Alliance

Emerging Church⁸³

[Note: This is by far only a partial listing of the alliances Rick Warren has formed.]

There are a host of Scriptures which warn us against unholy alliances...both in the Old and New Testaments. Here are two:

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,?” 2 Corinthians 6:14-17

“And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the **leaven of Herod.**” Mark 8:15 (**Religious-political alliances and merging church and state vs. separation of church and state**)

If Rick Warren's P.E.A.C.E. Plan came directly from God, then why is Warren obtaining part of it from man, especially unredeemed man? This would be tantamount to Moses going to the Israelites for the rest of the blueprints for the Ark of the Covenant or the Tabernacle, or Solomon getting the blueprints for the Temple from the Philistines, or Ezekiel obtaining the blueprints for the Millennial Temple from the nations surrounding Israel.

Why is Rick Warren seeking counsel from the ungodly when Scripture warns the believer not to:

“**Blessed [is] the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly**, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful” Psalm 1:1.

Why is Rick Warren supporting a \$100,000 Grand Prize to August Turak, a known and published New Ager and rewarding Ken Blanchard, an endorser of a number of New Age books and a promoter of the occult-based DISC Profiler⁸⁴, with authority to help train his billion-man Christian Army? Scripture warns us:

“Whoso **rewardeth** evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house.” Proverbs 17:3

For more information and alliances and false teachers Rick Warren promotes, see:

What are the *Roots of Purpose Driven Church* color chart.⁸⁵

21. HOPE

Just when it appears that there is no hope because of Rick Warren's take-over of churches throughout the world as he launches his Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan, I received the following letter from a pastor's wife in Dallas, Texas, whose family left Valley View Christian Church In Dallas, Texas, a congregation that her husband had served for nearly 34 years, along with a couple hundred others. Consequently they have since formed a new church. Now I must emphasize that many who left this church did not do so with the knowledge that it was THE INFLUENCE OF Rick Warren's teachings and programs which were behind the changes at the church....until after they left, as much of the infiltration of Warren's ideas, including the transformation process did not APPEAR to be dangerous at first. This letter should not only encourage the saints throughout the country who have been wounded by this movement, but also help equip them to be brave enough to take similar action. The following account is eerily similar to the accounts both Kaycia Key and I have heard reported and documented from Christians who have left or were purpose-driven out of other Purpose Driven Churches around the country:

December 14, 2005 and January 9, 2006

Hi James,

Our newly founded church, Cornerstone, is doing very well, has such a sweet spirit. We have over 250 members and we are meeting in facilities provided by Dallas Christian College. We have to use the gymnasium for worship services because it's the largest area to meet. We're too big for their chapel. We also have refugees from a myriad of other churches.

Ron and I are having an Open House this weekend to try to thank everyone for all the love and support we've received....so that has kept me pretty busy.

I finally got to get a little further into your book and another one that someone else sent which echoes the same concerns you have. I am so grateful to you for identifying some of the causes of my fear and concern for the Lord's church. The Deceiver certainly has come as an "angel of light" in these days.

I recently read an article in Christianity Today, five pages of Rick Warren's Global Plan to end world poverty. It was sad and frightening to read all those pages and only one mention of Jesus...a mention about how Rick Warren was there to restore the hands and feet to the body. And as you point out, his theology is definitely skewed. Have seen numerous articles corroborating your book...

Many who left Valley View Christian Church did so in great part because the leadership had developed an irrational and irrecoverable rupture in our common faith, belief and vision of Christ's church **after** we studied and implemented the *Purpose Drive Life* by Rick Warren.

The church had been experiencing problems between the elders and the congregation and people were quietly (and some not so quietly) beginning to leave. When the elders brought in a new preaching minister people grew more unhappy and then after we did the Purpose Driven programs the rift developed into the rupture of faith and our vision for Christ's church to the point a "re-visioning" even the foundational charter. To try to overcome this growing rift the elders, and Ron and I, agreed to submit ourselves to a Biblically based reconciliation process under the direction of a professional Christian reconciliation group to try to overcome this mindset which had come upon the church. But three days later the elders reversed their decision and asked Ron to resign, with six months severance or be fired and receive two months severance. Ron, my husband and Senior Minister, said that under these circumstances, they would have to fire him, because he said he could not resign when he had lived up to his end of the agreement. Ron Key did not, as some may thought (or been erroneously told) *start* a new church, but was asked to become the minister of the new church, once it was founded.

Since then the church has grown to about 275-300, several of whom were refugees from other churches in the area who were also leaving because of many of the same issues with leadership that had developed in their respective congregations after Purpose Driven Programs. We are also now being able to share in love with more people about the perils of Warren's programs. Believers, who sensed something amiss, but were not aware of the dangers in his teachings and who knew nothing (like me) of the congregations that have developed splits after having implemented his "purpose driven" ideas. As one of our members and past elder at VVCC stated " The question is not whether the congregation will obey their elders, but whether the elders will obey Christ

Kaycia Key

[reprinted by permission]

The ultimate question is not whether Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E Plan or the *Purpose Driven Life* bears witness with spirit of the elders or members of a church, but whether Rick Warren's teachings bear witness to the Scriptural teachings of Jesus.

22. CONCLUSION

Rick Warren, through his *Purpose Driven Life*, *Purpose Driven Church*, and his *Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan* has usurped the mantle and authority belonging only to Christ not unlike the Papacy, which has presumptuously set up the Pope as the vicarious head of the Church. We appeal to all Christians to sound the alarm on His Holy Hill! God is a jealous God, and Christ, not Rick Warren will secure the ultimate victory and will establish his own Kingdom, so help us God!

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” – 2Corinthians 11:3

"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore [it is] no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." – 2 Corinthians 11:14-15

“Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,”– Colossians 2:18

“For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.” – 1Timothy 4:3

CHURCH GROWTH MOVIE

http://christianunplugged.com/church_movie.htm

ADDITIONAL VALUABLE RESOURCES
WHICH ADDRESS RICK WARREN'S GLOBAL P.E.A.C.E. PLAN

Pastor Bob DeWaay

Critical Issues Commentary

<http://www.twincityfellowship.com/index.php>

Twin City Fellowship has just launched a “discernment tool” so people can check Rick Warren's *Purpose Driven Life* book against the Scripture. This is a new discernment resource that will help you navigate *The Purpose Driven Life* on your own, page by page, day by day—all 40 Days of Purpose. This tool allows you to be the Berean you want to be without wasting precious hours hunting for the texts:

Here’s how it works. We’ve positioned the comparisons side-by-side for each of the forty days to coincide with Warren’s text so you don't have thumb through the book’s index, then through each one of the bibles Rick Warren references, and then find it in a real bible (a translation.) The left column quotes Rick Warren's source for his teaching and the right column consistently quotes the New American Standard Bible version of that same scripture. What you find when you read and compare may surprise you.

We invite you to visit our site:

<http://www.cicministry.org/berean.php>

Please share your findings with others you feel may need to have this tool.

Regards,

Pastor Bob DeWaay

Twin City Fellowship, Minneapolis, Minnesota

&

The Dangers of Spiritual Formation and Spiritual Disciplines Issue 91 - November / December 2005 by Bob DeWaay at:

<http://www.cicministry.org/commentary/issue91.htm>

Pastor Gary Gilley

Gospel According to Warren, July 2005 Newsletter

http://www.svchapel.org/Resources/Articles/read_articles.asp?ID=112

Berit Kjos

Warren's P.E.A.C.E. Plan and UN Goals - Part 3 of 4

Whom do we serve?

<http://www.crossroad.to/articles2/05/peace-un-3.htm>

List a Scriptures on Peace:

<http://www.crossroad.to/text/responses/archive/purpose-1.htm>

Scroll down to: “**From Jane:** When I read Rick Warren's peace plan I must say I was deeply alarmed, especially because of his world wide influence deceives so many unsuspecting people.”

Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan

<http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/peaceplan.htm>

Lynn & Sarah Leslie

What is Transformation

<http://www.newswithviews.com/Leslie/sarah.htm>

RICK WARREN'S GLOBAL VISION, PURPLE HAZE, AND NEW AGE ASSOCIATION

<http://www.wayoflife.org/fbns/rickwarren-globalvision.html>

James Sundquist interview by ***Prophezine*** Magazine

http://www.abrahamic-faith.com/James/James_prophezine_interview.html

Crosstalk, VCY America

http://www.vcyamerica.org/crosstalk/event_popup.cfm?programid=1130

Southwest Radio Church

<http://www.swrc.com>

Go to search engine and type in “Rick Warren” for radio broadcasts and documents

Loren Davis

Church Growth Movement in Africa. 11-09-05a

Dr. Stan Monteith Radio Liberty interview (Rick Warren in Africa starts at 30:00 minutes in): 11-09-05

<http://www.soundwaves2000.com/rammaker.asp?id=155a&d=11-09-05a>

The Purpose Driven Church in Africa...Loren Davis Interview Audio

<http://www.soundwaves2000.com/rammaker.asp?id=155a&d=11-17-05a>

Loren Davis, Evangelist Missionary to Africa

<http://www.lorendavis.com>

Moriel Ministries

Rick Warren Connections - Especially to the Ecumenical Third Wave New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) and "Positive Thinking" Movement

http://www.moriel.org/articles/discernment/church_issues/rick_warren_connections.htm

Dean Gotcher

<http://www.authorityresearch.com>

<http://www.christianmedianetwork.com/gotcher.htm>

Mike Oppenheimer

A Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan

<http://www.letusreason.org/Popteac26.htm>

Robert Klenck, M.D.

What's Wrong with the 21st Century Church?

<http://www.crossroad.to/News/Church/Klenck1.html>

<http://www.crossroad.to/News/Church/Klenck2.html>

<http://www.johncoleman.org/Bob%20Klenck%20Page.htm>

Roger Oakland

PURPOSE DRIVEN ECUMENISM?

by Roger Oakland

<http://www.understandthetimes.org>

Richard Bennett (former Roman Catholic Priest)

The Adulation of Man in the The Purpose Driven Life & The Purpose Driven Life: Demeaning the Very Nature of God

http://www.bereanbeacon.org/articles/rick_warren_purpose_driven.htm

Former Catholics for Christ

<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Plains/2594/>

Paul Proctor

7/09/2005 interview on John Loeffler's *Steeling of the Mind* radio show interview:

<http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/PaulProctorInterview.mp3>

REBUILDING THE TOWER OF BABEL by Mac Dominick

<http://cuttingedge.org/news/rtb1.html> & <http://cuttingedge.org/news/rtb2.html>

<http://cuttingedge.org/news/rtb3.html>

Chris Carmichael, *Discerning a Christian Flip-Flopper: Why Rick Warren Has Critics*

<http://christianunplugged.com/christianflipfopper.htm>

Warren Smith interview on Southwest Radio, December 15, 16, 2005

<http://www.swrc.com/broadcasts/2005/december.htm>

The Necessity of Separation from Heresy, Discernment Newsletter, Jan-Feb 2006, Discernment-Ministries, Inc.

http://www.discernment-ministries.org/NLJanFeb_2006.htm

A Critique of the Purpose-Driven Life, Part I, by James Sundquist, *The Conservative Theological Journal*, Volume 9, No. 27, August 2005.

A Critique of the Purpose-Driven Life, Part II, by James Sundquist, *The Conservative Theological Journal*, December, 2005.

Who's Driving the Purpose Driven Church book review,
The Conservative Theological Journal, December, 2005.

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- ¹ TIME Global Health Summit Press Conference, Nov 1, 2005
<http://www.time.com/time/2005/globalhealth/transcripts/110105warrenpc.pdfabove>
- ² <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0503/22/lkl.01.html>
 Source: <http://www.biblebb.com/files/purpose.htm> (emphasis added)
- ³ <http://www.songfacts.com/detail.php?id=2553&>
- ⁴ <http://www.classicbands.com/hendrix.html>
- ⁵ Distributed by Way of Life Literature's Fundamental Baptist Information Service. Copyright 2001.
<http://www.wayoflife.org/fbns/jimi-hendrix-experience.html> (emphasis mine)
- ⁶ <http://pewforum.org/events/index.php?EventID=80>
- ⁷ <http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/288200.html>
- ⁸ http://rock-to-salt.cephasministry.com/pastor_1.html
- ⁹ Source: July 8 morning session: *American Experience: The Problem of Evil*, Rev. Peter Gomes, Pastor Rick Warren, Moderator: Alan Wolfe, Aspen Institute Conference, July 8, 2005, compact disc.
- ¹⁰ For more information on Desert Fathers see: <http://www.abrahamic-faith.com/James/Part%20X%20Enneagram%20Profiling%20vs.%20Scripture%20Documentary.htm> and *The Emergent Church*, Albert James Dager, Media Spotlight, Volume 28, Number 4, 2005.
- ¹¹ <http://cancerweb.ncl.ac.uk/cgi-bin/omd?metastazise>
- ¹² CNN *Larry King Live*, December 2, 2005
- ¹³ <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2005/010/17.32.html>
- ¹⁴ It can be found at <http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres32.html>
- ¹⁵ <http://www.creationists.org/resp0013.html>
- ¹⁶ For proof of Dr. Robert Schuller's promotion of universalism listen to Warren Smith interview: **Warren Smith** interview on Southwest Radio, December 15, 16, 2005 at <http://www.swrc.com/broadcasts/2005/december.htm>
- ¹⁷ <http://www.newswithviews.com/PaulProctor/proctor66.htm>
- ¹⁸ Richard Abanes, *Rick Warren and the Purpose that Drives Him*, p. 23, Harvest House 2005
- ¹⁹ <http://www.letusreason.org/Poptea1.htm>
- ²⁰ http://www.crmspokane.org/cgm_chart.htm
- ²¹ <http://www.purposedriven.com/en-US/40DayCampaigns/PDCampaignChurchFinder.htm>

This list is not exhaustive as there are many churches who have run 40 Days of Purpose or other Warren programs which not listed in this search engine.

- ²² <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbns/rickwarren-globalvision.html>
- ²³ http://www.abpnews.com/news/news_detail.cfm?NEWS_ID=842
- ²⁴ Robert Schuller, *Self-Esteem: The New Reformation*, Waco, Word Books, 1982
- ²⁵ Warren Smith, *Deceived on Purpose*, p. 126, Conscience Press, 2004
- ²⁶ <http://www.saddleback.com/home/todaystory.asp?id=6213> (removed)
- ²⁷ See Bob DeWaay's CIC article for a good expose on Dominionist and Reconstructionist Theology entitled: *The Dominion Mandate and the Christian Reconstruction Movement*;
<http://www.cicministry.org/scholarly/sch001.htm>
- ²⁸ <http://www.rna.org/meetingdates.php#miamithursday>
- ²⁹ Warren Smith, *Deceived on Purpose*, p. 123, Conscience Press, 2004.
- ³⁰ Ibid, p. 124
- ³¹ Ibid, p. 129
- ³² http://www.beliefnet.com/story/177/story_17718_2.html?rnd=6
- ³³ <http://www.bpnews.net/bpnews.asp?ID=20603>
- ³⁴ http://rock-to-salt.cephasministry.com/pastor_1.html
- ³⁵ <http://www.letusreason.org/BookR12.htm>
- ³⁶ CNN *Larry King Live*, December 2, 2005
- ³⁷ <http://www.letusreason.org/Current61.htm>
- ³⁸ Bob DeWaay, *Redefining Christianity*, 21st Century Press, 2006, p. 57.

³⁹ Warren Smith, *Deceived on Purpose*, p. 127, Conscience Press, 2004.

⁴⁰ For an excellent article by Sarah Leslie on the relationship between Rick Warren's Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan to Dominionism see: *Dominionism and the Rise of Christian Imperialism* at <http://www.discernment-ministries.org/ChristianImperialism.htm>

⁴¹ Bible Believer's Evangelistic Association, GOD'S PLAN FOR THE AGES.

⁴² October 29, 2005 Email from Cookie Schwaeber-Issan, Partner Relations Maoz Israel, maozisrael@maozisrael.org. MAOZ website is: <http://www.maozisrael.org/>

⁴³ Arutz Sheva, December 8, 2005: <http://www.israelnn.com/news.php3?id=94461>. Special thanks to December 10, 2005 *Be Alert* Newsletter

⁴⁴ <http://www.acwitness.org/psalm83english.html>

⁴⁵ <http://www.abrahamic-faith.com/False-Teachers.html>

⁴⁶ <http://pewforum.org/events/index.php?EventID=80%20page%2016>

⁴⁷ Paul Nussbaum, Philadelphia Inquirer, January 8, 2006

⁴⁸ http://www.erwm.com/muslim_jesus_vs_biblical_jesus.htm

⁴⁹ http://www.bereanbeacon.org/articles/muslim_vs_biblical_jesus.htm

⁵⁰ *Yeshua or Isa?* is now available at: <http://www.abrahamic-faith.com/Books/y.html>

⁵¹ Richard Abanes, *Rick Warren and the Purpose that Drives Him*, p. 31, Harvest House, 2005

⁵² Warren Smith, *Deceived on Purpose*, p. 124, Conscience Press, 2004

⁵³ <http://www.abrahamic-faith.com/False-Teachers.html>

⁵⁴ <http://www.swrc.com>

⁵⁵ <http://www.swrc.com>

⁵⁶ http://www.cccu.org/news/newsID.387/news_detail.asp

⁵⁷ <http://www.newswithviews.com/PaulProctor/proctor66.htm>

⁵⁸ http://www.swrc.com/offers/internet_0205.htm

⁵⁹ http://www.despatch.cth.com/au/Articles_V/The_Message_E_Petersen.htm and <http://www.newswithviews.com/BeritKjos/kjos22.htm>

⁶⁰ available at: http://www.swrc.com/offers/internet_0205.htm

⁶¹ <http://www.abrahamic-faith.com/James/charts.html>

⁶² SOURCE: Leon O'Dell leonodell@earthlink.net

⁶³ Warren Smith, *Deceived on Purpose*, p. 127-128, Conscience Press, 2004

⁶⁴ Warren Smith, *Deceived on Purpose*, p. 127, Conscience Press, 2004

⁶⁵ <http://www.takeheed.net/YANCEY%20&%20lasciviousness.htm>

⁶⁶ <http://www.abrahamic-faith.com/James/Richard-Foster.html>

⁶⁷ <http://www.time.com/time/archive/preview/0,10987,1093746,00.html>

⁶⁸ <http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/pdym.htm> for comprehensive list of Ken Blanchard's New Age endorsements

⁶⁹ For complete expose see: <http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~emcd/index5.htm>

⁷⁰ <http://www.crossroad.to/Quotes/management/blanchard.htm>

⁷¹ <http://www.takeheed.net/news17.htm>

⁷² <http://www.crossroad.to/articles2/05/text/peace-un-2.htm>

⁷³ Support for a Palestinian State within the present borders of Israel and at the expense of Israel is also a common view within the Church Growth Movement, as evidenced by a July 23, 2002 Letter to President Bush containing the following statement signed by John Ortberg:

"We commend your stated support for a Palestinian state with 1967 borders, and encourage you to move boldly forward so that the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people for their own state may be realized."

Source: http://www.northpark.edu/centers/middle/mideast.letter_to_bush.htm

⁷⁴ <http://www.nwcreation.net/articles/theageofearth.html>

⁷⁵ <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/05316/605324.stm>

⁷⁶ http://www.bereanbeacon.org/articles/rick_warren_purpose_driven.htm

- ⁷⁷ http://understandthetimes.org/Merchant2/merchant.mvc?Screen=PROD&Store_Code=UTTS&Product_Code=UTRDVD&Category_Code=DVD
- ⁷⁸ <http://www.factnet.org/disc/messages/3/8816.html?11144486160>
- ⁷⁹ ZENIT – November 30, 2005 <http://www.zenit.org/english/visualizza.phtml?sid=80888>
- ⁸⁰ Dave Hunt, *Global Peace and the Rise of the AntiChrist*, Harvest House, 1990, p. 138.
- ⁸¹ Paul Proctor, *TAKING YOUR KIDS OUT OF PUBLIC SCHOOL IS NOT ENOUGH!* *Source:* <http://www.worldviewweekend.com/secure/cwnetwork/article.php?ArticleID=399>
- ⁸² ***Dominionism and the Rise of Christian Imperialism*** at <http://www.discernment-ministries.org/ChristianImperialism.htm>
- ⁸³ <http://www.crossroad.to/articles2/05/peace-un-2.htm>
- ⁸⁴ <http://www.crossroad.to/articles2/05/text/peace-un-2.htm>
- ⁸⁵ <http://www.abrahamic-faith.com/James/charts.html>

Who's Driving the PURPOSE DRIVEN CHURCH?

*A Documentary on
the Teachings of Rick Warren*

JAMES SUNDQUIST

The Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren has become a Number 1 bestseller, and has been distributed to over 180,000 pastors worldwide. Rick Warren's theology has infiltrated almost every Christian denomination. His teachings have come like a flood into a city, in which no house is left untouched. Because of this, it is imperative that we test the spirits of his teachings to see if they are of God.

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; . . . If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

—1 Timothy 4:1,6



JAMES SUNDQUIST is the founder of Bible Belt Publishing. He wrote and produced two documentaries on the history of hymns and Christmas carols (for which he was nominated for a Grammy for Best Album Notes). James has a number of documentaries exposing the Purpose Driven Church and Church Growth Movement teachings and practices, and the infiltration of Carl Jung and psychology into the church in which he demonstrates these to be a clear and present danger to the church.

ISBN 0-9744764-5-5



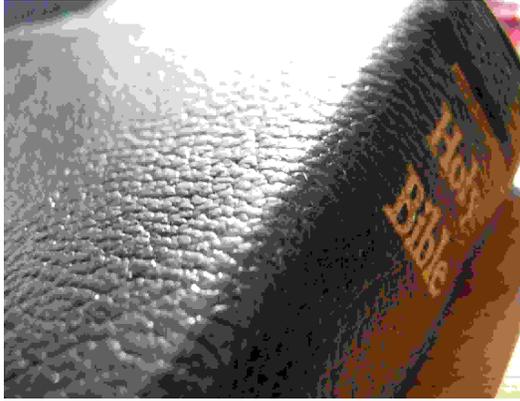
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Bible Belt Publishing
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma



Thy Word is Truth

Jesus says, in John 17:17:

"Sanctify them through thy truth: **thy word is truth.**"

Jesus is telling us that the Word of God is Truth. The **pagans** teach that there is **no absolute truth**, but that we each "**create our own reality**". But the Bible teaches that there is an absolute standard of Truth: God's Word.

[The man of God](#) - [No private interpretation](#) - [Bereans: no guru](#) - [Call no man teacher](#) - [The Spirit of Truth](#) - [God has preserved His word](#) - [Too important to be left to the experts](#) - [All of our priorities](#)

Paul, the Apostle, wrote in 2 Timothy 3:16-17:

"All scripture is given **by inspiration of God**, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for

instruction in righteousness: That the **man of God** may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

"The man of God": that's **you and me** if we are trusting in the real Jesus in terms of the real Gospel. We can trust that God's Word is Truth and that it is our standard for how to come to God on his terms and walk with him.

Peter, the Apostle, wrote in 2 Peter 1:20-21,

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any **private interpretation**. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Peter teaches that we are not to just make up our own private interpretation and make the scriptures say what ever we want to suit our own purposes. We are not to go to the Bible with a predetermined agenda to find scriptures that "prove" our views. Rather we are to go to the Bible trusting that the Lord will speak through his Word to us. We examine the plain meaning of the text and let the Bible interpret the Bible... **let the Word speak for itself**.

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Luke says in Acts 17:10-11,

"And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto **Berea**: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and **searched the scriptures** daily, whether those things

were so."

Luke commends the Bereans because they were not going to just blindly trust the "private interpretation" [of a guru!](#) They searched the scriptures THEMSELVES to see if what Paul said was true! Paul an Apostle! And the Bible commended them for it.

Jesus says in Matthew 23:8-11:

"But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. **Neither be ye called masters [teachers]:** for one is your Master [Teacher], even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant."

The word, "master" is the Greek word: kathegetes (kath-ayg-ay-tace'); meaning a guide, i.e. (figuratively) a teacher. (From Strongs)

Jesus says that **we are not go to men** to be our "teacher" or "master", because the Lord Jesus himself is our teacher, through the Holy Spirit.

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Jesus says in John 16:13:

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, **he will guide you into all truth:** for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."

Jesus wasn't talking to "clergymen" (the New Testament says nothing about clergymen!) he was talking to **followers of Jesus.**

The Holy Spirit will lead us into all truth.

It is crucial that we realize that God holds **each of us** personally accountable for how we respond to his Word as individuals. We can't blame any misunderstanding on a clergyman or hierarchy or a religious system. God expects us to examine his Word and trust and obey him... like the Bereans in Acts 17.

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Many people question whether the Bible can be trusted because they are under the impressions that there have been so many translations and so little evidence for the validity of the text we have today. But I trust that **God has preserved his Word**, Old and New Testaments. Indeed, there is no ancient document that even comes close to the number of remaining manuscripts of the books of the Bible that gives us great confidence that the words we have in our hands today are the words that were originally penned (by God through men). It's true that we don't have any original manuscripts but we do have copies that, in some cases (for the NT), come from within the lifetime of people who were alive at the time the originals were written! And the Dead Sea scrolls from about the time of Jesus, confirm significant portions of the Old Testament for us.

It is a generally held **myth** that we can't trust the Bible because it has been through so many translations from generation to generation. But, we can bypass the generations and go directly to ancient manuscripts to read them for ourselves (if we learn Greek and Hebrew!). So that blows that myth out of the water.

We can bypass the translators, also! Using a concordance and a Greek and Hebrew dictionary, we can, to a great degree, examine for ourselves what the words mean. All the more when

we can use modern computer software Bible texts and concordances and dictionaries. I use Bible software and love it. With my Bible software, I really do feel like I can bypass the translators. And I've never taken a seminary course. In fact, I feel that the Word of God is **too important to be left to the "experts"!!!**

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It is very important that we go to the Word of God, the Bible, for ALL our priorities in life. And all of our understanding about who Jesus is, what the Gospel is, how a person becomes reconciled with God, how a person gets to heaven, how we should live as Christians, what the Church is, how the Church should function, who should lead in the Body of Christ, what is our calling in society on this earth, what should our message be to the World.

All of these are **answered in the Bible.**

[A Bible Reading Plan](#)

[Contend for the Faith](#)

[Applying the Old Testament to the New Testament Church](#)

[Pillar and Ground of the Truth](#)

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The Emergent Church Movement

"Emergent Church"

Sometimes this is called a "movement" and sometimes just a "conversation".

Watch the videos at the [PBS site](#) about what the "Emerging Church" is suppose to be. (Thanks to [Lighthouse Trails](#) for pointing this out.)

I believe that the people involved, leaders and followers, are asking some good sincere questions and are raising some of the [same issues](#) I've raised. But, I also believe that they are doing what skeptics and pagans have done for ages past, they create a "straw man" and call it "traditional Christianity" and then tear it down. And even though one of their leaders might say that modern Evangelicalism is missing the point (I agree), I believe the

[A Media Spotlight Report](#)

"The Emergent Church"

"A New Path to Ancient Religion"

Please consider going to the Media Spotlight site and requesting a copy of this Fall report by Albert James Dager.

Al writes, "Over the past few decades there has appeared a new way of looking at church ministry which incorporates a more world-relevant approach to church services. Called "the emergent church movement," it was born out of a feeling that in many modern churches something has gone wrong, especially in failing to attract the younger, postmodern generation."

In Brother Dager's "A Personal Note" in the latest issue of "Media Spotlight", he writes, "The movement is focused on

Emerging Church leaders are also "missing the point".

They say they want to be true to the Bible, but I'm not so sure that their solutions and convictions are truly derived from Genesis to Revelation.

It reminds me of the crucial differences I found years ago between a grouping represented in modern times by [M. Scott Peck's](#) and [Marilyn Ferguson's](#) and [John Naisbitt's](#) views of "[community](#)" versus those of a grouping represented by people in the Biblical House Churches and the [historical](#) Plymouth Brethren, Anabaptists, and Waldensians, to give some examples.

Both groupings questioned religious traditions and traditional thinking and mindlessly following the establishment but only the latter, in my view, ended up following the real Jesus in terms of the real Gospel according to Genesis through Revelation.

Question the traditions of men and the establishment WE

replacing reliance upon God's Word for all spiritual belief and practice with sensual experience through the return to ancient forms of worship that characterize Roman Catholicism and other so-called, "high churches" such as the Anglican, Lutheran and Eastern Orthodox traditions."

Also, he writes, "When scripture is said to be inadequate to arrive at truth apart from experience, tradition, and human reasoning, and the methodology of a movement rests upon such a claim, then we must say unequivocally that that movement is not of God. The conclusion, then, is that the movement, being of a spiritual nature, must be of Satan. We say this with no apologies to the foolish or even naive followers of that movement. Our warning is to come out of it; have no part in it; repent of it."

See Al Dager's report for extensive documentation. Request it from the [Media Spotlight](#) site. (1/8/06)

Many are
being
seduced into
mystical
techniques to

MUST! But faithfully follow
Jesus according to the Word of
God WE MUST. Everything
else is a [COUNTERFEIT!](#)

conjure up
"God's
Presence"

*Emerging
Church
derived from
the
Emerging
Man?*

In [The Aquarian
Conspiracy](#), Carl
Rogers is quoted in
reference to his
concepts of the
"emerging man", "a
new kind of
autonomous human
being", and an
approaching "great
evolutionary leap"

Maslow speaks of his
psychology of ultimate
concerns and
transcendence: "...
mystical experience -
Mystic fusion, either
with another person or
with the whole cosmos
or with anything in
between. I mean here
the mystical
experience as

Conjure: To summon (a devil or
spirit) by magical or supernatural
power.

Definition from [Answers.com](#)

These techniques masquerade as
"prayer" and "meditation".

But it's not Biblical prayer and
it's not Biblical mediation.

Biblical meditation has nothing
to do with entering an altered
state of consciousness.

"But when ye pray, use not vain
repetitions, as the heathen do: for
they think that they shall be
heard for their much speaking."
Matthew 6:7

[Deep Breathing
and Visualization](#)

[Christians are
becoming
Unitarians](#)

[Four Ways
Christians Are
Deceived](#)

[Lucifer, the
Garden of Eden,
& the Tower of
Babel](#)

[Confronting
"Motivational"
Training
Programs](#)

[The Human
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[Humanistic &
Transpersonal
Psychology 1 of
2](#)

classically described
by the religious
mystics in the various
religious literatures."

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Transpersonal
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Hegelian Dialectic

2/25/2006 Updated 9/17/06

The "Hegelian Dialectic" is the process by which history is said to move onward and upward to **perfection**, the "Realization of Spirit", according to the German philosopher, G.W.F Hegel (1770-1831).

This is a **pagan concept**, similar to Karma, in which an impersonal force controls history. The Hegelian Dialectic represents the worldly thinking of the philosopher and of many rulers in history. This concept is contrary to what the Bible teaches in that God is working His purposes in the unfolding of world history and, in spite of the evil intentions of men and demons, He is in ultimate control. Rather than moving up to perfection, the Bible teaches that the world system is developing towards ever increasing apostasy and rebellion against God, trying to build its heaven on earth in a Tower of Babel-like vision. Perfection only comes when the Lord Jesus Christ personally returns to establish His Kingdom, which unfolds into Eternity.

The process of the Hegelian Dialectic, according to Hegel, is **thesis – antithesis – synthesis**, thesis – antithesis – synthesis, thesis – antithesis – synthesis, etc. To explain: say that there is an idea, call it a thesis. This thesis provokes its opposite, an opposing idea, called the anti-thesis or antithesis. Between these two **opposites** will develop **conflict** and out of the conflict will develop a synthesis. This synthesis will be some combination of the two opposite ideas. This synthesis becomes the new thesis which generates the antithesis, causing conflict and a new synthesis, and so on.

Hegelian philosophy was the basis for Marxism, Nazism, Fascism, and Western Progressive philosophy and social engineering.

[Machiavelli and How Rulers Think](#)

[History](#)

["HUMAN POTENTIAL", THE RULERS, AND IDOLATRY](#)

[Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism](#)

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW with UNCLE SAM in chains



"This past July 4th weekend in Hoodspport, Wa., I experienced the most unique and somewhat controversial Uncle Sam. Amidst loud music, revelry and a party spirit, this Uncle Sam was bound in chains and preaching the gospel message as he shuffled through the crowds. Like so many others, I asked the simple question:

Uncle Sam - why the chains?"

See the Interview at
[Polyventure Publications](#)

[Site Map](#)

Ron Boehme

YWAM, Reverend, Politician

My concerns about Ron Boehme and YWAM have to do with [the four ways that Christians are being deceived](#) in my article of that title.

As an example, one of many, in his book [Leadership for the 21st Century](#) he quotes Reconstructionist, Gary North (p. 158):

"We are seeing a shift in practical eschatology. It now includes a vision of victory. Better to plan for a long-term program to **subdue the whole earth**, generation by generation, than to squander our capital in a short-term sprint to save a remnant and then leave the world to the devil. Aim high, aim carefully, and shoot long."

Ron Boehme goes on to comment:

"Some are beginning to see the extremely **negative consequences of living every day as if it were our last, as if Christ were coming at any moment**. If we are consistent with that view, then it can easily lead to doing very little to change our world, and to do little if any long-range planning. And those who do no long-range planning can never lead."

There is much for sincere followers of Jesus to discuss about these things. It all comes down to what does the Lord call us to in the New Testament and what does the New Testament not say.

Consider Ron Boehme's campaign slogan for state representative:

"A Proven Leader Who will RESTORE [THE DREAM](#)"

[KINGDOM NOW OR NEW WORLD ORDER?](#)

[George Otis Jr: Mystical Warfare in Kitsap County](#)

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Chicken Little on the Road to Damascus

8/6/06 Updated 8/20/06

Part 1

Once upon a time there was a Conspiracy Theory Zealot who was obsessed with suspicions and paranoia. Fred believed every whacko theory he read that explained “what really happened” about every major tragedy and triumph in civilization for the last 1000 years. His co-workers called him, “Chicken Little” because every new media headline was another reason to speak about doom at the hands of the global conspirators. His fellow workers would listen to him for two or three sentences and then taunt, “The sky is falling, the sky is falling!”

Fred was anti-government and anti-tax and was convinced that newspapers and TV news were controlled by the powers that be. He had spent time researching the conspiracy theories of the Marxists, the Nazis, John Birch Society, the Lyndon Larouchies,

the Black Muslims, Spotlight Magazine, and many, many other individualized speculations. He knew all about the various players in these various conspiracy theories: The Knights Templar, the Sufis, the Freemasons, the Popes, the Illuminati, the Marxists, Order of the Skull & Bones, the Nazis, The Rothschilds, the Federal Reserve System, Council on Foreign Relations, Trilateral Commission, Order of the Skull & Bones, J. P. Morgan, The Rockefellers, the Round Table Groups, Bilderbergers, Bohemian Grove, and The Bush family.

Fred had his own theories for the betrayal of the Knights Templar, the American Revolution, the French Revolution, the murder of Captain Morgan, Lincoln's assassination, Garfield's assassination, McKinley's assassination, Kennedy's assassination, blowing up the battleship Maine, the burning of the Reichstag, the attack on Pearl Harbor, Watergate, the murders of Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, & Robert Kennedy, the Vatican banking scandal, the murder of Pope John Paul I, the murder of Princess Diana, the murder of JFK junior, Ruby Ridge, Waco, Oklahoma City, and 9-11.

As whacko as Fred was, even he didn't want to be distracted by foolishness about space aliens and big foot. And he didn't appreciate the hatred of racists and people who blamed the Jews for everything. Fred was very uncomfortable with some of those he inadvertently rubbed shoulders with... neo-nazis, the anti-Semitic, violent militias, extreme tax protestors, racists.

Part 2

But Fred was a mess. His obsession with conspiracy theories brought him continual anguish. He had no peace. As a building contractor he had been brought to near bankruptcy more than once by the back stabbing of what he called the "brotherhood". His attempts to earn a living was a continual struggle, he was convinced, because of the "good ol' boy network". Every daily newspaper headline was frustrating to him. The latest stories about the latest media hype was only pablum for the masses. The news events that the establishment media focused on were designed to distract from the real issues. The analysis of the establishment media was so obviously bogus. It burned Fred how the super-rich manipulated the masses and used them as "serfs on their plantation".

To be continued...

[About "Conspiracies"](#)

[The True Nature of the World System](#)

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Items from Lighthouse Trails Research Project



[Commentary on Current Events - Index](#)

["Awana Club Now Featuring Book by Youth Specialties Speaker"](#)

8/9/06

From the Lighthouse Trails Blog

"In February, we contacted Awana Club with concerns about their affiliation with and promotion of contemplative organizations such as [Willow Creek](#), [Youth Specialties](#), and Group Publishing. We later learned that there would be no changes made by Awana regarding these organizations. (You may read about this situation in our February [news release](#).)

"Today, we have learned that Awana is now featuring and offering a book by Saddleback Youth Pastor, [Doug Fields](#) (a regular speaker at Youth Specialties events). The book, [Your First Two Years in Youth Ministry](#): A personal and practical guide to starting right, is published by Youth Specialties and Zondervan. Inside the book are several sidebar commentaries by various people who promote contemplative and/or emerging spirituality: [Tony Campolo](#), the late Mike Yaconelli, Rick Warren, Marv Penner ([Briercrest Biblical Seminary](#), Canada, Duffy Robbins, Bo Boshers (leader at Willow Creek), and others most of whom promote contemplative spirituality and the emerging church. It is important to remember that Youth Specialties has been working in conjunction with emerging church leaders for several years now and has a major role in the growth of this movement.

"According to the Awana website, "Awana is the leading ministry to help local churches reach children and youth for Christ." However, if they continue going in the contemplative/emerging direction, it may not be the biblical Jesus Christ that is being offered to kids and youth but rather another Christ and another gospel. We hope and pray they will understand how vital it is to stay away from those who teach and promote contemplative spirituality and who are engaged with the emerging church movement."

From [Lighthouse Trails Blog](#)

Do You Name-Drop Rick Warren and Saddleback Church?

***"Purpose Driven Resisters - Must Leave or Die"
"Those who oppose the "program" are called leaders from hell."***

[See Lighthouse Trails June 2006 Newsletter](#)

"...when their churches decided to get involved with 40 Days of Purpose, everything began changing and when they questioned these changes, they each soon found themselves silenced, ostracized and eventually without a church to attend. Now today,

nearly five years after Purpose Driven Life was released, thousands of believers are scattered throughout the world, having been ridiculed and demoralized for even just the slightest questioning of the Purpose Driven program. In one email we received, the young man was handed a letter from his pastor. The letter had been written by a Saddleback field representative who told the pastor to do what he had to do to get rid of those opposing the new program."

"Calvary Chapel Rejects Contemplative and Emergent Spirituality!"

From Lighthouse Trails

May 21, 2006 - This weekend, a [position paper](#) addressed to pastors was posted on the Calvary Chapel website. The paper indicates that Calvary Chapel is taking a stand against contemplative spirituality and the emerging church and decrees that the title Calvary Chapel not be attached to such movements. The statement comes on the heels of a recent discovery by Pastor Chuck Smith, the movement's

founder, that his book, *When Storms Come*, had been tampered with unbeknownst to him. The book was published by Thomas Nelson and included contemplative and Eastern meditation language, which apparently had been added by someone doing the final editing of the book.

[See the rest of this article at the Lighthouse Trails site.](#)

Was Chuck Smith Sr.'s Book Tampered with?

"The founder of the Calvary Chapel churches, Pastor Chuck Smith, is known for his emphasis on expositional Bible teaching. So it was quite a surprise, when recently reading his 2005 book, *When Storms Come*, to see Smith favorably quoting the late Catholic mystic, [Anthony De Mello](#) (p. 137)."

[See entire article on the Lighthouse Trails site](#)

[See the above update 5/21/06](#)

"URGENT - Awana Club Participating in Willow Creek Conference

"Awana Clubs

Are They Heading Toward Contemplative/Emergent?

"Feb 23, 2006 [Awana Clubs](#) has been a respected and trusted Christian organization for many years. Countless children have been Cubbies and Sparkies and have memorized Scripture through the program.

"With so much of the church heading into the [contemplative/emergent camp](#), also known as the spiritual formation movement, what a tragedy it would be to see Awana being sucked into this also. Few things are stable these days ... is Awana the next to cave in?"

[See entire article at the Lighthouse Trails site](#)

"Christian" Leader Still Promoting New Age

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 21, 2006: Well-known professing Christian author, speaker and business guru, Ken Blanchard, who has ties with [Rick Warren](#), [Bill Hybels](#), [David Jeremiah](#) and other Christian leaders, has been endorsing and promoting New Age teachings for over twenty years. After this was brought to the light last April in our [Special Report](#), and after Blanchard said he would stop his promotions of the New Age, he is still endorsing New Age books and continues his connections with New Age organizations. This critical situation is affecting believers world-wide.

Blanchard, head of the [Lead Like Jesus organization](#), is considered by many as a trusted leader. He speaks at many different conferences including the [Living Leadership](#) with Mikhail Gorbachev.

Below is a table showing many of the connections Blanchard has to the New Age.

[See Table at the Lighthouse Trails site](#)

[Chuck Smith Jr of Calvary Chapel](#)

**YOGA - Just Exercise
or a Religion That Denies Jesus Christ?**

[See this article on the Lighthouse Trails Site](#)

From Lighthouse Trails (11/11/05):

"T houghts to Ponder ... T oo S erious to Ignore ...

•

President of Youth Specialties [announces](#) that "Christianity is an eastern

religion."

•

Saddleback Church's head youth pastor [teams up with Youth Specialties](#) at the upcoming National Youth Worker's Convention

•

Tony Campolo, who says [mysticism is a common ground between Christianity and Islam](#), is also [one](#) of the speakers.

•

[Youth Specialties](#) is featuring a book called [Sacred Way](#) that promotes centering and contemplative prayer, labyrinths, stations of the cross, and other New Age practices.

- Rick Warren and his wife, Kay, [are promoting Henri Nouwen](#), who said he was [uncomfortable](#) with those who say Jesus is the only way.
- *Christianity Today*, a big-time promoter of contemplative, now issues an article called "[Contemplative Kids](#)."
- Most Christian leaders are doing nothing to warn the church about Purpose Driven, the emergent church and contemplative spirituality?

Doesn't something seem amiss?"

[Lighthouse Trails](#)

[Coming from the Lighthouse](#)

Exposing the Truth About Contemplative Spirituality and Interspirituality.

July 2005 Issue

[This Issue Contains the Following Articles:](#)

- The Way, the Truth and the Life
- Ken Blanchard Listed Among New Age Gurus
- David Jeremiah to Join Ken Blanchard at Lead Like Jesus
- Brian McLaren Equates Absolutism with Totalitarianism
- NavPress - Whatever Happened to the Navigators?
- **Lighthouse Watch**
NavPress - Teaching Kids to Practice Contemplative Prayer
- Amazing Quotes
- Christian Leaders Help to Usher in Interspirituality
- Rick Warren and the Emerging Church
- Rick Warren and the Aspen Institute
- Ministry Spotlight
- Purpose Driven Catholics?

- [Brian McLaren to Speak at Willow Creek conference](#)
- [C. S. Lewis Summer Institute Invites Rick Warren and Richard Foster](#)
- [What is Contemplative Spirituality and Why is it So Dangerous? by John Caddock](#)

Items from the [Lighthouse Trails Research Project](#) Newsletter

Lighthouse Trails Publishing Responds to Rick Warren

A Public Response from Lighthouse Trails Publishing

June 17, 2005

On May 31st, 2005 we received [an email](#) from Rick Warren. Within hours of receiving this email, we learned that the email had been posted on the Internet. After prayerful consideration, we have come to the conclusion that we will not provide a *personal* response to Rick Warren regarding the email we received. However, we are compelled to address this situation publicly.

While in the process of preparing a response, we soon realized that the contents of the email sent to us by Rick Warren were misleading and [contained much misinformation](#). And having now witnessed the mocking tone by those involved with Rick Warren, we have decided we cannot, in good conscience, engage with people who go to such great lengths to hide the truth.

On April 20th, 2005 Lighthouse Trails Publishing issued [a press release](#), showing [the connections](#) between Rick Warren and New Age sympathizer Ken Blanchard. In our release we used a line from George Mair's book [A Life With Purpose](#) (a biography of Rick Warren). While the press release was not at all contingent on the quote by Mair (it being used only as a qualifier), Rick Warren's email to us focused primarily on George Mair. The assumption was that [if Mair could be discredited](#) then our press release would be invalid. However, the evidence we provided is solid, and we therefore stand behind our press release.

The real issue addressed in the press release was concerning Ken Blanchard—a man who, according to Rick Warren, has "signed on" to help implement Warren's global Peace Plan. Both in the press release and on our research web site, we have provided [numerous instances](#) where Blanchard has shown his endorsement and promotion of the New Age such as in the Foreword of the 2001 book, *What Would Buddha Do At Work?*, in which Ken Blanchard states:

Buddha points to the path and invites us to begin our journey to enlightenment. I point to this little jewel of a book and invite you to begin (or continue) your journey to enlightened work.

Blanchard's latest endorsement of the New Age centers around Vijay Eswaran's book, [In the Sphere of SILENCE](#), a June 2005 release that promotes the inner silence through mystical prayer practices, i.e. contemplative prayer. Of the book, [Ken Blanchard states](#):

This book is a wonderful guide on how to enter the realm of silence and draw closer to God.

Such comments speak for themselves. And yet, this same Ken Blanchard will, later this summer, share a speaking platform with Rick Warren in the [Leadership Summit 2005](#), which will be broadcast to 100 cities and over 50,000 leaders throughout North America!

What has baffled us most is that Rick Warren and those affiliated with him would spend more time contending with a small Christian publishing company than they do contending for the faith. With New Age doctrines influencing millions of people worldwide and within the Christian church, Rick Warren seems more intent on discrediting his critics than in exposing spiritual deception.

As for [Lighthouse Trails Publishing](#), we will continue researching pertinent issues, while publishing books that minister to and assist the body of Christ and reach out to the lost with the true message of salvation, which is through Jesus Christ alone.

We want to thank the faithful ministries, churches, and brothers and sisters who have committed themselves to defending the precious faith and say to you:

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ (I Peter 1:6-7) .

May God bless each of you who is truly contending for the faith. We appreciate you and feel privileged to stand with you.

David and Deborah Dombrowski

Lighthouse Trails Publishing

P.S. Because the private email we received from Rick Warren was made public on the Internet and because there is so much misinformation in that email we have provided some additional documentation and resources that may be helpful to you.

[Click Here for Additional Information](#)

Including:

Email from Rick Warren

A Closer Look at the Email and much more.

"Rick Warren Teams Up With New-Age Guru Ken Blanchard!"

This is a Special Report.

"Apr 19, 2005 While Rick Warren is gearing up to [train a billion people](#), unbeknownst to many he has also been teamed up with New Age and contemplative promoter, Ken Blanchard, for some time now. According to a new biography on Rick Warren, [A Life With Purpose](#) written by George Mair, Rick Warren has solicited the services of Ken Blanchard to aid him in training leaders: "Rick taps the best and most famous to help train church leaders to be like Jesus. He has hired Ken Blanchard to come to Saddleback to help train people how to be effective leaders." p. 193"

<http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/pressreleases.htm>

[Return to Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

<http://procinwarn.com>

Because of the Angels

1 Corinthians 11:1-16

"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you. But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

"Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

"For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.

"Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without

the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God.

"Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering. But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God."

My Wife's Head Covering

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Chuck Smith's System *Rejects Rick Warren's* "Purpose Driven" Movement

7/17/06

Roger Oakland has written an excellent, concise refutation of the "Purpose Driven" movement. I appreciate Lighthouse Trails for passing this on to us. The ironic thing is that Roger Oakland's article is written in the format of why Chuck Smith has rejected the Purpose Driven mentalities and techniques. Therefore, I believe Brother Roger's article serves two purposes:

- 1) It warns people against the unbiblical trends in the Purpose Driven - Emergent Church - Contemplative Spirituality movements. And...
- 2) It serves as evidence for the Episcopal (Papal) nature of the Calvary Chapel "Non-denominational" Denomination.

To put things in perspective, I believe the Purpose Driven - Emergent Church - Contemplative Spirituality problems are much more serious than the Moses Authoritarian problem of the Calvary Chapels.

HOWEVER! One of the reasons that the professing Evangelical Church is so easily drawn away to these unbiblical fads is largely BECAUSE of our dependence on celebrities and gurus and leaders with unbiblical authority. So, even though I agree with Roger about Emergent Church dangers and I am very grateful for his ministry of warning, I disagree with him about the validity of the Calvary Chapel movement as a system.

[Calvary Chapel Critique](#)

[Calvary Chapel Clergy & Moses Authoritarianism](#)

[Counterfeit Christs: Is your pastor a one-man show?](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[The Emergent Church Movement](#)

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

[Lighthouse Trails](#)

Let's ask the Lord together to help us sort these things out according to the New Testament.

[Calvary Chapel and Purpose Driven](#)

by Roger Oakland

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Rather My Children be Illiterate...

7/6/06 updated 7/12/06

[The Biblical View
of Education](#)

[Education for the
New World Order](#)

[Homeschooling](#)

[Fathers: Teach
your family the
Bible!](#)

I would rather my children be illiterate, than to turn them over to the government school system.

*Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.
Matthew 18:8*

But of course, my children are not illiterate. In fact, I'm very pleased and grateful to the Lord that my oldest daughter just graduated with Bachelor of Science degrees in Math and Physics!

I make such a statement above, because there are Christian parents who give up on homeschooling because they are concerned that they are not doing an adequate job. I pray our Lord would

In disputable matters, we must give one another freedom to apply Biblical principles as best we can, by the grace of God. We each may differ in "where to draw the line". But we ought to be willing to discuss among ourselves, knowing we have to draw a line somewhere when it comes to being in the world but not of the world.

Knowing that our children must make the transition to adulthood eventually, we aim to guard their lives strictly early on and release them to their own accountability to the Lord as they approach adulthood. For my wife (an incredible homeschooling Mom) and I, we decided that at about the age of 16 we would begin their transition to the working world by enrolling them in the "Running Start" program in the local community college. I recognize that there are some parents who homeschool all the way through college!

Some might say, "We send our children to public schools because we do not want to

encourage them and give them hope, purpose and direction.

When it comes to literacy, followers of Jesus have the most reason of anyone in the world to be able to read and write effectively! As Steve Phillips, missionary to West Africa, states:

"God is literate.

He not only speaks, He writes. Paul commands that his letters be read to all the brethren (1 Thess. 5:27; Col. 4:16).

Common men are commanded to read and reason from the written Word of God for themselves (Isa. 34:16); even children are to gain their doctrine from the

Scriptures directly (2 Tim. 3:15)." [See [June 2006 West African Update.](#)]

[There are great dangers](#) in turning your children over to government schools.

Now, of course, there are many disputable matters in this

isolate ourselves from society and we want to be involved in society to be a witness to the unsaved." Of course I agree that we must be in the world, but not of the world. We are called to be where the sinners are, to be a friend to the prostitute and the dishonest tax collector, even if religious people criticize us for our associations. HOWEVER, should we not be prepared properly for a particular ministry? Is it wise to send a new believer immediately to the Amazon to witness to tribal people? Does the desire to witness to the unsaved require us to let the unsaved teach our own children their world view and philosophies for five or six hours a day? Are there not other ways to be where the sinners are to tell them the good news of Jesus Christ and be involved with their lives?

[The Biblical View of Education](#)

[There are great dangers in turning your children over to government schools](#)

discussion. I acknowledge that when a Mom is in extremis and "at the end of her rope" that drastic action may have to be taken. And if you have your children in government schools because you see no other way, then trust the Lord Jesus in the midst of everything! He will give you wisdom and grace.

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<http://procinwarn.com>

There are great dangers *in turning your children over to government schools*

The government school system is effectively a Masonic Parochial School System.

A government school attempts to become family and church for the children.

A government school is equivalent to a temple of paganism.

The world view presented is one of Self-Esteem, Sorcery, and Visions of Tower of Babel Unity.

[The Biblical View of Education](#)

[Education for the New World Order](#)

[Homeschooling](#)

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

[Freemasons and Other Occult Brotherhoods](#)

[Rather My Children be Illiterate](#)

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Are you a part of the Assemblies of God?

To what degree has
your fellowship been
affected by Rick Warren
and Purpose Driven
Programs?

If you have observed
any of this or are
interested in the
documentation of
others, please [email me](#).

[What is Rick
Warren up
to?](#)

[Return to Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

<http://procinwarn.com>

To Promote and Exalt the name of
Billy Graham
is to Promote Global Apostasy

5/4/06

Billy Graham yokes with and endorses
Freemasons and False Teachers.

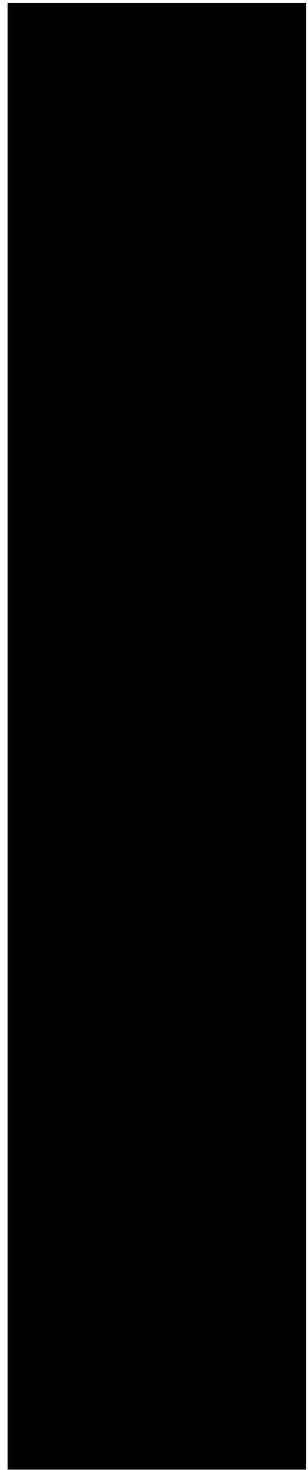
Billy Graham has endorsed and
promoted the yoking of Evangelicalism
with Roman Catholicism.

While we can rejoice when Christ is
preached, Billy Graham increasingly has
been promoting a "many paths to God"
message.

As evidence of the bewitching that has
come over professing Christians,
consider the guru status people give to
Billy Graham. Consider the irrational and
emotional way they react when they hear
criticism of this man.

Consider how the name of Billy Graham
came to national prominence. How did
he become a national celebrity? How did
he become an internationally famous
evangelist? Consider how a people
group, a subculture, can be manipulated
by their own pride in their appointed
figurehead leaders.

Who is being prepared to replace him as
a global celebrity?



[Billy Graham](#)

[Freemasons and Other Occult
Brotherhoods](#)

[Evangelicals Prostituting Themselves with
Roman Catholicism](#)

[Schuller Inherits Crystal Cathedral from
Father](#)

[What is Rick Warren up to?](#)

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Bob Dylan, Do You Love Jesus?

[The Good News](#)

[Agnostics for
Jesus!](#)

[The Evangelical
Subculture](#)

[Lucifer, the
Garden of Eden, &
the Tower of Babel](#)

[Site Map](#)

Bob Dylan, Do You Love Jesus? I want to know.

As a new believer on the Waianae Coast I was deeply moved by “Slow Train Coming”.

I was there at the Paramount in Seattle, January 1980, with a friend. We handed out tracts out front and loved the music and the message inside. Seemed like the audience was half and half.

Bob Dylan, Do You Love Jesus? I want to know.

I don't deserve to know. I don't need to know. The Lord knows. But I would like to know.

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The American Dream: Idolatry

Editor, The Sun (December 1994)

Christianized idolatry - that is what the themes of several of the recent political campaigns were. "Revive the American Dream!"... "Safe and Secure"... The only way to truly be safe and secure is by leaning on the everlasting arms of the Lord Jesus. Any other hope is a false hope. In fact the Bible says that in the last days the world will be crying, "Peace and Safety', and then sudden destruction will come upon them."

The "American Dream" is another such false hope. Our "dreams" or visions are conjured up in our own imaginations which are in rebellion against God. Those who profess to be Christians are to die to our own agendas, saying, "not my will but Your will be done". Those who see America as something special to God did not get that idea from the Bible but from the worldly propaganda of men. America is a pagan nation that is destined for judgment and destruction as is every pagan nation on this earth.

Followers of Jesus are called to be ambassadors from our sovereign Lord to this foreign world system. Our priorities should be the same as those of Noah, getting people on board the ark, which is not made of wood this time.

[Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism](#)

["I have a VISION!" "Achieve your DREAMS" ???](#)

[Ron Boehme](#)

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KINGDOM NOW OR NEW WORLD ORDER? - a review of Ron Boehme's book.

LEADERSHIP FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

By Ron Boehme

This article is a review of Ron Boehme's book.

This book is an example of a dangerous trend in the modern church. There is a growing movement among liberal Protestants, Roman Catholics, and even Evangelicals dedicated to creating a vision of global unity, that sets Christians up for synthesis with pagan movements. The areas of concern with Leadership for the 21st Century are that:

1. It advances a Kingdom Now/Dominion/Reconstruction point of view;
2. It quotes favorably two individuals who stand for New Age paganism, and includes their books in the bibliography (with no warning as to the pagan, globalist world-view that they advocate). These individuals and their books are:
 - John Naisbitt, [Megatrends](#)
 - [M. Scott Peck](#), [The Different Drum](#)

It is our conviction that, in these days of world-wide deception, the

deceptive views of pagan globalists must be exposed and warned against, not name-dropped and quoted favorably. We consider Ron Boehme to be a Christian brother who loves the Lord and would not intentionally mislead anyone. God's Word, however, refers to that "serpent Satan who deceives the whole world" (Revelation 12:9) and we know that world history is building towards the world system of the Antichrist. Therefore, unbiblical views of global utopia must be refuted.

BACKGROUND

Leadership for the 21st Century was published by Frontline Communications, a Division of Youth With A Mission (YWAM), in January 1989. Subtitled "Changing Nations Through the Power of Serving", the back cover says, "The choice is ours... someone must rise to lead." Ron Boehme founded YWAM's base in Washington, D.C. He was on the National Steering Committee of the Coalition On Revival (COR) and he worked out of the YWAM national office in Seattle, Washington as the director of the Revive America project. Mr. Boehme was also active in the leadership of Pastor 's Prayer Coalitions in Kitsap County, Washington with a "Celebration of Unity" theme.

"A KINGDOM WORLD VIEW"

"A VISION FOR CHRIST'S LORDSHIP IN THE NATIONS"

Leadership for the 21st Century asks us "to dream" about world-wide revival and advocates that we take dominion, and bring about a world-wide Christian utopia through "servanthood" in every sphere of society. The danger with this mentality is:

1. It is un-biblical. The Word of God does not prophesy a world-wide revival in the last days before Jesus' return. It prophesies a great apostasy. Our call is to snatch individuals from the fires of hell, to proclaim the truth, and to set godly examples, all by preaching Jesus Christ and him crucified. We are not called to attempt to Christianize the world-system or to encourage unregenerate people to try to live by the law apart from Christ or to take over this world in any way. This world system is headed for global unity in rebellion against God

and sudden destruction.

2. Trying to give Christians a "vision" for taking dominion to create a one-world global utopia (even if it is supposed to be "Christian") sets them up for deception. Christians looking for a form of global unity (especially if it is at the expense of sound doctrine) are set up to be synthesized with other global unity movements that are being used to set up the world-system of the Anti-Christ based on a one-world government, a one-world economic system, and a one-world religion. And, for an example of this synthesis, one has to look no further than Ron Boehme's book.

"KINGDOM NOW" AND PAGAN GLOBAL UNITY

Leadership for the 21st Century incorporates a synthesis between the globalist vision of "Kingdom Now, Dominion, Reconstructionism" and the globalist vision of the New Age pagan, John Naisbitt, and the "Christian Mystic", M. Scott Peck.

John Naisbitt and Megatrends

- Naisbitt says we are between an old era and a new era.
- The institutions of the old era, family and church, are being replaced by the ancient tribal concept of networking.
- High technology has spawned a self-help mentality characterized by a highly personalized value system (each person does what is right in their own eyes).
- The self-help movement has spawned the Human Potential movement (which Naisbitt characterizes as e. g., est, TM, Rolfing, Yoga, and Zen, which are based on Eastern Mysticism and the Occult).
- The world is being united into a "Global Village" through computer and satellite technology.
- Naisbitt wrote the forward for the 1987 edition of

Marilyn Ferguson's, The Aquarian Conspiracy, which is a New Age vision for mankind based on global unity and a vastly enlarged view of human potential. Naisbitt wrote, "My book, Megatrends, was the soft-core document on change; The Aquarian Conspiracy was the 'hard-core stuff.'"

- Megatrends is also featured in the New Age Catalogue.

M. Scott Peck

- Peck's books are found in both Christian bookstores and New Age bookstores.
- In The Different Drum, he advocates a one-world government; becoming a mystic; and mystical meditation. He refers favorably to the occultists Aldous Huxley, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, and Carlos Castenedas. He says that "Community Making" is the salvation of the world, in which small groups of people meet regularly and a "spirit" descends regardless of what religion they are. M. Scott Peck says he believes we are on the verge of a leap of human evolution.
- He says that humans are evolving toward godhood in The Road Less Traveled.
- The Road Less Traveled is recommended reading in The Aquarian Conspiracy .
- The Different Drum is prominently displayed in the New Age Catalogue . Ron Boehme sent his manuscript to over 250 people worldwide. A leader of Youth With A Mission told him that his book was too Christian right wing and that he needed to broaden the scope and be more inclusive by including the Christian left wing. This YWAM leader suggested M. Scott Peck, including his book The Different Drum . Ron read The Different Drum and decided to quote that

book in Leadership for the 21st Century and to include it in his bibliography.

"UNITY"

Central to the "Vision" for global revival is the unbiblical concept of unity advocated in Ron's book. This view comes from a twisting of John 17:20-23. These verses are being used widely throughout the evangelical Christian church to justify humanly organized coalitions and public events that promote a unity at the expense of sound doctrine. These verses are taken as a command to Christians to organize ecumenical-style unity movements. It must be noted, however, that:

- This passage is a prayer by the Son to the Father, not a command to believers. God will answer that prayer for all who truly belong to Jesus (the wheat among the tares).
 - "Tower of Babel" style of unity is an attempt to do in the flesh (in the name of "Peace, peace!") what only the Spirit of God can accomplish. It should concern us that at the very time the whole world is crying, "Peace, peace!" and "global unity" and "New World Order", Christians are saying the very same things.
-

THE BLESSED HOPE

Leadership for the 21st Century promotes an unbiblical world-view that sets Christians up to think they are serving God when, instead, they may be serving the very structure of the Antichrist. Rather than trying to Christianize the entire world system, we ought to trust in the Sovereign God who loves us; doing today what He has given us to do; trusting and obeying Jesus today; proclaiming the truth to whoever will listen while leaving the results in God's hands; leaving the future in God's hands; snatching individuals from the fire; warning others of the world-wide deception and the coming judgment; putting our hope in eternity, and not in this corrupt world system; and, especially, looking to that "Blessed Hope" of the return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

[Ron Boehme](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

["Vengeance Is Ours"](#)

[Tolerance](#)

[George Otis Jr and Mystical Warfare in Kitsap County](#)

[Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism](#)

[Dave Hunt Refutes Calvinism](#)

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Introduction

Updated 1/13/07

My name is Jim Baumgaertel. I live in Port Orchard, Washington State with my wife, Kim, and four children. I work as an engineer in a training branch of a Naval Shipyard. [\[email me\]](#)

Kim works very hard, by the grace of God, to [home school](#) the kids.

I was [raised](#) in a protestant home. About the time I was in junior high school I stopped going to church services. From then on I variously called my self an [agnostic](#) or atheist. In college, I began to wonder if there was a God. During that time and for a year after graduation I "investigated" Mormonism and tried Transcendental Meditation. But it was during the time my first wife divorced me that the Lord Jesus miraculously intervened in my life. I became a child of God and began to follow the [Lord Jesus Christ](#) the [summer of 1976](#) in Idaho Falls, Idaho.

Kim and I were married in 1981. One way that I know God loves me is because he brought Kim into my life: and my kids, Jessica, David, Amy, and Jennifer. The Lord used Kim's Mom, Joyce, to introduce us.

Since I became a Christian, I've fellowshiped in a variety of institutional church organizations: Assembly of God, Calvary Chapels, and others. But throughout that time, the blessing of God in New Testament Fellowship always came through relationships and meetings in homes and the intertwining of lives... in spite of the institutional "[churchianity](#)" structures. We continue to fellowship with believers in homes and also we are part of a fellowship that meets in a rented building. For sincere, true [New Testament Fellowship](#), I am grateful to God.

[The Summer of 76: Jesus Pierced My Heart](#)

[An Appeal to Mormons](#)

[Our "Pro-life" Days](#)

[Confronting "Motivational" Training Programs](#)

[THE BIBLICAL WARNING OF WORLD-WIDE
DECEPTION](#)

[The "House Church Movement"](#)

[Being the Bride of Christ](#)

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Abide in the Vine

Jesus says,

"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."

John 15:5

[Who Jesus is](#)

["To Be My Disciple"](#)

[Walking in the Spirit](#)

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Search Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning

Use the form below to search for documents in this web containing specific words or combinations of words. The text search engine will display a weighted list of matching documents, with better matches shown first. Each list item is a link to a matching document; if the document has a title it will be shown, otherwise only the document's file name is displayed.

A brief [explanation](#) of the query language is available, along with examples.

Search for:

[Back to Search section of Home Page](#)

Query Language

The text search engine allows queries to be formed from arbitrary Boolean expressions containing the keywords AND, OR, and NOT, and grouped with parentheses. For example:

information retrieval

finds documents containing 'information' or 'retrieval'

information or retrieval

same as above

information and retrieval

finds documents containing both 'information' and

'retrieval'

information not retrieval

finds documents containing 'information' but not
'retrieval'

(information not retrieval) and WAIS

finds documents containing 'WAIS', plus 'information'
but not 'retrieval'

web*

finds documents containing words starting with 'web'

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By placing links to other websites on this page, I do not mean to give 100% endorsement to anyone.

And I also don't mean to imply that they would endorse me at all!

Unless otherwise noted, the ministries I link to are, for the most part in my view, "speaking the Truth in Love" (Ephesians 4:15).

If you think I'm wrong to link to any of these sites... or if you think I need a stronger disclaimer about one of these sites... please [let me know](#) and tell me why.

Some of the links at the end are for information and research purposes only. Not only do I not endorse these sites, but I warn against what they stand for. May the Lord give you discernment.

By the way, if you see my articles on other websites or links to my site from other websites, realize that I don't necessarily endorse those sites.

Community Bible Fellowship	East Regional Watch
Yelm Bible Fellowship - Ourhousechurch.com	Christian News & Views
The Phillips - Missionaries to West Africa	Radical Pilgrim
Christian Missions in Many Lands	
Polyventure Publications	athleo.net
Other House Church links	Pastor's Site
Coffee Oasis	The Lamp Ministry
What Mean These Stones?	MeySen Schools
Plymouth Brethren	The Chronicles of Arnia
Media Spotlight	Promise Keepers vs. Scripture

Gospel for Muslims .org	The God of the Bible versus the god of multi-level marketing
The Berean Call	Amway, A Different Gospel (Ex-Amway Site)
Lighthouse Trails Research Project	The Berean Beacon
PsychoHeresy Awareness Ministries	Cephas Ministry
Babylon the Great is Falling	Operation Clambake
Through the Maze - Beyond Mormonism	Disclaimer for the following sites- *
	* The Trilateral Commission
Village of Hope	* The Council on Foreign Relations
	* World Council of Churches
Home Page	* Unitarian Universalist Association

[Community Bible Fellowship](#)

*P.O. Box 805
Wauna, WA, USA 98395*

Meeting in Lakebay, Washington State on the Key Peninsula, near Key Center and Gig Harbor

<http://cbf-wa.org/>

"Our Fellowship: Community Bible Fellowship is a non-denominational gathering of believers seeking to give glory to God and follow His word. We emphasize... our relationship with God through Christ in worship, nurturing one another toward Christlikeness, equipping believers with the word of God, and proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ to the world."

[Yelm Bible Fellowship - Ourhousechurch.com](#)



*A New Testament house-church
for the Roy, Mckenna, Yelm and Spanaway communities
[Washington State, USA]*

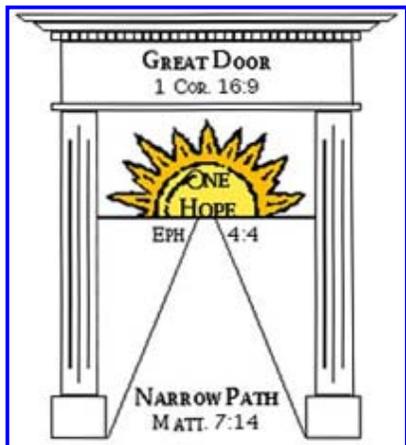
***"And they were continually devoting themselves
to the Apostles' teaching
and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread
and to prayer" (Acts 2:42)***

"The scriptures give a clear picture of how, when, where and why the Church met for the first 200

+ years of her history. Absent from this picture are church buildings, pews, Sunday school programs, professional ministers, worship teams and stained glass windows.

"Instead, we see [fellowship], the weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper (as a full meal), mutual edification, bearing one another's burdens, accountability and love; all in the context of a believer's home.

"This site is designed to edify the universal Body of Christ and inform our local expression of The Church. You will find meeting times and places, helpful articles and useful links to other sites devoted to 'house church theology'."



[The Phillips](#)

Missionaries to West Africa

Steve and Patti Phillips

You are invited to learn about Steve and Patti Phillips, missionaries to West Africa. Please consider some of Steve's writings.

These links are to pages on the procinwarn.com site. You will also find a link to the Phillips' own website.

Your prayers are requested for the Phillips family as they labor there for the gospel of Jesus Christ. "You also joining in helping us through your prayers" (2 Corinthians 1:11)."

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[Christian Missions in Many Lands, Inc. \(CMML\)](#) is a faith-based, non-profit, missionary service organization ministering to brethren assembly missionaries from the USA and other countries.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Matthew 28:19-20

[Polyventure Publications](#)



Polyventure Publications has come into being as a direct result of the lack of distribution resources for little known authors, specifically in areas of Christian discipleship, Bible Truth, and living out the Kingdom of God; which may not be culturally acceptable or politically correct. It is commonly known that author name recognition and/or money are primary keys to acceptance by major publishers and distributors. Major Christian publishers are no different than secular publishers when they publish what is currently popular, as their ultimate goal is also to "turn a profit". This situation has created a plethora of small publishers and self-publishers. The works of self-publishers are primarily some sort of print-on-demand, which often results in the cost of printing being more than the retail price of a similar size work on the bookstore shelf. Unfortunately, these higher costs further eliminate bookstore chains, who require big discounts from publishers so they can maintain the "turn a profit" standard for their bookstores, which demand up to forty percent mark-up. In addition, there are few bookstores left which will place even a local author's work on their shelf, because all sales are dictated by the huge chain of which they are a part.

House Church links

These are some of the other Biblical House Church sites I am aware of. I don't agree with everything they teach or every link on their site. I do believe these sites are a legitimate and a mostly edifying contribution to the discussion among all believers as to how to be the Body of Christ together. Another important note: The term Biblical "House Church" does not necessarily mean they must meet in a home, but most likely they will. The structure a Biblical assembly meets in has an influence on the thinking and functioning of the fellowship, but it is not crucial. What is important is whether the way we function and lead and relate to one another is according to the teachings of our Lord Jesus and his Apostles. For some of my thoughts on the general topic, please see: [The "House Church Movement"](#) And, also: [Restoration Movements](#)



The brother who runs the above site is a Preterist, but not a hyperpreterist... so, that's good.



These brethren seem to be Preterists, but I still love them.

[Yelm Bible Fellowship - Ourhousechurch.com](#)

[Coffee Oasis](#)



[Breakfast Pig Christians](#)

["What mean these Stones?"](#)



"Plymouth Brethren"

In the last few years I have begun to appreciate those assemblies of believers that are sometimes called, "The Brethren" or the "Plymouth Brethren". They have a very interesting history. They have been very influential in modern Evangelicalism, though most Evangelicals don't know anything about them. They are a very diverse group. Some are cult-like. I do not endorse the "closed" or "exclusive" brethren or any of several cults that use the name "brethren". There appears to be some segments of the Plymouth Brethren who are very institutional and fluffy like most of the Evangelical subculture. But... there also appears to be some assemblies who are loving and serious-minded disciples of Jesus. These are the people I have a kinship with. The following are some links that may help you get to know this rich branch of the Bride of Christ. As usual, I don't endorse everything on these sites or the links that they have to other sites.

[Plymouth Brethren .com](#)

[ShawnCuthill.com](#)

[Brethren Online .org](#)

[BrethrenPedia](#)

[John and Suzanne Sinclair](#)

[Plymouth Brethren discussion forum](#)

[Christian Missions in Many Lands](#)

[Search of Brethren sites](#)



Media Spotlight

"A Biblical analysis of religious and secular media"

Al and Jean Dager

P.O. Box 290
Redmond, WA 98073-0290

I would encourage you to ask for their free newsletter. I don't agree with everything they teach, but they have been such an encouragement in so many ways through their newsletter and reports. They continue to be among a very few that are contending for the Faith and refuting so many false gospels and unbiblical trends within the Body of Christ.

Articles or recommendations relating to Media Spotlight on this site: [The World Christian Movement](#) - [The Purpose Driven Program](#) - [The September 11th Turning Point](#) (my article in which I quote Al) - [Books by Al Dager](#) - [The Emergent Church](#)

Gospel for Muslims .org

<http://gospelformuslims.org>

THE BEREAN CALL

Dave Hunt, Editor-in-Chief, **T.A. McMahon**, Executive Director

"A publication of The Berean Call, an evangelical ministry committed to encouraging Christians to grow in spiritual discernment through their study of the Bible. In Acts 17:10-11 we are told that the Bereans received what was being preached to them by the Apostle Paul and were commended because they "searched the scriptures daily" to see if those things were true. We exhort followers of Christ to emulate the Bereans as they seek biblical truth."

Free monthly newsletter. "TBC Today" is a daily email update.

The Lord used Dave Hunt's ministry to rescue me first from "motivational training" and "human potential" deceptions, and then later from "Christian activism" and the "Coalition On Revival". It was through this ministry that I learned the importance of following the Lord Jesus, alone, and not "gurus"; and about comparing EVERYTHING to God's Word as the standard of Truth.

See on this site: [Items from The Berean Call](#) from the "TBC Today"

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[Lighthouse Trails Research Project](#)

[Exposing Dangers of Contemplative Spirituality](#)

"The Avenues Through Which Contemplative Spirituality is Entering the Church

["Rick Warren and the Purpose-Driven Life](#)

[Willow Creek](#)

[Youth Specialties](#)

[Emerging Church Movement](#)

[Richard Foster and Renovare](#)

[Larry Crabb
and the Association of Christian Counselors](#)

[Robert Schuller and His New Age Gurus](#)

[North America's Seminaries and Colleges"](#)

[Items from the Lighthouse Trails Research Project Newsletter](#)

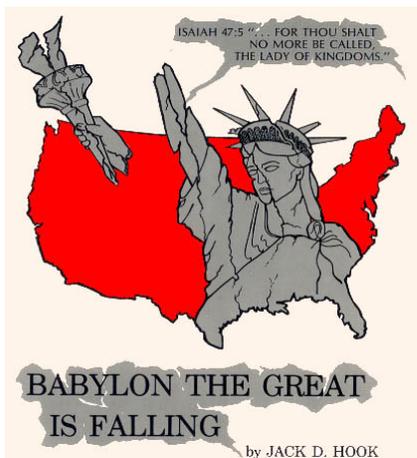
[PsychoHeresy Awareness Ministries: Christian Study Materials - Free Newsletter, Books, Warning Packages, Position Papers](#)

"Exposing psychoheresy and its increasing stranglehold on the Church."

Martin & Deidre Bobgan, Editors

The Bobgan's are among a very few who are contending for the Faith against the false gospels of psychology. They provide an extensive and detailed analysis of various trends and people.

[BABYLON THE GREAT IS FALLING](#)



Isaiah 47:5 "...for thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms."

Jack Hook is a tender-hearted brother who lives in Phoenix. Jack wrote the book, [Babylon The Great Is Falling](#) about twenty years ago and this book is the basis for his web site.

"Just before the Lord Jesus Christ came into my heart in the spring of 1978, everything in the world looked dreary and dismal. The Vietnam War I had returned from years earlier shattered all my dreams and ambitions for a peaceful life. Before my Vietnam days, I longed for a "Utopian fulfillment" like most other people."

Jack's web site proclaims our hope in Jesus Christ and warns against the false hopes of this world's political, economic, and religious systems. He has many specific convictions about the meaning of prophetic scriptures which you and I ought to search out for ourselves in God's Word. What I appreciate most is his testimony of God's grace in his life and his conviction that:

"The love of God in Christ must be shouted across the land. To love is to warn. We must expose the lies of God's enemy."

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In September of 2003 I was blessed of the Lord to get to know Jim Spencer of Boise, Idaho. Jim is a former Mormon who became a follower of Jesus Christ, pastored a church, and now ministers through authoring books, speaking, and his web sites, including Mazeministry.com. Jim is licensed in the Foursquare denomination (which I do not endorse, but I love and appreciate Jim). Jim Spencer wrote a book in 1993 called, Heresy Hunters: Character Assassination in the Church, in which he calls into question the tactics of some "cult busters".

Truth without Love is too hard; Love without Truth is too soft

[**beyondmormonism.com**](http://beyondmormonism.com)

*Job Opportunities
at
MeySen Schools
Sendai City, Japan*

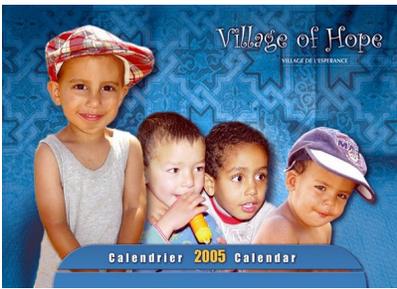
Teaching English

Two-Year Degree required to obtain work visa.



<http://www.meysen.ac.jp/engli/eng.htm>

MeySen Academy



<http://www.voh-ainleuh.org/>



[Village of Hope - Village de l'Espérance](#)

*A new hope for
the Children
of Morocco*

*Une nouvelle espérance
pour les Enfants du Maroc*

Eastern Regional Watch <http://erwm.com/>

Discernment Resource Ministries - Will you be a watchman?



[Christian News & Views](#)

Andy Neckar, the editor of this site, desires to be "Earnestly Contending for the Faith; Exposing Deception in Politically Correct Churches" I may not agree with all the articles or all the links, but Andy's site speaks to a lot of the unbiblical trends in the Body of Christ. I encourage you to be an Acts 17 Berean as you explore his articles and links. If there is something you disagree with, email Andy. Let me know what your thoughts are, also.

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<http://www.radicalpilgrim.da.ru>

The Radical Pilgrim is not an institution, just a Bible Believing web site (a book could be a future possibility). Nor is it connected to, or belonging to any group, denomination or organization. Therefore we are not trying to get you to join "[our thing](#)" and add membership to our cause, or club (there's too many of them already), or empire (politics is not our game).

*This is Tom Lamb's, **KIWI WEB SITE**. I may not agree with all the articles or all the links, but Tom's testimony of how the Lord Jesus has worked in his life is a great encouragement. And many of the issues he raises are worth examining in the light of God's Word. Please be an Acts 17 Berean as you explore his articles and links. If there is something you disagree with, email Tom. Let me know what your thoughts are, also.*

Beyond Protestantism

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athleo.net

Have you ever met a brother that seems to be an up-front, sincere individual, in whom there is no guile?

<http://typicalsaint.com/>

[Pastor's Site](#)

A Romanian brother, Cristian Secrieru, who recently immigrated to Canada.

Recently I linked to brother Cristian Secrieru's web site, and then noticed that he dedicated his book, partly, to Robert Schuller. Being concerned about that I asked him about it. And I truly appreciated [his reply](#) (which he permitted me to post).



Thy Word is a
Lamp
to my feet

[The Lamp Ministry](#)

[The Chronicles of Arnia](#)



See on this site: [Cracking the Da Vinci Code - Arne Herstad](#)

[Promise Keepers vs. Scripture](#)

Is **this**
the Path to Godliness



"Promises"
& Promise Keepers...

Examining them
in the Light of Scripture

A Study page which examines the foundational tenets of this popular Christian men's movement, organization and it's teachings in Light of Scripture

This site is edited by W. Lee Miller who has set a great example for me as a brother who "Speaks the Truth in Love".

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[The God of the Bible versus the god of multi-level marketing](#)

Consider the articles on this website, as a Berean. It's not the ["business model"](#) or the products being sold I'm concerned about when it comes to MLM. It is the [idolatry](#) and the [cult mentality](#) that is often promoted by these business organizations: Counterfeit evangelism... not evangelizing for Jesus but for "the business". Counterfeit conversions... to "the business" and its "community" not to Jesus and the Body of Christ. Counterfeit zeal... for "building the business", for building the "downline", not for the things of God, not for the calling of the New Testament for the Church, not for making disciples of Jesus... but for making disciples of the "upline". [False christs and false gospels](#) promoted by the many "must-buy-for-the-success-of-your business" [books](#) that the upline promote: [Think and Grow Rich](#) by Napoleon Hill, [Psycho-Cybernetics](#) by Maxwell Maltz, [Don't Let Anybody Steal Your Dream](#) - Dexter Yager with Douglas Wead, [The Possible Dream: A Candid Look at Amway](#) - Charles Paul Conn, [Compassionate Capitalism](#) - Rich DeVos, Co-founder of Amway, [See You At the Top](#) - Zig Ziglar.

[Internet Society Of Ex Amway Distributors With Web-Pages](#)

This is a list of sites. They're probably not all Christians so I don't endorse all these links. But I did want to make available this subculture of people who say they've been wronged by that system.

Amway, A Different Gospel (Ex-Amway Site)

12/20/2001: It's down again! Try the above two links.

6/3/2001: It's back up.

2/4/2001: This site disappeared. If I find it again I'll put the hyperlink back up. Try "The God of Multi-Level Marketing" above.

10/2/99: There appears to be quite an attack in progress against those who desire to warn others.

I don't know who hosts this site, but it appears to be a sincere follower of the Lord Jesus. I've included it here because it raises some very important issues regarding Amway and similar organizations. May the Lord give you wisdom as to what is idolatry as opposed to a pure devotion to Jesus Christ.

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"[Berean Beacon](#) Ministries proclaims the Good News of Salvation (the Gospel of Jesus Christ). The President and founder is Richard Bennett, a former Roman Catholic Priest. A number of articles are posted to help those in Catholicism to find the true Gospel of Jesus Christ."

"The greatest obstacle to the Gospel is silence. By remaining silent and hoping that our Christian life will testify for itself we fail to keep the Lord's commandment. The commandment, "go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." means to go and speak the Word to the Catholic! The majority of Nuns and Priests and former Catholics that I know who have been saved out of Catholicism all testify to the fact that no Bible believer ever approached them about their salvation. Christ's commandment to give the good news is a commandment, not a request!"

[Cephas Ministry](#)



As far as I can tell the person who operates the above web site does not profess to be a follower of Jesus, so of course, use discernment as you peruse it. But his warnings to others about CoS is something worth considering.

Disclaimer for the following sites:

The following links are for information and research purposes only. Not only do I not endorse these sites, but I warn against what they stand for. May the Lord give you discernment.



[This site](#) will give you a glimpse of one perspective of the human rulers of this world system.

[The Council on Foreign Relations](#)



[Foreign Affairs Magazine](#)

This organization is older than the Trilateral Commission. This organization played a role in forming the Trilateral Commission.

world council of churches **welcome**



The WCC is the ultimate in Protestant "churchianity" and Visions of Global Unity. This is the place to learn about Protestant ecumenicalism. (Thanks to the sister who suggested this link!)



Go to the UUA site and compare with Biblical Christianity.

"With its historical roots in the Jewish and Christian traditions, Unitarian Universalism is a liberal religion -- that is, a religion that keeps an open mind to the religious questions people have struggled with in all times and places. We believe that personal experience, conscience and reason should be the final authorities in religion, and that in the end religious authority lies not in a book or person or institution, but in ourselves. We are a "non-creedal" religion: we do not ask anyone to subscribe to a creed."

[Unitarian Universalist Association](#)

Preparing the world for the counterfeit Christ: Some people I really care about are Unitarian! I'm not against people, but I do want to contrast what I believe the Bible teaches with what is advocated by the UUA. My main reason for mentioning the UUA on my website is to, not so much criticize the UUA, but to try to show those who profess to be Evangelical Christians that they are **effectively becoming Unitarians**, whether they know it or not! Jim B.

[Tolerance](#) - [Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#) - [Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#) - [Who Jesus is](#) - [Thy Word is Truth](#) - [The Good News](#) - [Agnostics for Jesus!](#) - [The False Gospel of Self Esteem](#) - [CREDO: A Glimpse of the World Religion](#) - [The Bahai Faith](#) - [Freemasons and Other Occult Brotherhoods](#) - [Three Choices for Truth](#)

[Christians are becoming Unitarian-Universalists](#)

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<http://procinwarn.com>



Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning

Shall we be disciples of Jesus together? Or would you rather just participate in a Religious System?

[Contend for the Faith](#) - Professing Evangelical Christians are effectively becoming [Unitarian-Universalists](#).

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:23

[What's New](#) - [Blog](#) - [About This Site](#) - [Site Map](#) - [Articles](#) - [Search](#) - [Links](#) - [Discussion Board](#) - [Contact Information](#) - [Commentary on Current Events](#) - [Books to Consider](#) - [Kingdom of God](#) - [World System](#) - [The Gospel for West Africa](#)

[Why am I "against everything"?](#)

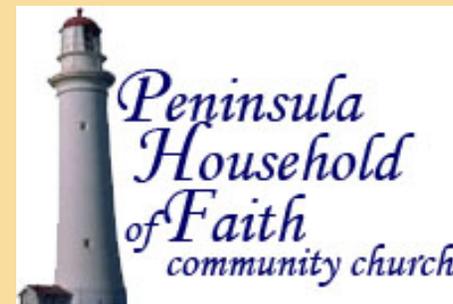
["Community"](#) - *Salvation of the World?* - **No... a ["Tower of Babel"](#) counterfeit.**

Kay Arthur/Josh McDowell to Share Platform with Contemplative

Source: [Lighthouse Trails](#)

1/27/07

I do not know these brethren and they don't know me, but I have heard good things about them. I pray our Lord would bless their fellowship in Jesus' name.



[Peninsula Household of Faith Community Church](#)

www.phfcc.org

[Rojas Family](#)

Mark Driscoll Recommends Contemplative Authors/Participates at Emergent Event

Source: [Lighthouse Trails](#)

"Emerging church leader Mark Driscoll, who claims to have distanced himself from the emergent movement (which has a premise immersed in mysticism/contemplative) recommends his readers turn to contemplatives like Gary Thomas (who tells people in his book Sacred Pathways to repeat a word of 20 minutes) and Richard Foster (Celebration of Discipline). Some Christian leaders have defended Driscoll's supposed turn away from emergent. And yet, Driscoll is a scheduled speaker at the upcoming National Pastors Convention, which is a significant promoter for contemplative and emerging spiritualities."

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[The Good News](#)

Welcome to a site devoted to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It's my desire that the Lord would use these pages to proclaim His Gospel, to invite people to put their trust in Him, to build [His Ekklesia](#), and to warn of false gospels, false messiahs, and counterfeit religious systems.

Media Spotlight Articles

Now available in pdf form from [their site](#):

[SIX ROMAN CATHOLIC DOCTRINES THAT NULLIFY SALVATION BY GRACE](#) - (476 kb)

[DELIVERANCE - Demonization and the Christian](#) - (230 kb)

[ALL ECUMENICAL ROADS LEAD TO ROME](#) - (831 kb)

Site Map

[site map .xml](#)

Kingdom of God

Who Jesus is

World System

[EVANGELICALS AND CATHOLICS TOGETHER
\(ECT\) - \(106 kb\)](#)

[RENOVARÉ - Taking Leave of One's Senses -
\(296 kb\)](#)

[C.S. LEWIS - The Man and His Myths - \(74 kb\)](#)

[FOUR TEMPERAMENTS - Astrology and
Personality Testing - \(115 kb\)](#)

[FINDING GOD IN THE LORD OF THE RINGS -
\(753 kb\)](#)

[THE PURPOSE DRIVEN PROGRAM - A growing
PHENOMENON in the Churches - \(3.5 mbs\)](#)

[APOSTOLIC REFORMATION - A New Move or an
Old Deception? - \(100 kb\)](#)

[THE ALPHA COURSE - Chapter and Verse on
Alpha's Jesus - \(360 kb\)](#)

[ALLEGIANCE: To Whom Do We Pledge? - \(2.3
mbs\)](#)

[THE DA VINCI CODE - Truth or Gnostic
Propaganda? - \(1.7 mbs\)](#)

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[Bill Gothardism](#)

[New Life in Jesus Christ](#)

[Disciple of Jesus Christ](#)

[Loving the Truth](#)

[Personal Testimony](#)

[New Testament Fellowship](#)

[Churchianity](#)

[Issues of Concern Among
Christians](#)

[Counterfeit Christianity](#)

[The World Religion](#)

[The New World Order](#)

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[About the Banner/Logo](#)

Misapplying the Old Testament

This is a general problem among those who profess to be Bible Believing Christians: **Taking Old Testament scriptures** that were written to Israel at a specific time for a specific purpose, and then **trying to apply them** directly to followers of Jesus in the **New Testament Church**.

This ends up causing many problems that distract from a pure devotion to Jesus Christ. These problems end up turning a New Testament relationship with Jesus into a religious system of food and drink and rituals and holy days. And as referred to above, it also causes Christians to pursue Nationalistic Patriotic Idolatry.

[Applying the Old Testament to the New Testament Church](#)

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[Procinwarn.com](#) [Blog](#)



*** If we love people, we will warn people. ***

What's New

WARNING: Congress 2007 Christian Conference

Posted on procinwarn.com 1/9/07

Source: [*Lighthouse Trails*](#)

"On February 1st - 3rd, Vision New England will be presenting the [Congress 2007 conference](#). Speakers will include: contemplative meditation promoters [Tony Campolo](#), Jack Hayford, and Bill Hybels and emerging church leader, Don Miller (*Blue Like Jazz*). The [theme for this year's event](#) is a take off of Rick Warren's motto, "Whatever it Takes." It is disappointing to see Joni Eareckson Tada on the speaker list"

[See the rest of the article](#)

[The Bible Versions Debate](#)

By Dusty Peterson, Published in Media Spotlight

President Ford's Memorial at the National Cathedral

1/2/2007

Posted 1/2/2007 Updated 1/15/07

A believer in the Lord Jesus might have many mixed feelings and observations and analyses as he watched the ceremonies and listened to the speeches and pondered the context and history and gathered rulers and personalities as the United States honored the 38th President, Gerald R. Ford, July 14, 1913 - December 26, 2006.

Freemasonry, Warren Commission, Nixon pardon

Santa Fe International Corporation, Kuwait, Iraq

CIA, Yale, Order of the Skull & Bones, Kennedy Assassination, Watergate, Amway, Episcopal Church Denomination, Helsinki Accords

At the service today, the name of Jesus Christ was prominent (which surprised me) in the proceedings led by Episcopal clergy and included military participants and celebrity eulogizers.

John (Jack) Ford read Isaiah 40:28-31. Susan Ford Bales read James 1:19-25. Father Certain, (The Reverend Dr. Robert G. Certain, *Rector, St. Margaret's Episcopal Church & School, Palm Desert, California*) read John 14:1-6a. [but not 14:6b!]

Some attendees:

Family - Wife, Betty Ford, children, Michael, John, Steven, Susan; grand children and great-grand children;

Former Presidents and wives - President George W. Bush and Laura Bush, President Bill Clinton and Senator Hillary Clinton, President George H. W. Bush and Barbara Bush, Nancy Reagan, President Jimmy Carter and Rosalynn

Carter

Tributes given by:

- * George H. W. Bush, *Forty-First President*
- * Dr. Henry A. Kissinger
- * Thomas J. Brokaw
- * George W. Bush, *Forty-Third President*

Honorary Pall Bearers: Martin Allen, James A. Baker, III, Robert Barrett, James Cannon, Kenneth Chenault, Richard B. Cheney, William Coleman, Richard DeVos, Robert Dole, Richard Ford, Alan Greenspan, Robert Hartmann, Carla Hills, Henry Kissinger, Jack Marsh, Paul O'Neill, Donald H. Rumsfeld, Brent Scowcroft, Sanford Weill, Frank Zarb

Ceremonies at Palm Desert, California, U.S. Capitol Rotunda, National Cathedral, Presidential Library in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Other attendees: Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld

There were no Evangelical Celebrities to be found which stood out to me compared to many events over the last fifteen years.

President Ford's Career:

University of Michigan, B.A., 1935 Yale University School of Law, LL.B., 1941 United States Navy, 1942 - 1946 United States House of Representatives, 1949 - 1973 Vice President of the United States, 1973 - 1974 President of the United States, 1974 - 1977

Quotes of President Ford about Freemasonry:

Remarks at an Unveiling Ceremony at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial, Alexandria, Virginia.
February 17th, 1975

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=5485>

"When I took my obligation as a master mason--incidentally, with my three younger brothers--I recalled the value my own father attached to that order. But I had no idea that I would ever be added to the company of the Father of our Country and 12 other members of the order who also served as Presidents of the United States."

"Masonic principles--internal, not external--and our order's vision of duty to country and acceptance of God as a Supreme Being and guiding light have sustained me during my years of Government service. Today especially, the guidelines by which I strive to become an upright man in Masonry give me great personal strength."

"Masonic precepts can help America retain our inspiring aspirations while adapting to a new age. It is apparent to me that the Supreme Architect has set out the duties each"



Symbol on the Memorial Service [Program](#)

[Crusaders' cross](#)

"Also known as the **Jerusalem cross**. This cross was the symbol of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem, which existed for almost two hundred years after the First Crusade. The four smaller crosses are said to symbolize either the four books of the Gospel or the four directions in which the Word of Christ spread from Jerusalem. Alternately, all five crosses can symbolize the five wounds of Christ during the Passion. This symbol is also used in the flag of Georgia."

From Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cross>

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[Counterfeit Christianity, The World Religion, and The New World Order](#)

[Christians are becoming Unitarians](#)

[Freemasons and Other Occult Brotherhoods](#)

[Trilateral Commission & CFR Membership](#)

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[West African Mission Update - December 2006](#)

[Rick Warren on Meet the Press](#)

[**On Wearing a Head Covering**](#)

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Contemplative, Emergent, Interspirituality

[From Lighthouse Trails](#)

Posted 1/1/2007

"In 2006, many of us witnessed the escalation of contemplative spirituality within Christendom like never before. One leader after the next either openly promoted contemplative or remained eerily quiet about the issue all together. A major Christian publishing house released a book on yoga, trusted Christian leaders participated in a Fox Home Entertainment DVD on contemplative prayer, online Christian bookstores became nesting grounds for authors who teach panentheism and interspirituality, and Purpose Driven has made it into over 400,000 churches with Rick Warren being a proponent of both contemplative and the emerging church."

"We know that many of you have paid dear prices for standing for biblical truth. The editors and the authors of Lighthouse Trails Publishing and Lighthouse Trails Research thank you for being an inspiration to other believers and a witness to those who still live in darkness. It is our desire to be a service to the body of Christ, and we hope we can do that in 2007 in humility, love and courage."

"God bless you as you contend for the precious faith. May the Lord watch over you and keep you safe."

- [Son of PTL Jim Bakker Says Gay Marriage OK; Resonates With Contemplative Spirituality](#)
 - [Lighthouse Trails Research Top Stories of 2006](#)
 - [Christian or "Christ Follower"?](#)
 - [VIDEO: The New Age - A Pathway to Paradise?](#)
 - [How to Know When the Emerging Church Shows Signs of Emerging in Your Church](#)
 - [An End of the Year Greeting from Brian Flynn](#)
 - [Rick Warren and Another Possible Presidential Candidate Meet Together](#)
 - [Event in Iran Says Holocaust Never Happened](#)
 - [In 2006, Which Christian Colleges Are Turning to Contemplative?](#)
 - [Christian Leaders Still Promoting "Purpose Driven Life"](#)
 - [Ministry Spotlights](#)
 - [Just in case you didn't know](#)
 - [Publishing News](#)
-

[From Lighthouse Trails](#)

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About "End of the Spear"

"Dare to Make Contact"

Posted 12/28/06 updated 12/30/06

An amazing story about five martyred missionaries and the producers hired a gay activist, Chad Allen, to play the lead role. "Why?", I've continued to ask. The fact that a gay activist was cast is troubling enough. But I'm considering now if there isn't a broader agenda in mind.

The movie was released in January and I posted commentary from my friend, Bob Haines about the situation in February: [Movie about Martyred Christian Missionaries stars a homosexual](#). Though I had long been inspired by these missionaries,

husbands and wives, I did not intend to see the movie. I have been profoundly disappointed in recent years with the lack of discernment and gullibility of Christians and how easily they have been manipulated by media hype when it came to movies that are superficially labeled "Christian". However, another friend gave the dvd to me as a gift and I watched the movie.

I actually liked the movie and all the actors portraying missionaries and Waodani. I loved the scenery. But there is much more going on here that must be considered.

"End of the Spear" was produced by Every Tribe Entertainment whose web site is subtitled, "Truth Beyond Imagination" Their "about us" information includes the following:

We are storytellers. Every Tribe Entertainment creates films that address globally relevant issues in order to incite a positive impact on the world.

We believe the most powerful stories are those that raise the most meaningful questions. This sets the stage for social discourse that explores potential solutions through varying perspectives. Our films are designed to entertain and stimulate our audiences. We craft hopeful stories - from the world - for the world.

Every Tribe Entertainment was founded in 2003, and released its first motion picture, End of the Spear, in January 2006. The film debuted in the top 10 theatrical grossing films during its opening weekend, and to date has grossed over \$20 million in home video sales and rentals.

Building on the success of our first release, Every Tribe Entertainment's focus is to produce captivating and thought-provoking cinematic experiences that appeal to a broad international audience.

"End of the Spear" is very touching and heart-warming and even inspiring, if you concentrate on the fact that real brothers and sisters-in-Christ lived through these events. And yet, there was not a single mention of the name of Jesus who these missionaries died for!

The movie attempts to portray the ministry and deaths of Nate Saint, Jim Elliot, Peter Fleming, Ed McCully, and Roger Youderian and how Elizabeth Elliot and Nate's sister, Rachel, continued to minister to the Auca/Waodani tribe.

The movie begins with the voice of the character, Steve Saint, son of the pilot, Nate, in narration saying:

Some people say we live in a world of irreconcilable differences. They're saying true peace, lasting peace can't be obtained because we haven't found a way yet to change the human heart. I took a journey once with a warrior named Mincayani down a remote river deep in the Amazon basin of Ecuador. The events of that journey will challenge what a lot of people say.

Why did Every Tribe Entertainment produce this movie? They say they want to "...address globally relevant issues in order to incite a positive impact on the world." They say they, "...believe the most powerful stories are those that raise the most meaningful questions. This sets the stage for social discourse that explores potential solutions through varying perspectives."

They want to create, "... thought-provoking cinematic experiences that appeal to a broad international audience." So they choose a powerful example of Hebrews 11 type martyrs from the heritage of the Evangelicals, they cast a gay activist in the lead role and they tell us in the opening narration that they want to challenge the idea that we can't have lasting peace because we can't change the human heart.

Is the Gospel of Jesus Christ portrayed as the only hope? The Gospel is no where to be found in the movie. The closest it comes is when the Nate Saint character is comforting his son. The young Steve Saint asks if his Dad will defend himself with his gun if the Waodani attack. The father says he can't shoot the Wadoani. "They're not ready for heaven. We are." The implication is there, for anyone who is willing to interpret it so, that the missionaries are going to make the Waodani ready for heaven. But anyone who wants to interpret otherwise can. The theme of the entire movie can be interpreted by one with a global peace vision as being one of helping to bring peace by understanding and avoiding phobias because of misunderstanding.

The missionaries are portrayed as referring to God by the Waodani name, Waengongi. The message that the tribes people learn is that Waengongi doesn't want them to spear their fellow Waodani. Did the missionaries never tell the Waodani about Jesus in Israel who died on the cross for our sins? Did they really let the tribes people think that God was the same as their god, Waengongi?

Is this movie simply about human compassion, courage, "redemption", forgiveness, and a hope for global peace? What does it profit a person if he gains all of this but loses his soul? And there is only one name under heaven by which a man must be saved: Jesus. (see Acts 4:12)

The following is what the Every Tribe Entertainment site says to promote the dvd release of End of the Spear:

Debuting on DVD June 13 from Fox Home Entertainment, End Of The Spear takes viewers deep into the heart of darkness to discover that faith and forgiveness can transcend the senseless acts of violence that stand in the way of cultural understanding.

"End of the Spear"... does this refer to the end of violence, a global hope of peace? Heaven on Earth? A Tower of Babel vision? "Cultural understanding"? Social engineering? Myth-making?

"Dare to Make Contact"... with who? Any people we are phobic about?

As believers in the Lord Jesus, our calling is not to be zealous about movies but to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to whoever will listen.

Every Tribe Entertainment CEO from their site:

"Mart Green, CEO

Mart is a producer of *End of the Spear*. Before starting Every Tribe Entertainment he built Mardel Christian and Educational Supply, a growing chain of 23 stores in 6 states. Mart's family built Hobby Lobby, which now has 381 stores in 30 states. Mart combines his passion for stories with his experience in building well run, customer oriented companies."

Mart Green's father is billionaire, David Green. Founder of Hobby Lobby. Hobby Lobby has made use of Bill Gothard's Character First training program.

Every Tribe Entertainment's next project is a movie titled, "Blink" about a Muslim princess who is assisted by an American who is, "... struck by an incredible gift - the ability to see multiple potential futures. This mysterious skill helps them avoid capture once, then twice."

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[Christians are becoming Unitarians](#)

[Occult Terms](#)

[Missionaries](#)

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[West African Mission Update - December 2006](#)

Posted 12/28/06

~ News From Patti ~

Dear Brethren,

I have recently returned from a trip to Nigeria. Steve left two days after I returned, and has since also returned home here in Sierra Leone. Altogether it took about 38 days.

During all this time I have not had a chance to correspond with anyone outside of our vicinity, except a few phone calls. The trip itself was of the Lord.

The week before I left, I had come down ill which concerned me. I did not know if I could travel as sick as I was. But the Lord had other plans. It seemed evident that I was not getting over the illness, and that I was going to Nigeria.

[More](#)

~ News From Steve ~

The three weeks spent in Nigeria were overall very encouraging. Many of the brethren are faithfully continuing to preach the gospel and raise up disciples in various places. It was a joy to meet with numerous brethren that I had not previously known who have been blessed by the efforts of Titus, Yinnkah, Kunle, Moses, Tony, Oliver, Solomon, Dr. George, and brother Samuel.

The Lord is evidently using these brethren to carry on the work for His honor and glory and unto the spiritual profit of many.

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Rick Warren on Meet the Press

12/24/06 updated 12/28/06

Unify the World's Religions to join with the Global Political and Economic Systems to solve the world's problems

Pragmatism

[Video](#)

[Transcript](#)

Faith in America: Can Religion unite the country for the greater good? Tim Russert, Jon Meachem: American Gospel

Many religions civil peace: freemarket economy for religions, let the best ideas win.

Can religion be a force for unity?

Warren is sick of being known by what we're against, he wants Christians to be known by what we're for.

Roosevelt prayer on D-Day, our republic, our religion, our civilization, unholy forces of our enemy. Almighty God, Amen

Aspen Institute speaking, Warren.

Lincoln second inaugural address Christian?

Ben Franklin: public religion – utility to maintain morality.

Deism in founding fathers

It's time for the church to be known for love and not legalism. Warren.

Right and left think they've lost. Extremism. Both sides all in this together.

A culture of civility.

Liberals moderates conservatives: five global goliaths. Could coalesce around these.

Third leg of the stool: government, business, the church

Faith sector, public sector, economic sector

Business: management skills, most churches poorly managed.

Global reach of the church. Universal distribution. Doesn't need to be Christian. Imam. Only truly global organization. Buddhists, Hindus. Local credibility: priest, pastor, imam, or rabbi, credibility. proselytizing

Secularists very small, unite the faiths. I don't care what your motivation to do good is as long as you do good.

Athiest movement - manifesto

You're not going to take religion out of their lives. You can manage it, you can marshall it. Rick is one of the great marshallers.

Religion of humility. "We don't have a monopoly on truth" we have to watch the proselytization. Sense of history, excesses in the name of religion.

Founding fathers managing and marshalling not opposing religions.

Atheists: killed more in the 20th century... [faith is the hope implied]

Compassionate conservatism and Compassionate liberalism. The compassionate part is the Jesus part.

American values instead of religious values, while recognizing the spiritual element.

Americans: given much, expect much, responsibility

Psalm 72 ???

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[Counterfeit Christianity, The World Religion, and The New World Order](#)

[Christians are becoming Unitarians](#)

[Freemasons and Other Occult Brotherhoods](#)

[Trilateral Commission & CFR Membership](#)

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On Wearing a Head Covering

*The following are from two emails we received from Barbara Wilderbuer.
Posted 12/24/06*

Women, for the most part, stopped wearing head coverings in Christian churches in the mid 20th century. Around the same time abortion was legalized, prayer in school was restricted, the five fundamentals of faith was being scooted out the doors of trusted theological seminaries, interest in the cults and even the occult, self-expression, rebellion to parents, mothers of small children joining the work force, psychotherapies and relativism, and on and on it goes---

Today we are told head coverings are a cultural thing of the past, not necessary to women in the church today. It is amazing to me that women who obey the Biblical command to wear a head covering are labeled "legalistic", "uninformed", and perhaps not even saved-- in much need of "grace".

I wear a hat or scarf to church or public worship gatherings of Christians. I have been labeled these and more for 27 years. Still I would not trade the sweet fellowship with Christ I have for the acceptance of others for all the riches in the world!

I do have a question for those who argue the "cultural" point of a problem with the women in the church at Corinth, however: Are the women of *that* day any different from the women of today? If we are *still doing* the same things they did back then, the principles of head coverings, submission to the authority of our husbands, and quiet learning that pleases the Father would still apply.

The truth about "cultural" head coverings is sadly miscommunicated. Greek women covered the whole head, only allowing the eyes to be seen. Jewish women covered the hair, allowing the entire face to be seen. *How* to wear a head covering is the cultural issue, *not* whether it is Biblical to wear one.

And finally, to be legalistic about wearing a head covering is a simple one: The "only this kind and nothing else will do" mentality is legalism. To make it a salvation issue would also be legalism. There have been rare occasion that the church bulletin held over the top of my hair had to do when I prayed in church because I ran out the door without my scarf. God doesn't care what we use, just so long as we obey and cover the head. It is a symbol of faithful obedience for three reasons that are not cultural: the order of creation as it was Eve that was deceived, not to offend the angels present at the assembly, and submission to our husbands. These are not cultural reasons.

Thank you.

My wearing a head covering used to be a very sensitive issue for me. I resented it. I felt like Paul was not being fair. I did not want to accept it as from my Lord Jesus. God's Word. Unchanging. Perfect. I listened to all the reasons not to. It's been a difficult journey. Such a simple instruction--yet at the same time a VERY BIG DEAL. Why? Pride, I'm quite sure. I can only suggest that my flesh hates to submit and obey. I was born to rebel and if it were written just the opposite then I believe that women would be wearing hats and scarves like crazy, stating reasons just the same---"the command was cultural to that time period. It doesn't apply to our day." And so I can only shrug my shoulders and believe with simple trust that God has his purposes for why up is up, down is down, and if he tells us to stomp around Jericho seven times and shout to the glory of the Lord even though it does not make good military sense then He has a reason for it and it is not our place to question Him but rather to obey Him. It truly is a narrow way that He beckons us to travel and I pray His merciful loving kindness will continue to extend unmerited toward me until the day of His glorious return for His bride, The Church. Wowsie, wow!! Oh how I look forward to that day!!!

God bless you both! And shalom.

We are called to simply speak the truth. We are called to be motivated by love.

Without the truth we are no different from pagans. Without love we are just Pharisees.

The world and many professing Christians would like to silence the truth in the name of "love".

Our own flesh is used to discredit our message.

Jesus will help us.

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"But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; **for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.**" 1 Samuel 16:7

What do Jesse Jackson, Gloria Steinem, Robert Schuller, and James Dobson all have in common?

The False Gospel of Self Esteem!

Jesse Jackson led young people in the affirmation chant, "I AM - Somebody!"

Gloria Steinem, the Feminist leader, wrote the book, *Revolution From Within - A Book of Self Esteem*.

Robert Schuller wrote the book, *Self Esteem: The New Reformation*

James Dobson has promoted Self Esteem for many years including with the following quote from his book, *What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew about Women*:

"In fact, low self-esteem is a threat to the entire human family, affecting children, adolescents, the elderly, all socioeconomic levels of society, and each race and ethnic culture."

Quoted in the Bobgan's book, *James Dobson's Gospel of Self-Esteem & Psychology*

[The False Gospel of Self Esteem](#)

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[Unbiblical Phrases That Christians Use](#)

["Building Your Mate's Self-Esteem"](#)

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From TBC Today 12/8/06

Global Summit on AIDS and the Church

on the Saddleback campus

MAN SAYS: "[Beginning November 30], the Global Summit on AIDS and the Church [was] held on the Saddleback campus. It is not a church service, but an international summit for pastors and world leaders. Leaders from churches, denominations, health, NGOs, Christian organizations, governments, businesses, and entertainment will meet together to discuss how they can work with churches to end AIDS. Participants will hear messages from Laura Bush, Sen. Bill Frist, Sen. Sam Brownback, Bill Gates, Bono, the doctor who discovered AIDS transmission heterosexually, **Franklin Graham, the President of World Vision, the President of World Relief, the President of Compassion**, and about 30 other speakers who are concerned about AIDS. [Pro-homosexual, pro-abortion] **Sen. Obama** is one speaker at a conference which includes Republicans and Democrats, Christians and non-Christians, pastors, business leaders, and all kinds of races from around the world. Yet the vitriol and unChristlike slander was over the top." (**Rick Warren**, Purpose Driven network, November 25, 2006)

GOD SAYS: "Be ye not **unequally yoked** together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" (2 Corinthians 6:14-15)

[TBC: More recently, Warren and Saddleback released a follow up statement: "We do not expect all participants in the Summit discussion to agree with all of our Evangelical beliefs. However, the HIV/AIDS pandemic cannot be fought by Evangelicals alone. It will take the cooperation of all government, business, NGOs and the church. That is the purpose of this Summit -- to marshal the policy of the government; the finances of business; the expertise of the health organizations; and the compassion, volunteerism and reach of the church in order to care for the sick and save lives."

Saving of lives is certainly paramount, but saving of souls is greater yet. We have seen enough examples that demonstrate **whenever evangelicals join hands with the world, the real "good news" will be set aside**. That is part of the demands of the world.]

From TBC Today 12/8/06

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[Messianic Solver of World Problems](#)

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..." *Acts 16:31*

"Be ye therefore perfect , even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." *Matthew 5:48*

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love..." *Ephesians 1:3-4*

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*Over the years I have gone from being interested in and being supportive of the **Hebrew Roots** movements and **Messianic congregations** to, recently, realizing that nearly all of it is corrupt and unbiblical.*

I've realized that Galatians and Romans and Hebrews were written to give us understanding that protects us from agendas like the "Hebrew Roots" movements.

How shall we explain from scripture the unbiblical nature of Messianic Congregations and Hebrew

[How shall we edify one another as we discuss?](#)

Please visit [this portion](#) of my discussion board as I am trying to answer this question.

As the editor of this site and your fellow believer in Jesus, please hold me accountable to these truths in everything on this site and in our personal relationships.

You can [register](#) and take part in the discussion board or you can [email me](#).

Jim

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Foursquare Church Promoting Emerging/Contemplative Leaders

11/18/06

On the Lighthouse Trails site

[*Landmark Education vs. a link on Apologetics Index*](#)

Landmark Education vs. Apologetics Index and Google and a French TV Station

11/16/06

On the Religion News Blog site

Men in their 20s & 30s

11/15/06 Updated 12/4/06

Young men are conditioned, by the World in general and by the Evangelical Subculture in particular, to see the Christian life as a **career ladder** in the Church to climb for ever increasing power and prestige.

1. Pew Sitter
2. Sunday School Teacher
3. Home Fellowship Leader
4. Deacon
5. Elder
6. Professional Clergyman
7. Megachurch Pastor
8. Denominational Empire Pope
9. Celebrity Author & Speaker
10. Counselor to Presidents and the Super Rich
11. Messianic Solver of World Problems

I know. I was one of these young men. I pray our Lord Jesus will help me to whatever degree I'm still driven by selfish ambition at the age of 53.

Most young men just pursue items 1, 2, 3, and 5. Variations are when young men pursue the musician obsession for the same reasons.

Have you noticed that many young men actually appear to be "running for elder"... as if it were a political office? Well, in many churches it is a political office.

And yet, it is Biblical for a brother to desire to serve as an overseer/elder/bishop:

"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." 1 Timothy 3:1

If being an elder is truly seen as an opportunity to participate, to serve, to edify, to set an example, and to help shepherd the flock, then we rejoice that brothers are motivated by love to do so.

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[US university president poses with 'suicide bomber'](#)

Jerusalem Post 11/5/06

Nathan & Julissa Cedarland [Serving In Mexico](#)



A Call To Repentance

Dave Hunt

See the [November 2006 Newsletter](#) on The Berean Call site.

This is an important message about the many ways professing Christians and the Evangelical subculture have become corrupt and deceived.

This message includes serious warnings about the following:

President Bush and Condoleezza Rice, D. James Kennedy, R.C. Sproul, Bob Finley, Christian Aid Mission, Mennonite Central Committee, World Vision (WV), Timothy George, Jack Hayford, Duane Litfin, Brian McLaren, David Neff, Ron Sider, Jim Wallis, Rick Warren, Thomas Wang, John Stott, Billy Graham, John Ankerberg, James Dobson, Renovaré Spiritual Formation Bible, J.I. Packer, Zondervan, Rupert Murdoch, Rick Warren, The Roman Catholic Church, Richard Land, the Southern Baptists' Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, Pat Robertson, Jack Van Impe, Bishop Fulton Sheen, Chuck Colson, Paul Crouch, TBN, Benny Hinn, Jerry Falwell, Robert Schuller, the Chrysostom Society, Richard Foster, Calvin Miller, Karen Mains, Eugene Peterson

[November 2006 Newsletter](#)

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What if your friends were thinking of sending their child, by himself, to be a witness to the [temple prostitutes](#)?

What if they were considering turning their children over to the temple for several hours a day to be taught by them... all in the interest of witnessing to them and the other children?

What if they told the temple prostitutes, "Please... teach our children your Selfism philosophies, your sorcery and divination, your visions of Tower of Babel - global unity - heaven on earth!"

"Celebration of Discipline - 27 Years of Influence!"

From the Lighthouse Trails site *10/29/06*

Richard Foster has been promoting unbiblical mysticism beliefs and techniques for many years and has helped to spawn the Emergent Church and Contemplative Spirituality movements that have swept Evangelicalism. Consider the following from the Lighthouse Trails blog article:

"Those that Foster quotes favorably in *Celebration of Discipline*:

[Thomas Merton](#)

[Morton Kelsey](#)

[Madame Guyon](#)

[Evelyn Underhill](#)

Elizabeth O' Connor

[Thomas Kelly](#)

[Fyodor Dostoevski](#)

[Soren Kierkegaard](#)

George Fox

Agnes Sanford

[Brother Lawrence](#)

[Dallas Willard](#) "

"Those Who Quote, Promote and Endorse Richard Foster:

[Focus on the Family](#)

[Chuck Swindoll](#)

[Christianity Today](#)

[YWAM](#)

[C.S. Lewis Institute](#)

[Intervarsity Christian Fellowship](#)

[Youth Specialties](#)

[More on *Celebration of Discipline*](#) "

Is it looking to be the next Calvary Chapel non-denominational denomination?

[See Comments](#) by
Senator Barack Obama
and CFR's Walter Russell Mead
about Evangelicals and Politics

[Broken Fragments](#)

Thoughts on Song of Songs

A New Booklet by Steve Phillips

[Teen Mania Introduces Kids to Contemplative-Promoting Speaker](#)

At the Lighthouse Trails Blog 10/26/06

Must we patronize a brothel to witness to prostitutes?

Of course not!

We are called to proclaim Jesus to prostitutes while remaining separated from their immorality.

If they are temple prostitutes, we are called to remain separated from their idolatry.

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What does it take to build the Megachurch of the Anti-Christ?

What does it take to build ANY Megachurch?

As followers of Jesus...

We are called to take the hit

The cheap shot
The misrepresentation
The propaganda

[Who's Driving the Purpose Driven Church?](#)

[Pray for the Berean Call](#)

[Music - The Counterfeit](#)

[Our First Visit to a Brethren Assembly](#)

[Synthesizing the Evangelicals](#)

[Extreme Calvary Chapel](#)

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[*Extreme Calvary Chapel*](#)

Synthesizing the Evangelicals

10/19/06

Comments by Senator Barack Obama:

"We need to take faith seriously not simply to block the religious right but to engage all persons of faith in the larger project of American renewal"

"Some of this is already beginning to happen. Megachurch pastors like **Rick Warren** and **T. D. Jakes** are wielding their enormous influence to confront AIDS, Third World debt relief, and the genocide in Darfur. Self-described "progressive evangelicals" like **Jim Wallis** and **Tony Campolo** are lifting up the biblical injunction to help the poor as a means of mobilizing Christians against budget cuts to social programs and growing inequality. And across the country, individual churches like my own are sponsoring day-care programs, building senior centers, and helping ex-offenders reclaim their lives."

Time Magazine October 23, 2006

Book Excerpt: "My Spiritual Journey"

"In an exclusive excerpt from his new memoir, the rising star discovers how faith can open doors to understanding"

Comments by Walter Russell Mead of the Council on Foreign Relations in Foreign Affairs magazine in the September/October 2006 issue. Mr. Mead speaks of why he is actually hopeful about merging the Evangelicals with a global agenda:

"As evangelicals have recently returned to a position of power in U.S. politics, they have supported similar causes and given new energy and support to U.S. humanitarian efforts. Under President Bush, with the strong support of Michael Gerson (an evangelical who was Bush's senior policy adviser and speechwriter), U.S. aid to Africa has risen by 67 percent, including \$15 billion in new spending for programs to combat HIV and AIDS. African politicians, such as Nigeria's Olusegun Obasanjo and Uganda's Yoweri Museveni, have stressed their own evangelical credentials to build support in Washington, much as China's Sun Yat-sen and Madame Chiang Kai-shek once did. Thanks to evangelical pressure, efforts to suppress human trafficking and the sexual enslavement of women and children have become a much higher priority in U.S. policy, and the country has led the fight to end Sudan's wars. **Rick Warren**, pastor of an evangelical megachurch in Southern California and the author of *The Purpose Driven Life* (the single best-selling volume in the history of U.S. publishing), has mobilized his 22,000 congregants to help combat AIDS worldwide (by hosting a conference on the subject and training volunteers) and to form relationships with churches in Rwanda."

Earlier in this same article Mr. Mead observes about the traditional view of Evangelicals:

"This [apocalyptic vision of Evangelicals] is not particularly hospitable to the idea of **gradual progress toward a secular utopia driven by technological advances and the cooperation of intelligent people of all religious traditions.**"

[Novus Ordo Seclorum](#)

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Our First Visit to a Brethren Assembly

10/14/06

For years I have wanted to visit a meeting of a "Plymouth Brethren" assembly. On September 3rd, 2006 we had the privilege of meeting with the saints at Carter Road Bible Chapel in Princeton, New Jersey. They meet in a beautiful white building built in 1898 and occupied by various churches since then. This Brethren Assembly has been meeting at this location since 1973 but was originally formed in the 1920s in Trenton.

We met two of the three elders that morning and I very much respect the fact that they were both in their 70's or 80's. They were very kind and eager to welcome us. They were energetic leaders who led from among their brothers and sisters.

At 9:30 AM was the "Breaking of Bread" in the main meeting room of the Chapel. There was no one up front. Everyone was sitting in the pews. We were all silent for a time and then someone selected a hymn which we opened to in the hymn book and sang a cappella. There were several hymns sung and a brother stood up in the congregation and read a scripture and another brother stood up and prayed. Then one of the brothers went forward to the front and distributed the bread and the cups to other brothers who distributed them to the congregation. Most of the sisters wore head coverings of various styles during the meetings.

At about 10:30 we went through a hallway to a fellowship hall and enjoyed talking to various members of the congregation.

The "Family Bible Hour" began about 11:00 AM. We gathered in the main Chapel meeting room again. A brother in his 30's led the singing of hymns from up front, accompanied by a lady playing an organ. We took part in a responsive reading out of the back of the hymnals which spoke of Jesus' death for us on the Cross. The main speaker that morning was a visitor who was coming from twenty years on the mission field in the Phillipines and on his way to a new position with Christian Missions in Many Lands (CMML). He was in his 50's and taught from Luke 16 about Lazarus and the Rich Man. He started out by quoting from Rick Warren and the Purpose Driven Life, which I do not recommend. It was my privilege to meet this Brother in Christ and I am grateful for his dedication to the Gospel.

I loved visiting Carter Road Bible Chapel and assembling with these precious fellow believers in Jesus Christ. My wife enjoyed speaking to the wife of one of the elders and several other ladies. A young woman who had graduated from Princeton befriended my daughter. My daughter also enjoyed talking to a young woman who was visiting from the mission field in Hong Kong.

A significant portion of the congregation was from India or at least ethnic Indian, including several young families. I enjoyed getting to know a brother who was planning to visit his family in the south of India soon. He was telling me how most of his relatives are Roman Catholic, which I found interesting.

The meeting of the Christians at Carter Road Bible Chapel was such a blessing for its simplicity and its depth and its

unaffected sincerity. It had many of the qualities I appreciate about our home assembly. Do pray that our Lord Jesus would continue to bless this beloved congregation.



Believershome.com



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["Christian Schools Introducing Teens to Mysticism Proponent"](#)

*At the Lighthouse Trails site
10/11/06*

Please
Pray for
the Brothers and Sisters who minister via

The Berean Call

10/9/06 modified 10/10/06

(Strikethroughs and rewording based on email discussion with a Berean Call customer service representative.)

Please pray for Dave Hunt and Tom McMahon, who lead the organization and for the staff that serves the Assembly of Christians around the world.

Pray for Dave and his wife, Ruth, and for their adult daughter, Janna, who is going through treatments for cancer.

Brother Dave Hunt has probably had at least as much of an impact on my Christian life as any other person.

I don't know Dave personally and I've only met him once briefly when he spoke at a local church. And yet the Lord used Dave Hunt's ministry, since about 1980, through newsletters, books, videos, and audio tapes to rescue me first from "motivational training" and "human potential" deceptions, and then later from "Christian activism" and the "Coalition On Revival". It was through Dave's ministry that I learned the importance of following the Lord Jesus, alone, and not "gurus"; and about comparing EVERYTHING to God's Word as the standard of Truth.

It was a blessing when Brother Dave took the time to discuss Jesus Christ with a flight attendant on one of his frequent trips. It happened to be my sister!

The Berean Call's administrative assistant led one of our closest friends to the Lord many years ago.

Please pray about the following concerns I have about the Berean Call and their current ministry.

1. That their legitimate support for Israel and the Jewish people and their opposition to Islam will not seduce them into a political activism mode that distracts from the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It was Dave that helped ME to see the corrupt nature of idolatrous political pursuits!
2. That they will rethink their yoking with apparent endorsement of Tim LaHaye who is listed as an endorser in at least one of their books, *What Love Is This?*. It concerns me that in the name of opposing Calvinism (I agree that militant Calvinists must be confronted) they would yoke with endorse Tim LaHaye and therefore overlook his own deceptions which are at least as serious as militant Calvinism. Tim LaHaye helped to popularize psychology and disguised astrology through his "Four Temperaments" book series. Tim LaHaye was very much involved in the seduction of American Christianity into political activism and morality crusades through his Moral Majority of California and his Coalition of Traditional Family Values. His wife, Beverly, continues to seduce professing Christians into the "culture wars" through Concerned Women for America. Recently, Tim LaHaye endorsed Mel Gibson's movie, *Passion of the Christ*.
3. That they will rethink their yoking with Calvary Chapels. Or they will rethink their approach when speaking to Calvary Chapel congregations. For the most part I believe that most Calvary Chapel clergymen preach the real Jesus and the true Gospel, for which I rejoice. But their leadership structure with a one-man "Pastor/Teacher" who exerts a Moses-like authoritarian control over each congregation is not a Biblical, healthy example to set for the rest of the Body of Christ. I have personally heard Dave Hunt advocate the leadership of an assembly by multiple elders. Calvary Chapels do not have true elders. They are ruled by one man who has an advisory

board who are called, "elders". Part of the reason that Evangelicalism is so deceived is BECAUSE of people who follow their leaders as gurus because their leaders are allowed to have unbiblical authority over their brethren!

[The Berean Call](#)

[Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism](#)

[*Four Temperaments, Astrology & Personality Testing*](#)

by Martin and Deidre Bobgan
On the Psychoheresy web site

[Quotes about Mel Gibson's Movie](#)

[Calvary Chapel Critique](#)

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[The Rulers and Murder](#)

"Outspoken Putin critic shot dead in Moscow"
MyWay News 10/7/06

[Machiavelli and How Rulers Think](#)

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Music - The Counterfeit

In Worship, Discipleship, & Fellowship

10/4/06 updated 10/7/06

How much does the New Testament say about music? Not much, and yet look how obsessed we Evangelicals have become with music in our understanding and practice of worship, being disciples, and assembling ourselves together.

Our assembly meetings have been turned into "church service" productions that are dominated by musical performances. This deceives professing Christians into searching for a church where they "feel" like they have been a part of "worship" which requires them to be surrounded by an adequate number of emotional people with their eyes closed and raising their hands, and getting "into" the music.

Well meaning brothers who are musicians have been misled to confuse devotion to their music with serious discipleship.

Young leaders have been conditioned to think that a really right-on church or home fellowship is one with really talented musicians.

The Christian Music industry is a parachurch subculture. It is auxiliary to the Church. It is outside the church and has a life of its own. It is a pied-piper system that usurps the role of the assembly and becomes the bulk of a young person's Christian life.

From that first summer I believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, my favorite thing is to sing songs to the Lord with other believers. I have always greatly appreciated friends who play the guitar or the piano or the congas who have a heart to serve and minister and participate. As a new believer, moving from place to place because of the Navy, there were times I didn't know people yet, and there were record albums from the Christian Bookstore that I played in my apartment and I sang to the Lord and I was ministered encouragement and hope and trust.

Looking back, I would have benefited more from learning earlier than I did what it means to be a disciple of Jesus and an Acts 17:11 Berean. The Evangelical subculture I was in placed too much emphasis on music as if it were at the center of being a Christian and being the Church.

When we sing songs to the Lord together, sometimes I close my eyes; sometimes I raise my hands; I most definitely get emotional from time to time. While these things are part of worship or the effect of worship, they are by no means central to worship. Neither are they central to being a serious disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[What I Recommend](#)

[Dove Awards on TBN](#)

[Being a Disciple of Jesus](#)

[The Evangelical Subculture](#)

[Music in the Assembly](#)

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[About this Book](#)

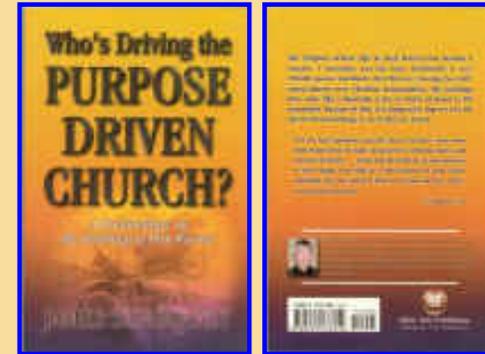
[James Sundquist](#) is founder of Rock Salt Publishing and is very devoted to contending for the faith. Pray for this brother that he, and each of us, would speak the truth motivated by love. I have greatly appreciated the encouragement of getting to know James as an internet co-worker in Christ.

[RICK WARREN'S GLOBAL P.E.A.C.E. PLAN vs. SCRIPTURAL TEACHINGS ON PEACE](#)

(PDF file 177 kb)

BY JAMES SUNDQUIST

Who's Driving the PURPOSE DRIVEN CHURCH?
A Documentary on the Teachings of Rick Warren
By James Sundquist



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[See Discussion about King James Version and other Bible Translations](#)

Comments about Quakerism 9/28/06

My beloved friend whom I greatly respect, [Carl Mease](#), sent me the following comments about Quakerism:

"I noticed your comments on Quakerism from your trip. [My wife] was raised a Quaker, her dad still being a Friends pastor, and I was saved in the Friends Church. There are two distinctly different denominations, with the same name, only because they have the same roots. The only written distinction is that some are called Evangelical Friends. The other group, which is basically Unitarian, is commonly called the Eastern Quakers because they are mostly in Penna. and the Eastern states. Interestingly enough, it is my understanding the original split came over whether to have a pastoral system. Even more interesting is that the group (I believe originally called the Hicksites) that wanted to maintain the leading of the Spirit in worship without a pastor leader/coordinator; devolved into the Unitarian types today. The group that wanted a pastoral system is the present Evangelical Friends. The pastor in the Evangelical group actually does not have power or superior authority as in many groups. The name Society of Friends merely comes from that time in England when it was illegal to start a church, but you could have a religious society, much like the Wesleys were first involved in."

"Quite frankly, the Friends in Kansas that I was a part of would look like the local Nazarene or Wesleyan church as far as plan of salvation and maintaining the Christlike walk.

"Yet they are different in church government, and still maintain with the Salvation Army - no water baptism and what most would call the communion service. These things seem to have been a reaction to the Roman Cath church of the 1600's which said both were necessary for salvation. A defense of these and other early Quaker belief are found in Barclay's "Apology, by Robert Barclay in the late 1600's. It is still in print, and I may have a copy if you want to look at it.

"The early Quakers were far from Unitarianism, e.g. William Penn's writings which include "No Cross, No Crown".

"I have had some personal experiences with the Eastern Quakers which put them into the anything goes (except the message of the Lord), and of course their statements and writings also expose them as Unitarians. As the denominations go it appears that Mid-America Yearly Meeting and NW Yearly Meeting are alright. Friends United Meeting may be the middle ground folks, who have some of each group within their Yearly Meeting. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting is the outspoken of the 'Eastern' Friends. (Yearly Meeting is comparable to a denominational convention, as it is the time all the meetings (churches) of the same persuasion get together for business etc.). The American Friends Service "Committee is a function of the Unitarian types."

Carl"

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Quakerism

The Religious Society of Friends

9/20/06 updated 9/23/06

While in Princeton recently, we visited the Stony Brook Quaker Meeting House built in 1760 and still in use.

Consider the following quotes from a Quaker pamphlet available at the meeting house:

"The Light Within, which is the central Quaker idea, is no abstract phrase. It is an experience."

"... it is clear on the basis of the Quaker faith, that scripture cannot be thought of as the one source of truth and revelation, the one and only word of God. It takes its place rather as a pattern of spiritual literature, rich with the experience of saintly human lives and raised by unmistakable inspiration to an incomparable religious value."

From "[An Interpretation of Quakerism](#)" by Rufus M. Jones, 1930

Read about [Rufus M. Jones](#) and [Mysticism](#) at Wikipedia.

In what ways has Quakerism influenced modern Evangelicalism? Are their convictions Biblical?

In Quakerism, I'm having a hard time finding the preaching of the Gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ, alone.

At it's most basic, how is Quakerism really that different from Unitarian Universalism?

Richard Foster is a Quaker. He is the founder of Renovare and author of many books, including *Celebration of Discipline*.

The late John Wimber, a founder of the Vineyard Movement, began his religious life as a Quaker.

George Fox University associates itself with Quakerism but has a fairly sound Evangelical [Statement of Faith](#).

[Thy Word is Truth](#)

[Christians are becoming Unitarian-Universalists](#)

[The Emergent Church Movement](#)

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[The Hegelian Dialectic](#)

9/17/06

Satan is Working Both Sides

The Roman Catholic Empire vs. the Islamic Empire

The enemy desires to polarize people, including professing Christians, to seduce them to choose sides.

Either side they choose will deceive them and control them.

And then Hegelian synthesis...

We are Ambassadors for Jesus Christ!

Do not be deceived.

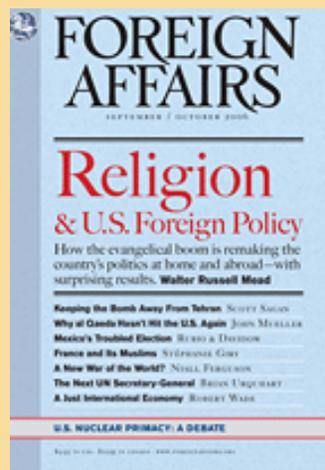
[Islam, the Pope, and the World Religion](#)

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"This [apocalyptic vision of Evangelicals] is not particularly hospitable to the idea of **gradual progress toward a secular utopia driven by technological advances and the cooperation of intelligent people of all religious traditions.**"

Novus Ordo Seclorum

Read [the article](#) about Evangelicals from the perspective of the Council on Foreign Relations' magazine



Consider buying your own copy of this September/October 2006 issue at your local bookstore

"Summary: Religion has always been a major force in U.S. politics, but the recent surge in the number and the power of evangelicals is recasting the country's political scene -- with dramatic implications for foreign policy. This should not be cause for panic: evangelicals are passionately devoted to justice and improving the world, and eager to reach out across sectarian lines."

"Walter Russell Mead is Henry A. Kissinger Senior Fellow for U.S. Foreign Policy at the Council on Foreign Relations.

Further reading for this article can be found at www.foreignaffairs.org/mead_reading."

This article is a very important glimpse into how the elite are viewing current trends in the Evangelical subculture and how these trends can be used to help build the new order.

But what does the Bible say?

9/13/06 updated 9/17/06

[Trilateral Commission & CFR Membership](#)

[The Evangelical Subculture](#)

[Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

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Trip Back East - September 2006

9/13/06

- * Carter Road Bible Chapel
- * Princeton Cemetery
- * Princeton Battlefield
- * Quaker Meeting House
- * Washington Crossing

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Professing Evangelical Christians are effectively becoming [Unitarian-Universalists](#).

How?

ONE MAJOR AVENUE IS VIA THE
[The Emergent Church Movement](#)

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[EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW with UNCLE SAM in chains](#)

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"Some are beginning to see the extremely **negative consequences of living every day as if it were our last, as if Christ were coming at any moment**. If we are consistent with that view, then it can easily lead to doing very little to change our world, and to do little if any long-range planning. And those who do no long-range planning can never lead."

[Who would say such a thing?](#)

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Ekklesia: To the Roots of Biblical House Church Life

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Chicken Little on the Road to Damascus

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My Wife's Head Covering

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"Awana Club Now Featuring Book by Youth Specialties Speaker"

Because of the Angels

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[Chuck Smith's System](#)
[Rejects Rick Warren's](#)
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[Rather My Children be Illiterate...](#)

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[There are great dangers](#)
[in turning your children over to government schools](#)

[Are you a part of the](#)
[Assemblies of God?](#)

Who would name an organization after [himself?](#)

[Bob Dylan, Do You Love Jesus?](#)

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Pay No Attention

To Anything I Say

Ron Boehme

YWAM, Reverend, Politician

"A Proven Leader Who will [RESTORE THE DREAM](#)" ???

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The God who has created everything has revealed Himself by:

- **What He has created**

The Universe is a visual aid that illustrates and demonstrates the awesomeness of our God.

"In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth." Genesis 1:1

"Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" Romans 1:19-20

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork". Psalm 19:1

- **The history of the Jewish people**

There are no people in history like the Jewish people.

"And he [God] brought him [Abraham] forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness." Genesis 15:5-6

"And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?" Genesis 18:17-18

"For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." Deuteronomy 7:6

"To the chief Musician on Neg'-i-noth, A Psalm or Song. God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him." Psalm 67

- **Becoming one of us and walking among us for 33 years and allowing us to nail Him to a cross**

In the beginning **God** created the heaven and the earth. Genesis 1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**. The same was in the beginning with God. **All things were made by him**; and without him was not any thing made that was made. John 1:1-4

And **the Word was made flesh**, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. John 1:14

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. Luke 2:7

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. Luke 2:40

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man. Luke 2:52

And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. Luke 4:17-21

For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Luke 19:10

Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. Luke 24:7

- **His death and resurrection**

- **The unique collection of 66 books called the Bible**
- **The Holy Spirit's testimony to our hearts**

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The God who has created everything has revealed Himself by:

- What He has created
 - The history of the Jewish people
 - Becoming one of us and walking among us for 33 years and allowing us to nail Him to a cross
 - His death and resurrection
 - The unique collection of 66 books called the Bible
 - The Holy Spirit's testimony to our hearts
-



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Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Romans 12:10-13

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About Love

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

1 Corinthians 13

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Contact Information - Email address: jimbaum@procinwarn.com **Web address:** <http://procinwarn.com>

Jim Baumgaertel - [Introduction](#)

About the Logo/Banner: The left side is a photo of a lamp that shows a vine and branches and fruit: [John 15:5](#). We, the Church, are the branches abiding in the Vine, Christ Jesus. My son took the photo of the lamp in the home of my mother-in-law and step father-in-law. The lamp was made by my mother-in-law's late brother-in-law.



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"STATEMENT OF FAITH"

I know there are some who don't like the idea of a "statement of faith". And I understand that position. I like the principle of, "No creed but Christ, no book but the Bible". But for now, this list of statements says some important things. Please [email me](#) with comments or questions. If one or more of these items represent something other than what the Bible says, I want to change them.

The Bible

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, fully inspired without error in the original manuscripts, and the infallible rule of faith and practice.

God

There is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, equal in power and glory. This triune God created all, upholds all, and governs all. God the Father is an infinite, personal Spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men. He hears and answers prayer. He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit came forth from the Father and the Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify and empower for ministry all who believe in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Jesus Christ and He is an abiding Helper, Teacher, and Guide. The present ministry of the Holy Spirit includes all the Biblical gifts of the Spirit as God sovereignly uses yielded vessels.

Jesus

Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit, fully

God and fully man. Jesus was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, performed miracles, taught truth, died a substitutionary atoning death on the cross, rose again bodily, ascended into heaven, is perpetually interceding for His people, and will personally and visibly return to the earth.

Man

All humans are sinners by nature and by choice, and, therefore, under condemnation. The heart of man is evil. All unregenerate humans are enemies of God. God regenerates, by the Holy Spirit, those who repent of their sins and confess Jesus Christ as Lord. Jesus Christ baptizes the believer with the Holy Spirit to empower for service by His sovereign will and timing. The believer will be bodily resurrected to eternal blessing. The unregenerate will face final judgment and endless suffering.

Angels, Satan, and Demons

Angels were created by God to worship and serve Him and to minister to believers. Satan, an angel, exalted himself in rebellion against God. Satan (or Lucifer) led a rebellion of a portion of the angels. These demons, led by Satan, provoke rebellion among humans against God. Demons may control (i.e. possess) an unregenerate human. Demons cannot control a true believer in Jesus. Demons may tempt or attack a true believer, but only as allowed by God. A demon cannot force a true believer to sin. A true believer sins when led astray by the lusts of his own flesh.

Salvation and Perseverance

Salvation for an individual is by grace through faith in believing in and confessing Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. An individual must recognize the evil and hopelessness of his own heart and life. He must recognize that he deserves eternal hell. He must recognize his need for a savior. He must believe that Jesus' deity, sinless life, death on the cross, shed blood, and resurrection from the dead, is sufficient propitiation for his sins. He must repent of his own self-centered and rebellious life, ask God for forgiveness, and receive as a gift eternal life through Jesus Christ. The believer must deny himself, pick up his cross and follow Jesus. He must abide in the Vine and walk in the Spirit knowing that his standing with God and perseverance is by grace from first to last.

The Church

The Church of Jesus Christ is the Body of Christ on earth and includes all people throughout the world who have believed in the true Jesus in terms of the true Gospel. The Church exists to glorify God, to edify believers, and to make disciples of people from all nations. God has ordained various ministries for the overseeing and working of the Church. God has provided each member of the Body of Christ with gifts for the edification of the Church. The Lord Jesus Christ committed two ordinances to the Church: water baptism and the Lord's Supper.

World History

World history is a matter of two elements: Mankind rebelling against God and God reaching out in mercy and reconciliation to all who would humble themselves. Every event in time relates to one of these two elements. There is nothing neutral. World history is the unfolding of God's sovereign purposes and plans in spite of the evil intentions of men and fallen angels.

The World System

The World System is under the control of the evil one as allowed by the sovereignty of God. The kings and rulers take their stand against God and His anointed one. Christians are to pray for and give honor to the kings and rulers. Christians are to be subject to the magistrates without disobeying God. The World System is developing towards the global system of Anti-Christ.

The "Wisdom of Man"

The "wisdom of man" is foolishness to God.

The Blessed Hope

Our hope is not in this world system but in the "Blessed Hope" of Jesus' soon return. The Lord Jesus Christ will visibly return to the earth and establish His earthly Kingdom.

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<http://procinwarn.com>

Who Jesus is

[Jesus is God](#)

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[Son of God](#)

[Risen Lord](#)

[Son of Man](#)

[Judge](#)

[Son of David](#)

[The Vine](#)

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[Messiah & Coming King](#)

[High Priest](#)

[The Way, the Truth, and the Life](#)

[Alpha & Omega](#)

Jesus is God

And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, **I AM** hath sent me unto you.

Ex 3:13-14

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, **I AM.**

Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

John 8:56-9:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God.**

John 1:1

And **the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,** (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth

John 1:14

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. **For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.**

Col 2:8-9

Then saith he to Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

And Thomas answered and said unto him, **My Lord and my God.**

Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

John 20:27-29

Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? **He that hath seen me hath seen the Father**; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake

John 14:9-11

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The Creator

In the beginning **God** created the heaven and the earth.

Gen 1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**. The same was in the beginning with God. **All things were made by him**; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

John 1:1-4

And **the Word was made flesh**, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one **Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.**

1 Corinthians 8:6

And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, **who created all things by Jesus Christ:**

Eph 3:9

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear **Son**: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: **For by him were all things created**, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: **all things were created by him, and for him**: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Col 1:13-17

Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his **Son**, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, **by whom also he made the worlds**;

Heb 1:2

The four and twenty elders fall down before **him that sat on the throne**, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: **for thou hast created all things**, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Rev 4:10-11

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Son of God

He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.

Dan 3:25

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

Luke 1:35

Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

Matt 14:33

Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

Matt 27:54

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;

Mark 1:1

And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

John 1:34

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Son of Man

I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

Dan 7:13-14

But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.

Matt 9:6

The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.

Matt 11:19

For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day.

Matt 12:8

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For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Matt 12:40

He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;

Matt 13:37

The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Matt 13:41-42

For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

Matt 16:27-28

For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

Matt 18:11

And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Matt 19:28

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And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

Acts 7:56

But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?

Heb 2:6

And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

Rev 1:13

And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

Rev 14:14

Son of David

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Matt 1:1

And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?

Matt 12:23

And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.

Matt 21:9

Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.

Matt 22:42-46

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The Passover Lamb

And Abraham said, My son, **God will provide himself a lamb** for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

Gen 22:8

Your **lamb shall be without blemish**, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall **take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post** of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.

Ex 12:5-8

And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is **the LORD's passover**. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the

gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and **when I see the blood, I will pass over you**, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

Ex 12:11-14

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold **the Lamb of God**, which taketh away the sin of the world.

John 1:29

Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even **Christ our passover** is sacrificed for us:

1 Corinthians 5:7-8

And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to **crucify him**.

Matt 27:31-32

And **they crucified him**, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

Matt 27:35

Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, **yielded up the ghost**.

Matt 27:50-51

And, behold, **the veil of the temple was rent** in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

High Priest

And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

Gen 14:18-20

The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.

Ps 110

So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to

save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec. Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.

Heb 5:5-12

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Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually. Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham: But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham.

For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him. If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order

of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God. And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest: (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord swore and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:) By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

Heb 6:17-8:6

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Prophet

The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

Deut 18:15

For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

Acts 3:22

This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.

Acts 7:37

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter

of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Heb 1:1-2:1

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Our Pastor

For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the **Shepherd** and Bishop of your souls.

1 Peter 2:25

Risen Lord

And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

Matt 28:5-7

And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

Luke 24:36-50

And 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

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The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a Sabbath day's journey. And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

Acts 1:1-14

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Judge

Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

Acts 10:40-42

Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Acts 17:29-31

For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

Rom 2:14-16

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Tim 4:1

For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Heb 10:30-31

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The Vine

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

John 15:5

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Messiah & Coming King

And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

Rev 5:5

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 9:6-7

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And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with

righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.

Isaiah 11:1-10

Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider. Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD

to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Isaiah 52:13-54:1

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Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

Dan 9:25-10:1

And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?

John 7:31-32

The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.

Matt 26:63-65

He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

Matt 16:15-17

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And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ. And he charged them that they should tell no man of him. And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

Mark 8:29-31

And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.

Acts 18:5-6

But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

1 John 2:22-23

Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Matt 24:29-31

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The Way, the Truth, and the Life

Jesus saith unto him, **I am the way, the truth, and the life**: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

John 14:6

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Alpha & Omega

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. **I am Alpha and Omega**, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

Rev 1:7-9

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The Prayer of Jehoshaphat

“... for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee.”

2 Chronicles 20:12

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The Freedom to Disagree

**The Bible is not really
the standard of truth
for people unless
everyone, who
professes Jesus as
Lord, has the freedom
to disagree with each
other.**

**If an individual or
system suppresses the
freedom to disagree,
then they have become
the standard of truth,
usurping God and his
word.**

**Each of us must
personally be
accountable to our
Lord and his word, not
to a man or a system.**

**As a lifestyle, we
encourage one another
to derive truth from
the plain meaning of
scripture. And as a
lifestyle, we contend
for the faith.**

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Three Choices for Truth

Among Professing Christians

Only one is Biblical...

1. **The Bible** is the standard of Truth and each person is individually accountable for seeking that truth, understanding and obeying that truth, and advocating that truth. The Bible is taught with Biblical authority. Each person desires to do what is right in the eyes of God.
 2. "Truth" is relative and subjective and **individuals** are their own standard of "truth" as they "seek truth" and define truth, dialogue & discuss & facilitate, and negotiate truth. The source is the private interpretation of the individual. There is no authority. Each person does what is right in his own eyes.
 3. **Religious leaders and their systems** are the standard of "truth" which they enforce on their followers. The source is the private interpretation of the leader. The religious "truth" is taught with a counterfeit authority. Each person does what is right in the eyes of the leader.
-

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The "House Church Movement"

[Modified 4/8/06]

"The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house." 1 Corinthians 16:19

For 2000 years followers of Jesus have met in homes all over the world, where ever the Gospel has been preached. In the New Testament, this is how Christians fellowshiped: Acts 2:1-2, 2:46, 5:42, 12:12, 20:20, Romans 16:5, 1 Corinthians 16:19, Philemon 2. There is absolutely nothing wrong with Christians meeting like this today and there continue to be many all over the world who do fellowship as the Body of Christ in people's homes.

Unfortunately, the "House Church Movement" includes as much deception as any of the institutional religious systems. That's why we don't advocate joining any "movement" whether religious, theological, denominational, political, economic, educational, etc. We homeschool but we warn against much that is in the "homeschool movement". We fellowship in people's homes, but we warn against much that is in the "house church movement".

In the name of "home church" I've seen lists that include, e.g., New Age flavored "Ground Zero" in Kitsap County, Washington State, which has included Catholic nuns and promoted anti-war speaker, Starhawk, a witch!

I've seen discussions in which it was clear that some home church

advocates did not take God's Word as seriously as they ought. They might as well have been Unitarian for all of their talk of "tolerance" at the expense of sound doctrine.

There is one name that often comes up in some segments of the "house church movement", [Gene Edwards](#). I've seen some home church websites for him and some against him. As [Dan Trotter](#), who fellowships in a house church, puts it (tongue in cheek), there are those who believe, "Gene Edwards is the Antichrist." and others that, "Gene Edwards is the fourth person of the Trinity." I understand that many who came out of the coercive, authoritarian "Shepherding Movement" in the 70's and 80's were blessed by Edward's book, [Three Kings](#). I bring Gene Edwards up as an example that there are controversies among house church assemblies just as there are among the institutional churches. Guruism remains a problem. All of us must be willing to be open to correction.

I've spent a few years now exploring what Christians have to say on the World Wide Web. Unfortunately, many who understand true New Testament teaching about the Church, are not willing to take a stand against deceptions within the Church. And many Christians who do take a stand against deceptions within the Church are sold out to Institutionalism and the Professional Clergy! It can feel awfully lonely for people who want to be Biblical on both counts. I'm sure some of you know exactly what I'm talking about.

What I recommend is that individual Christians be Acts 17 Bereans about EVERYTHING! Let's not just TALK about the Bible being our standard of Truth, but let it be the standard of Truth when it comes to: Who Jesus is, What is the Gospel, Contending for the Faith, What is the Church, and how should we function and fellowship.

[What I recommend](#) is that followers of our Lord Jesus trust him for simple New Testament fellowship; not joining any movement or bandwagon. Consider meeting in homes with other like-

mindful Believers and be the Church of Jesus together. Consider searching the Web for sites that discuss New Testament Fellowship, Home Church, House Church. Be a Berean and realize that some will be unbiblical and some will be right on. The Truth will set you free!

If you fellowship in a house church, I'd like to hear about it. Or if you have questions about this topic, please [write me](#) and refer to this page.

[What is the Church?](#)

[True New Testament Fellowship is not New](#)

[Four Ways Christians are being Deceived](#)

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The Summer of 76: Jesus Pierced My Heart

Daily Sobbing Sessions

I was going through sobbing sessions nearly every day in Vallejo, California. My first wife was divorcing me. I was twenty-three years old. I had come within about a week of being "baptized into the Mormon Church". I was still doing Transcendental Meditation every day for about 20 minutes. During one of my lonely crying sessions the Lord broke through. He reached out to me. He spoke to me, but not audibly (and I almost never use that phrase, "God spoke to me"!)

But God somehow let me know that everything was going to be all right; that he was there; that he existed and he cared about me; that I should leave the Mormon situation, but I should continue to seek Him.

A Simple Fellowship and The Gospel

In my Navy Nuclear Power school class at Mare Island Naval Shipyard, there was a fellow officer, Jeff, who I knew to be a "Bible thumper"; a born-again type; a "one way Jesus" type. I asked him if I could be his roommate when we got to Idaho Falls, Idaho. He said yes. In Idaho, I began to go with Jeff to a small fellowship that met in the basement of a building. There, Tim, a brother from Australia, preached the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ. He contrasted the Gospel of grace through faith in Jesus Christ with the false gospel of works of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons). And even though followers of Jesus had presented the Gospel to me over the years, this was the first time I understood it in a way that pierced my heart! Still, there were times I would be with that fellowship, we would be singing or praying and worshipping the Lord, and I would think, "I can't believe I'm here. What am I doing here? What would my friends from High School or the Naval Academy think if they saw me with these Jesus people?"

We would sing: "He is our peace, who hath broken down every wall. Cast all your cares on Him, for he careth for you." "Little Country Church on the edge of town." "Prepare ye the Way of the Lord". "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but I will trust in the name of the Lord my God." "I will enter his gates with thanksgiving in my heart." "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our hearts and our hands. Lift our hearts and our hands unto God in the heavens. Let us turn again to the Lord." "Lord I just want to thank you, thank you for being so good."

There was a group of young people in this fellowship, older teenagers and young adults, that

spent a lot of time together. They often provided the music for the fellowship meetings. I spent most of my time off from work with this group; studying the Bible, singing, spending late evenings in coffee shops eating carrot cake (with Bibles on the table?! and holding hands and praying in public?!), traveling to other cities to give singing and musical presentations to other fellowships.

I remember telling the church fellowship one morning, "I didn't know I could love so many people at one time!"

One day there was a knock at the door of my apartment and on my door step were two older ladies from the fellowship. They, very kindly and very gently, confronted me about Transcendental Meditation. I had actually faded out of the habit of meditating, by the grace of God, as I had shifted my attention more and more to the things of God. But their admonition confirmed to me that a follower of Jesus should have nothing to do with the occult. I was thankful that they would love me enough to confront me and warn me!

The Teton Dam Busted

My first wife was to fly out to Idaho to spend the summer with me. We were going to try to get things together. But I then was told it was just going to be a month, then a week, then it was down to just one weekend. When she arrived I found it was just to get me to sign papers. That was the weekend the Teton Dam broke. I spent most of the weekend riding in pickup trucks and filling sand bags to help protect Idaho Falls from the rising Snake River. At the end of the weekend, after I had taken her to the airport to say good bye for the last time, I was back at my apartment building standing outside. It was early evening and I was looking at the horizon after the sun had gone down. I was grieving about a life that felt like it had just gone down the drain.

Surrendering to Jesus Christ

But then I remembered the fellowship in the basement of the building. I thought, "That's where I'm headed. That's where I'm going. What those people have, that's what I want. That's going to be my new life." I don't know if that's where I went from darkness to light or not. I don't know if I specifically put my trust in Jesus right then. I don't know if I repented of my sins right then. But I did experience the proverbial lifting of the ton of bricks off my shoulders. I felt released of a great burden. I felt comfort and hope for the future. Sometime during that summer of 1976 I was reconciled to God through Jesus Christ. Sometime that summer I became a child of God, a disciple of Jesus, and I went from darkness to light. I can't pin point the moment, but it was sometime that summer. My understanding of the Gospel was confirmed and refined over the next few months. I remember reading one popular tract and officially committing to Jesus Christ through a "sinner's prayer" as it invited me to do. I just wanted to do what I understood the Lord wanted me to do in putting my trust in him.

Growing in the Lord

Over the next year or two, my life continued to be a mess in many ways, but I continued to fellowship with believers everywhere I went (I moved seven times in six years, 1975 to 1981). Each time I met with a new assembly of Christians I was overwhelmed by the way I could love people I had never met before and they could love me, because of Jesus in our lives. By the grace of God, I've continued in a walking, talking, laughing, crying, moment by moment and day by day relationship with Jesus Christ (I heard that description somewhere along the way, I don't remember where!). I've continued to learn more and more about the fruit of the Holy Spirit and obedience and maturity our Lord expects and works in our lives. I've continued to grow in the knowledge of what God reveals in his word about who he is, and what he has called us to as individuals and as the Body of Christ. My life has been blessed by the Lord with a godly woman named Kim who has been my wife for 20 years, and with four awesome children.

Remembering

Over the past 26 years (it's now 2002) there have been times that I have felt far from the Lord. And I have foolishly wondered if he loves me or even if he exists. And I have allowed myself to wallow in discouragement. And one of the ways Jesus encourages me is to remind me of how he got a hold of my life. How he pierced my heart and brought hope and direction and purpose into my life, the summer of 76. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord. "Lord, I just want to thank you. Lord, I just want to praise you. Jesus, I just want to thank you. Thank you for being so good."

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"Tolerance"

Letter to the Editor of the Bremerton Sun October 1990

Mikhail Gorbachev recently said, "Tolerance is the [Alpha and Omega](#) of the New World Order". Tolerance used to mean respecting a differing view without having to be accepting of it.

These days "tolerance" means unity at the expense of integrity. Whether it's [George Bush](#), Mikhail Gorbachev, John Paul II, the Dalai Lama, Carl Sagan, Isaac Asimov, or [Billy Graham](#); regardless of the guru, the whole world is following its leaders into a Global Unity at the expense of the truth. Two recent examples in Kitsap County illustrate.

In the fall, 1990 issue of the Ground Zero Community's newspaper is an interview with Starhawk, "... a peace activist and leader in the Feminist spirituality... movements in the United States and Europe." The article speaks of, "...her Pagan spiritual tradition of Wicca, or Witchcraft." What kind of integrity does this represent? The Ground Zero Community includes several who are members of Catholic religious orders. What are they doing yoking themselves with a Witch, even if it is in the name of "world peace"?

On September 30th, 1990, 4500 Protestants gathered in the Kitsap Pavilion for a ["Celebration of Unity"](#) service. Despite their disclaimers, it was very much an ecumenical service, with a great diversity of groups including some who preach "a different gospel".

I say, "Come, let us reason together...", but let's not be swept away by the bandwagon of relativistic "tolerance" and "acceptance".

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived - Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

Professing Evangelical Christians are effectively becoming [Unitarians](#).

[“Salad Bowl Sunday” Ecumenical Event Corrupts the Gospel](#)

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Idolatry

Scriptures

Worshipping Created Things Rather than the Creator	Worship of Angels
No Other gods Before Me	The god of this World
Self Exaltation	Molech, Baal, & Demons
Your own godhood	The Beast and his Image
The Cult of Community	Idolaters
Lovers of Themselves	Works of the Flesh
Lust of the Flesh, Lust of the Eyes, & the Pride of Life	We Walked in Abominable Idolatries
The Work of Their Own Hands	Keep Yourself from Idols

<u>Divination & Witchcraft</u>	<u>Abstain from the Pollution of Idols</u>
<u>Covetousness</u>	<u>Come out from among them</u>
<u>Stubbornness</u>	<u>Flee from Idolatry</u>
<u>The City</u>	

Worshipping Created Things Rather Than the Creator

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into **an image** made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and **worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator**, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

Romans 1:18-25

No Other gods before Me

And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. **Thou shalt have no other gods before me.** Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven **image**, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or

that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

Ex 20:1-8

Hear, O Israel: **The LORD our God is one LORD**: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

Deut 6:4-5

Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, **Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.**

Matt 4:10-11

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Self Exaltation

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, **I will** ascend into heaven, **I will** exalt my throne above the stars of God: **I will** sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: **I will** ascend above the heights of the clouds; **I will** be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

Isaiah 14:12-15

Your own godhood

And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and **ye shall be as gods**, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

Gen 3:4-7

The Cult of Community

And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, **let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name**, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

Gen 11:1-4

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Lovers of Themselves

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be **lovers of their own selves**, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

2 Tim 3:1-5

Lust of the Flesh, Lust of the Eyes, & the Pride of Life

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

1 John 2:15-17

The Work of Their Own Hands

Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made: And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself: therefore forgive them not. Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low:

Isaiah 2:8-12

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Divination & Witchcraft

When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a

wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

Deut 18:9-12

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Covetousness

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

Colossians 3:5

Stubbornness

For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

1 Samuel 15:23

The City

Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.

Acts 17:16

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Worship of Angels

Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and **worshipping of angels**, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

Col 2:18

The god of this World

But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom **the god of this world** hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

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Molech, Baal, & Demons

And they built the high places of **Baal**, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto **Molech**; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.

Jeremiah 32:35

And they forsook the LORD, and served **Baal** and **Ashtaroth**.

Judges 2:13

And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? **if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him.** And the people answered him not a word

1 Kings 18:21

Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which **have not bowed unto Baal**, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

1 Kings 19:18

But what saith the answer of God unto him? **I have reserved to myself seven thousand men**, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.

Rom 11:4

Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of **strange gods**: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.

Acts 17:18

But I say, that **the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God**: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

1 Corinthians 10:20

Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

1 Corinthians 10:21-22

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and **doctrines of devils**;

1 Tim 4:1

And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not **worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood**: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

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The Beast & his Image

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man **worship the beast and his image**, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship **the beast and his image**, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

Rev 14:9-11

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which **had not worshipped the beast, neither his image**, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Rev 20:4

Idolaters

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor **idolaters**, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10

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Works of the Flesh

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, **Idolatry**, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Gal 5:19-21

We Walked in Abominable Idolatries

For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and **abominable idolatries**: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

1 Peter 4:3-5

Keep Yourself from Idols

Little children, **keep yourselves from idols**. Amen.

1 John 5:21

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Abstain from the Pollution of Idols

But that we write unto them, that they abstain from **pollutions of idols**, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

Acts 15:20

Come out from among them

And **what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?** for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore **come out from among them**, and **be ye separate**, saith the Lord, and **touch not the unclean thing**; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

2 Corinthians 6:16-18

Flee from Idolatry

Wherefore, my dearly beloved, **flee** from idolatry.

1 Corinthians 10:14

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"Tearing down ministries" ? 12/17/2001

This is an open letter to ELRIII. I tried to reply to your return address but it wasn't accepted by your ISP. Please [email me](#), if you see this.

From: ELRIII

I guess you're the only Christian in the world. You're doing a great job tearing down ministries that are reaching thousands for Christ. Great going!!

To: ELRIII

It's very important that you and I talk about important things, and not just attack each other personally.

Everything I've put on my website deals with something I consider to be very serious as to "Who is Jesus Christ?" and "What is the Gospel?".

I have not tried to say who is a Christian and who is not. I've simply tried to point out the many ways that Christians are being deceived.

When I became a Christian about 23 years ago, I was taught basic truths of God's Word as to who Jesus is and what is the gospel. Over the years I've been amazed at how there has been a continual perverting of these truths within Evangelical Christianity.

Please let me know specifically where you believe that I'm wrong, and let's talk about it in the light of God's Word.

Jesus loves you and I,

Jim Baumgaertel

"As a Man Thinketh" ??? 12/17/2001

This is an open letter to Dragonfly. Hi, Dragonfly, I tried to reply to your return address but it kept coming back, "User Unknown". Please [email me](#), if you see this.

For anyone else, please examine Dragonfly's comments and question, and consider my response. And maybe you would like to respond to my response...

Jim,

...To make a long story short: I believe that "religion" has caused most of the problems we face in the world today.

I grew up in fear of "The New Age Movement", not understanding what it was. I am not a believer in that doctrine, but positive thinking, a belief in a part of myself that strives to be like God, my creator, has been the one thing helping me to heal the wounds of childhood and religious dogma.

To blast the people who want the world to be a better place, and offer a Bible quote here and there, is not reaching people who have been down the church road and been left feeling empty for the trip.

Bring an understandable message, people will listen. Bring dogma, and they will scoff.

Religion is a man-made thing, created to honor God. Spirit is a God-made thing created to honor His creation. God made us to succeed and prosper within His guidelines and laws. Positive thinking is not an evil thing. What did He mean when he said, "**As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he** (or, 'will he be', I don't quote much)"?

I am no theologian, so if you wish to reply, please do so with complete thoughts, not overloaded with scripture. As the devil quotes scripture to suit his own purposes.

Thanks,

Dragonfly

Dragonfly,

I appreciate you making contact with me. And I pray the Lord Jesus will give you and I wisdom on these things and continue to lead us and guide us in our lives with him.

As I read the Bible, the emphasis is on individuals becoming reconciled with God through Jesus Christ in order to walk in an eternal love relationship with him. Our establishing that relationship and growing in that relationship is entirely the work of the Lord Jesus and nothing of ourselves. All we do is surrender our lives and our will to him, moment by moment and day by day.

The world system's philosophies are about us working on our selves to grow in power and personality and success and spirituality. The world indoctrinates us to trust in ourselves and to believe in ourselves and our own abilities to be what ever we want to be.

Jesus is calling us to be like a grain of wheat, which he says, unless it falls to the ground and dies, it can't bear any fruit. He says he is the vine and we are the branches (see John 15). The New Testament tells us that we are called to be crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me, and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me (Galatians 2:20).

Positive thinking is one of the many approaches where I trust in my powers and techniques to work on myself to be all that I can be.

You referred to the saying, "**As a man thinketh...**" That saying and its supposed meaning is a common misconception based on a misquote and misunderstanding. I've run into it many times, quoted in human potential training programs and in Masonic literature and among Evangelical Christians who are promoting positive confession or positive thinking.

The actual verses are in Proverbs 23:1-8 which I've included below. The verse actually reads, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee."

And in context, all this is saying is that a wealthy, greedy, stingy man is not what he seems to be on the outside but what his heart is on the inside... represented by his thoughts.

The real person is represented by his true thoughts. His thoughts are a result of the true nature of his heart. If his heart is evil, his true thoughts will be evil, no matter what he pretends on the outside.

This verse is not saying that his thoughts are the cause of his being good or evil. It is simply acknowledging that his true inner thoughts are the effect of his true nature and better represent that true nature than outward appearances.

The world says we can mold ourselves and create our own destiny by the powers of our own minds. The Bible says we have no hope in and of ourselves. Our only hope for eternal life and abundant life now is to put our trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let me know your thoughts and ideas, Dragonfly.

Jim Baumgaertel

Proverbs 23:1-8

1 When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee: 2 And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. 3 Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful meat. 4 Labor not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. 5 Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven. 6 Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats: 7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee. 8 The morsel which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words.

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The Good News

I invite you to consider the
Good News of Jesus Christ
and I invite you to surrender
your life to the Lord Jesus.

- "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners**, of whom I am chief."

1 Timothy 1:15

- Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and **become as little children**, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 18:3

The God who has created everything has revealed himself by:

- What he has created;
- The history of the Jewish people;
- Becoming one of us and walking among us for 33 years and allowing us to nail him to a cross;
- His death and resurrection;
- The unique collection of 66 books called the Bible; and
- The Holy Spirit's testimony to our hearts.

The Gospel (Good News) as I understand it from the Bible is this:

1. God created us for the purpose of a love relationship with him.
2. Since you can't love a robot, he gave us the ability to reject him.

3. Each of us rejected him out of self-centeredness and rebellion and we became enemies of God.

- We each chose to try to be the gods of our own lives.
- Hell is a place for people who insist on being the gods of their own lives, not wanting to surrender to the God who created them and who loves them; not wanting to be with him on his terms for all eternity.

4. God already had a plan to rescue whoever would respond to his provision.
 - Even though we deserved eternal capital punishment (death) God, himself, would become one of us and die in our place.
 - He did come to die for us and he rose again to show, objectively, to humans that he was who he said he was.

5. God gave the Law in the Old Testament to show us:

- His holiness;
- That we could never live up to his holiness in our own efforts;
- That we needed a Savior.

In fact the entire Old Testament points to Jesus. "God will provide the lamb"
(Genesis 22:8)

6. We cannot save ourselves by

- Our good works
- Trying to be a good person or
- Thinking the right thoughts

We go from being enemies of God to becoming a child of God by:

- Humbling ourselves before God,
- Repenting of our sin,
- Receiving God's forgiveness because of what Jesus did for us,
- Putting on Jesus' righteousness instead of a righteousness of our own, and
- Asking Jesus to be the Lord of our lives for ever and ever, instead of trying to be the god of our own lives.

What I'm saying here is from the Bible and has nothing to do with the evils of historic "Christendom" or modern American religious right-wingers.

And it doesn't depend on whether or not your Christian friend is a self-righteous holier-than-thou, religious hypocrite zealot! Jesus wants to set Christians free of all of that!

It is simply a matter of each of us realizing that we were once lost but now we're found as we put our trust in the Lord Jesus.

I invite you to receive Jesus as
your Savior and Lord.

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that **while we were still sinners, Christ died for us**. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

Romans 5:8-10

"But **as many as received Him**, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name." John 1:12

Repent!

Be Reconciled to God

What Must I Do to be Saved?

Proclamation, Invitation, &
Warning

A child of God

We go from being enemies of God to becoming a child of God by humbling ourselves before God, [repenting of our sin](#), receiving God's forgiveness because of what Jesus did for us, putting on Jesus' righteousness instead of a righteousness of our own, and asking Jesus to be the Lord of our lives for ever and ever, instead of trying to be the god of our own lives.

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Jim & Kim email:
jimbaum@procinwarn.com
Web: <http://procinwarn.com>

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Do you have Hope?



As your life unfolds...

The Good News

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The God who created everything...



The God who has created everything has revealed himself by what he has created; by the history of the Jewish people; by becoming one of us and walking among us for 33 years and allowing us to nail him to a cross; by his death and resurrection; by the unique collection of 66 books called the Bible; and by the Holy Spirit's testimony to our hearts.

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6. We cannot save ourselves by our good works, trying to be a good person, or thinking the right thoughts.

You don't have to be lonely.

Agnostics for Jesus!

That was the title of the "public room" I would open, from time to time, when I used to have an AOL account. I would open it up and then sit back and wait. Invariably, someone would show within minutes, saying, "Agnostics for Jesus! What does that mean?" We would then have a discussion about who Jesus Christ is and how one can know the Truth.

Though it really is an oxymoron, I am an Agnostic for Jesus... that is a former Agnostic. I was raised in a church-going home but stopped going to church in junior high school. In high school, I was into Ayn Rand's Atlas Shrugged and the Virtue of Selfishness. The first year I was at the Naval Academy (my "plebe year") the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that West Point Cadets and Annapolis Midshipmen could no longer be forced to attend chapel or religious services. At first, the Academy set up an alternative, the "Morals and Ethics" class on Sunday mornings. I was one of the first to sign up.

The Morals and Ethics Class

That was a turning point for me. The Morals and Ethics class was held in a large amphitheater classroom which was close to full the first Sunday it was held. It was moderated by one of the Navy Chaplains. One by one, Midshipmen would stand up and say, "I think truth is..." or "I think reality is like..." blah blah blah. That's when it hit me... the futility of humans ever being able to figure things out on their own. Everyone had their own opinions. Everyone conjured up in their own imaginations who "god" was or what's right and wrong or what "truth" is.

It was still to be five more years before I would surrender my life to Jesus Christ, but the "Morals and Ethics" class was an important step the Lord used to prepare my heart and mind for him.

The Dilemma of an Agnostic

I really do understand what a professed agnostic goes through. How can one know who is right? "You're right and you're right? You can't both be right!" Can they? Can everyone be right? Does the truth really matter? Is there a God? Does he have an opinion? How can one know?

An excellent illustration I heard once describes the dilemma of an agnostic: "If there is a God, it's as if **there is a sort of veil** between this God and us. And there seems to be no way to penetrate that veil to prove God's existence. So... I will just go on living my life the best I can. Apparently, I can never really know."

Who Can Penetrate the Veil?

What most agnostics don't realize is, even if there is such a veil that prevents us from proving God's existence... If there is a God who cares about us... **Perhaps he is willing and able to penetrate that veil** and reveal himself to us! And maybe we aren't just left with our own imaginations about who he is and what he thinks.

Perhaps God has penetrated the veil to reveal himself to humans in history and to reveal what his priorities and purposes are.

Once a sincere agnostic realizes this, then his purpose in life shifts from speculating and philosophizing to searching and seeking for claims and evidence that God has revealed himself to humans.

"Seek Me, Find Me"

I know of no one in history who lived the life that Jesus did and

who made the claims that he made. There are no people in history like the Jewish people. There is no book that rises to the unique power and history and claims as the collection of the 66 books called [the Bible](#). A sincere agnostic ought to examine the life and message of Jesus, including his claims to be God, and whether or not he rose from the dead.

Are you such an agnostic? If there is a God, do you want to know? Do you want to care about what he cares about?

Similar to what Jeremiah told the Jewish people held captive in Babylon, God calls to you:

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:13)

And as the Apostle Paul said:

"For whosoever shall [call upon the name of the Lord](#) shall be saved." (Romans 10:13)

If you have questions, please [email me](#). I'm eager to help by the grace of God!

And thou shalt hang up the vail under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the vail the ark of the testimony: and the vail shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy.

Exodus 26:33

And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. And when the centurion, which stood over against him,

saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

Mark 15:38-39

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Why are Homosexuality, Fornication, Harlotry, and Adultery Sin?

God created you with a purpose: To bring glory to Himself in an eternal love relationship with Him.

God created male and female with a purpose: that they might be one – bridegroom and bride.

God invented marriage as a living metaphor for how He desires our relationship with Him to be.

The people of God are the Bride of Christ.

God's plan for the Bride of Christ came first, then God created male and female and instituted marriage.

Homosexuality, fornication, harlotry, and adultery pervert God's purpose for creating us and destroy the metaphor that represents the Holiness of our Lord Jesus Christ and the sanctified intent of marriage.

Homosexuality, fornication, harlotry, and adultery symbolize in a tragic, deathly way our idolatry in worshipping created things... other gods, Self, false Christs... instead of worshipping our Creator, who loves us.

“Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.

But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

“Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by

the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.”

Ephesians 5:1-33

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Repent!

Turn from sin, self-centeredness, and rebellion and turn to God. Cry out to the Lord Jesus in brokenness and repentance at the foot of the Cross!

And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Luke 5:31-32

For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

2 Corinthians 7:10

And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

Luke 18:13

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee

from you.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

James 4:7-10

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

2 Peter 3:9

Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

Romans 2:4

- 1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.
- 2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.
- 3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.
- 4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.
- 5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.
- 6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

13 Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

15 O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

Psalm 51:1-19

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

Matthew 3:7-8

From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Matthew 4:17

And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Mark 1:15

And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 18:3-4

I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

Luke 13:3

Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

Luke 15:10

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 2:38

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

Acts 3:19

Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 20:21

But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

Acts 26:20

Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

Acts 8:22

When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

Acts 11:18

In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

2 Timothy 2:25

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Be Reconciled to God

...for **all have sinned** and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 3:23

For the **wages** of sin is **death**, but the **gift** of God is eternal **life** in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23

But as many as **received Him**, to them He gave the right to **become children** of God, to those who believe in His name:

John 1:12

And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, **that you may know that you have eternal life**, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.

I John 5:11-13

For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

And you, who once were alienated and **enemies** in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight-- if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Colossians 1:19-23

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were **enemies** we were **reconciled to God** through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Romans 5:8-10

Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the **ministry of reconciliation**, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, **be reconciled to God**.

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we

might become the righteousness of God in Him.

2 Corinthians 5:18-21

Jesus said to him, "**I am the way**, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 14:6

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"What must I do to be saved?"

The Gospel (Good News) of Jesus Christ

Jesus answered and said unto them, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." John 6:29

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures... 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:4-6

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God... Romans 3:23

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)... Ephesians 2:4-5

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:23

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. Ephesians 2:8-9

And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the

law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith... Philippians 3:9

But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost... Titus 3:4-5

And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Acts 16:30-31

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Humans & "Religion"

Editor, The Sun

(April 1998 - In response to a forum asking if humans were "hard-wired for religion".)

God has revealed himself through what he has created. Since the beginning, God has given each human a knowledge of himself so that we are all without excuse. The fact that it seems that humans are wired for religion is not a physical or mental issue but a spiritual issue.

Humans throughout history and in every culture have suppressed the knowledge of God and have become enemies of God. This has led them to worship created things rather than the creator. This worship of created things is rooted in self-centeredness and rebellion in desiring to be the gods of our own lives and has manifested itself in innumerable ways: the worship of the Sun, moon, and stars; pantheism, self-image psychology, the power of myth, the human potential movement, tribalism, nationalistic patriotism, and Tower of Babel visions of global unity.

God has continued to reach out to us, revealing himself through the Jewish people, and eventually becoming one of us in order to walk among us. He allowed us to nail him to a cross in order that he might take upon himself the penalty for our self-centeredness and rebellion. By his death and resurrection, Jesus has provided the way for us to be reconciled in our relationship with our creator.

May we forsake our hard-wiring for religion and other forms of rebellion, and turn to the Lord Jesus Christ for true life and relationship.

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TWO KINDS OF GUILT

"For godly sorrow produces repentance to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death." 2 Corinthians 7:10

WORLDLY GUILT

Worldly guilt or sorrow can come from the "guilt trips" that other people try to put on you. Worldly guilt can also come from yourself, as you wallow in self-absorbed remorse; "beating" yourself up. This kind of guilt can come from the condemnation of the enemy of your soul.

This is the kind of guilt that causes people to jump from bridges.

This kind of guilt leads to hopelessness, despair and destruction.

Reject this kind of guilt as an attack!

THE OTHER KIND OF GUILT

Sometimes we feel guilty because we ARE guilty! God's Holy Spirit convicts us in our conscience.

Many people refuse to listen to their conscience. The more they reject it, the easier it is to ignore it until finally it doesn't bother them anymore. That's scary!

Godly sorrow leads to an honest self-appraisal; which leads to repentance; forgiveness; and LIFE!

"For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." John 3:17

"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to

the flesh, but according to the Spirit." Romans 8:1

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The God of Prophecy

The God of the Bible proves his existence by telling mankind what will happen before it happens.

No other book or individual can claim the truth of prophecy fulfilled, like the Bible.

The two main topics of prophecy are:

- Israel
 - The Messiah... Jesus
-

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Jesus Created Everything

4/7/06 - updated 4/9/06

There are reasons to doubt what you have been taught by the educational system and the media about evolution.

There are reasons to believe what the Bible teaches about creation.

When I grew up, evolution was one of my favorite topics to read about. I had a Time-Life book called, Evolution. The World Book encyclopedia and books on fossils were also my references for this interest.

When the Lord Jesus got a hold of my life at the age of 23, and I believed on Him, I was vaguely aware that evolution-creationism was going to be an issue. But I put it on the shelf, so to speak, trusting that my Lord Jesus would sort out this and any other question for me according to His timing.

Eventually I began to learn about evidence for creation and reasons to doubt evolution. I found out that the fossil record has very little evidence for transitional species. I went back and looked at my Time-Life book, Evolution,

from my childhood and realized that it did not even hint at the gaps in the fossil record. I realized it was more propaganda than objective scientific reporting.

The day after I began to write this article, I became aware of a new fossil find heralded as another "missing link". The fact that, after almost 300 years of looking for fossils, they are still having to call them "missing" links is very telling! It is my view that each of these finds are not "links" but simply additional (possibly) extinct species created at the same time all species were created.

It reminds me of how the mass media so hyped the alleged find of signs of possible life in Martian meteorites in Antarctica. This was trumpeted on the front pages of newspapers. When the find was later discredited, the articles were buried deep inside the newspapers.

The World WANTS evolution to be true. They DO NOT WANT there to be the God of the Bible. If evolution is true, there is no God, so that they can be the gods of their own lives. Evolution is a fervently held religious belief system.

More to come...

[Jesus the Creator](#)

Creation vs. Evolution

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Creation vs. Evolution

Genesis 1:1

1 In the beginning **God created the heavens and the earth.**

John 1:1-14

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 He was in the beginning with God.

3 **All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.**

4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Col 1:13-20

13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

19 For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell,

20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

Psalm 14:1-3

1 [The fool has said in his heart](#), "There is no God." They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none who does good.

2 The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek God.

3 They have all turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is none who does good, no, not one.

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The Ethiopian Eunuch Reading About Jesus in Isaiah

Acts 8:26-40

And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.

Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this,

He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;
and like a lamb dumb before his shearer,
so opened he not his mouth: In his
humiliation his judgment was taken away:
and who shall declare his generation? for
his life is taken from the earth.

And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou

believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.

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"To Be My Disciple"

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Matthew 16:24-26

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Walking in the Spirit

For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another! I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Galatians 5:13-26

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A Bible Reading Plan

Below is a Bible reading plan recommended by Steve Phillips, a missionary to Nigeria. It is from his book, [The Discipleship Experience](#), published in Nigeria in 1999.

"Scripture Reading" is listed in the book as the first of "The 7 Aspects of the Discipleship Experience", the others being: individual study of the word of God, teaching others, prayer, evangelism, service/fellowship, and the breaking of bread.

This approach has been greatly enriching and reinvigorating to my wife and me and one of my daughters.

SCRIPTURE READING according to the following daily schedule. One chapter per day is to be read from each of the six sections making a total of six chapters per day that are to be read.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| (1) <i>GENESIS – ESTHER</i> | Narrative / History containing examples, warning, and illustrations. (After reading Esth. 10, return to Gen. 1) |
| (2) <i>JOB – MALACHI</i> | Poetry and Prophecy (Psalms and Proverbs will not be read as part of this section since they are covered in # 3, 4. After reading Mal. 4, return to Job 1) |
| (3) <i>PSALMS</i> | Prayer, Worship, and Deliverance in affliction (After reading Ps. 150, return to Ps. 1) |
| (4) <i>PROVERBS</i> | Wisdom for all of life (After reading Prov.31, return to Prov. 1) |
| (5) <i>MATTHEW – ACTS</i> | The life of Christ and of the church (After reading Acts 28, return to Mt. 1) |
| (6) <i>ROMANS – REVELATION</i> | The Doctrine of the Scriptures (After reading Rev.22, return to Rom.1) |

During the course of one year, sections 1 and 2 will be read approximately once each. Sections 3 and 6

will be read about twice each, section 5 nearly three times,
and section 4 twelve times.

I can't say that I've been keeping up with the pace of this Bible reading plan, but the sequence itself is a great blessing. Now this is a confession on my part. Pray for me. It should not be that hard to read six chapters a day! I know. Instead of working on this web site I should go read the Bible... Jim B.

[The Phillips - Missionaries to Nigeria](#)

[The Manifold Wisdom of God](#)

[Thy Word is Truth](#)

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A Wise Man & A Fool

Correct a wise man and he becomes wiser; but a fool hates correction.

See Proverbs 1:5, 9:8-9, 15:5, 17:10, 23:9

[Lord Jesus, please help me not to be a fool.]

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For the "Great Leader"

He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

Proverbs 16:32

["To Be My Disciple"](#)

[Walking in the Spirit](#)

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Nothing can happen to us...

Unless the Lord allows it.

And if He allows it...

Then He has a purpose for it...

For our good and His glory.

(see Romans 8:28, James 1:2-4, John 16:33, Hebrews 11)

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"The Last Days"

2 Peter 3:1-18

Scoffers Will Come Scoffing

Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation. For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now reserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

The Lord is Longsuffering

But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

What Manner of Persons Ought We to Be?

Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?

Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Be Diligent

Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; and account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation-- as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.

Grow in the Lord Jesus

You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever.

Amen.

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Christians & Civil Government

"Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, **We ought to obey God rather than men.**"

Acts 5:28-29

"Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, **Render therefore unto Caesar** the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."

Matthew 22:17-21

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth

evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor."

Romans 13:1-7

"Put them in mind to **be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates**, to be ready to every good work..."

Titus 3:1

"**Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake**: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king."

1 Peter 2:13-17

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, **prayers**, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and **for all that are in authority**; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

1 Timothy 2:1-2

[I Support the U.S. Constitution](#)

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Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism

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Don't Walk as the Pagans Walk

"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

"But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Ephesians 4:17-32

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Finances

Seek first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness	Make Godly use of money
Our daily bread	Don't store up treasures on earth
My God shall supply all your need	Let the brother of low degree rejoice
Godliness with Contentment	Charge them that are rich...
The Love of Money: Root of All Evil	You can't serve God and Riches
Food and Clothing	Take no thought for your life; what to eat, what drink
Give generously	Don't love the World
If you don't work, you shouldn't eat	Friendship with the World is hatred toward God
Work with your hands	Wisdom of Proverbs
If you don't provide for your family	

Seek first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Matthew 16:33

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Our daily bread

Give us this day our daily bread.

Matt 6:11

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My God shall supply all your need

But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God. But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Phil 4:18-19 [Back to the Top](#)

Godliness with Contentment

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

1 Tim 6:6-9 [Back to the Top](#)

The Love of Money: Root of All Evil

For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

1Tim 6:10-11 [Back to the Top](#)

Food and Clothing

And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

1 Tim 6:8 [Back to the Top](#)

Give generously

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

Luke 6:38

Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

Matt 5:42

And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

Luke 3:10-11

But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

I John 3:17

Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

Gal 2:10

And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

Acts 2:44-45

And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

Acts 4:32

Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea:

Acts 11:29

Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

Rom 12:13 [Back to the Top](#)

If you don't work, you shouldn't eat

For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

II Thessalonians 3:10-12 [Back to the Top](#)

Work with your hands

Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

Rom 12:11

Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Eph 4:28

And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

1Thes 4:11

And labor, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it:

1 Corinthians 4:12

And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

1Thes 4:11

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If you don't provide for your family

But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

1 Tim 5:8

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Make Godly use of money

And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Luke 16:9-13

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Don't store up treasures on earth

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth

corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Matt 6:19-34 [Back to the Top](#)

Let the brother of low degree rejoice

Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

James 1:9-12 [Back to the Top](#)

Charge them that are rich...

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

1 Tim 6:17-19 [Back to the Top](#)

You can't serve God and Riches

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Matthew 6:24 [Back to the Top](#)

Take no thought for your life; what to eat, what drink

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

Matthew 6:31-32 [Back to the Top](#)

Don't love the World

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

I John 2:15-17 [Back to the Top](#)

Friendship with the World is hatred toward God

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

James 4:4 [Back to the Top](#)

Wisdom of Proverbs

He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.

Proverbs 10:4

Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labor shall increase.

Proverbs 13:11

In all labor there is profit: but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury.

Proverbs 14:23

Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds.

Proverbs 27:23

He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread: but he that followeth after vain persons shall have poverty enough.

Proverbs 28:19

The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer;

Proverbs 30:25

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**Followers of
Jesus should
not worship
what our
fellow citizens
worship... no
matter what
nation-state we
live in.**

**Our heroes are
not the heroes
of this world
system. Our
Lord Jesus,
alone, is
worthy of our
worship. The
Apostle Paul
says, "Be ye
followers of
me, even as I
also am of
Christ." (1
Corinthians
11:1)**

**Who are our
heroes? For a
glimpse please
consider
Hebrews 11.
The people we
look up to
today ought to**

Hebrews 11

Now **faith is** the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

By faith **Abel** offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh. By faith **Enoch** was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. **But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.** By faith **Noah**, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he



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be of the same nature as these.

When everyone around you is promoting society's heroes; the mass media's heroes; the government's heroes... we have a different calling; an eternal purpose; different heroes.

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condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

By faith **Abraham**, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with **Isaac** and **Jacob**, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Through faith also **Sara** herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might



have had opportunity to have returned. **But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.**

By faith **Abraham**, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure. By faith **Isaac** blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith **Jacob**, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff. By faith **Joseph**, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

By faith **Moses**, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a

season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. By faith the harlot **Rahab** perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace. And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of **Gedeon**, and of **Barak**, and of **Samson**, and of **Jephthae**; of **David** also, and **Samuel**, and of the prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that

they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: **God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.**

Hebrews 11:1-40



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Every Word

... is essential

"It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Matthew 4:4

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Which is Worse: Ignorance or Apathy?

6/24/06 updated 6/27/06

In the 1980s when I was an activist, I would speak to Churches and groups. I would often start by saying that if we took a poll of Evangelical Christian church-goers, "Which is worse: Ignorance or Apathy?", the majority would probably say:

"I don't know and I don't care!"

Back then I saw professing Christians as being divided into two groups: 1) The ignorant and apathetic, and 2) Those with Zeal.

Now days I see that **there are really three groups**. The largest group I still think are the ignorant and apathetic. The second group is those with zeal, but they have a zeal without knowledge. The third group is what I advocate: those having a zeal **WITH** knowledge.

*"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that **they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.** For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."*

Romans 10:1-4

Ignorant & Apathetic

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to

destruction, and
many there be
which go in
thereat:

Because strait
is the gate , and
narrow is the
way, which
leadeth unto
life, and few
there be that
find it."

Matthew 7:13-
14

"Examine
yourselves,
whether ye be
in the faith;
prove your own
selves. Know
ye not your
own selves,
how that Jesus
Christ is in you,
except ye be
reprobates?" 2
Corinthians
13:5

"I know thy
works, that
thou art neither
cold nor hot: I
would thou
wert cold or
hot. So then
because thou
art lukewarm ,
and neither
cold nor hot, I
will spue thee
out of my

mouth."
Revelation
3:15-16

Zealous without Knowledge

Gospel of
Works

Religious
Systems

Love of Money

Political Action

Tower of Babel

Pride

Crusades

Techniques

Spirituality

Zealous with Knowledge

"To the intent
that now unto
the
principalities
and powers in
heavenly places
might be
known by the
church the
manifold
wisdom of
God,
According to
the eternal

purpose which
he purposed in
Christ Jesus our
Lord..."
Ephesians 3:10-
11

More to come...

[I first heard the "I don't
know and I don't care" quote
in about 1981 from a former
co-worker of mine, the late
Ralph Seeley. I recently
became aware that it
originated with the singer,
Jimmy Buffet.]

[Crusades for "Morality", Political Action,
Social Activism](#)

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Who should care about the truth?

[Who Causes Division](#)

[When you hear something new](#)

[True New Testament Fellowship is not New](#)

Who should be able to openly and honestly discuss the truth? Who should be willing and free to speak up about the truth, in love? What are the responsibilities of an elder in this regard? What are the responsibilities of other brethren? How do they differ? Who or what is the standard of truth? To what degree must everyone agree with each other who fellowships in the same assembly, recognizing that we are to live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God? How can we stand for the truth and yet give others the freedom to disagree with us?

[Three Choices for Truth](#)

[Three issues relating to Truth](#)

[Thy Word is Truth](#)

[Loving the Truth](#)

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"Roach Stomper"?

[Three Choices for Truth](#)

Who coined this phrase?

[Three issues relating to Truth](#)

How might this phrase be useful?

How might this phrase be misused?

Should someone in a fellowship presume to be the standard of truth?

How should we deal with someone who thinks it's his job to "stomp" on every "roach" of false doctrine in the assembly?

How do we stand for the truth and yet give others the freedom to disagree?

Is it ok for brothers in an assembly to discuss controversial issues? Is it ok to disagree? Is it ok to raise concerns about issues?

How should we respond if legitimate

discussion is being
suppressed by
accusing people of
being "roach
stompers" when they
try to discuss issues
of truth?

[Please write!](#)

[New Testament Fellowship](#)

[Loving the Truth](#)

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When you hear something new...

[Who Causes Division](#)

[Thy Word is Truth](#)

[Who should care about the truth](#)

When you hear something you've never heard before, watch out!

[True New Testament Fellowship is not New](#)

First of all, you might be hearing something extra-Biblical, made up by man even if they are claiming it is Biblical. Reject it as contrary to scripture.

However... another reason it might sound new is just because you never were taught it. It might actually be Biblical but the tradition you are immersed in kept you from seeing it.

Let God be true and every man a liar! (see Romans 3:4)

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The Foolishness of Preaching

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by **the foolishness of preaching** to save them that believe.

1 Corinthians 1:18-21

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You only want to hear good things?

"And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil..."

1 Kings 22:8

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Important Principles to Understand

1. The [flesh](#) and the [world system](#) are totally corrupt and in rebellion against God and cannot be reformed; They must and will be destroyed by God.

...and the **whole world** lieth in wickedness.

1 John 5:19

2. We are to have no confidence in the flesh and we are not to be a [friend to the world system](#).

3. That Serpent of old, Satan, is [deceiving the whole world](#).

4. Our only hope for being with God in eternity and for pleasing God in this life is by [trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ](#).

5. This is our purpose as [the Ekklesia](#), the Body of Christ, the Bride of Christ: God is making known His [manifold wisdom](#) to the principalities and powers in heavenly places through us, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord!

[Out of the Depths](#)

The Mystery of Suffering
(pdf file: 300 kb)

6. The Bible outlines for us the unfolding of [world history](#) from creation to the New Heaven and New Earth.
7. Things are unfolding [just as the Bible said](#) they would.
8. Human [society is controlled](#) by groups of elites in rebellion against God.
9. The world is moving [towards a one world](#) government, a one world economic system, and a one world religion.
10. There exists an [apostate religious structure](#) that includes the false philosophies of this world, the religions of the world, the Roman Catholic church, the protestant churches, and most of what professes to be Evangelical Christianity.
11. Professing Christians are [being deceived](#) by the same lies as the world.
12. The lies of [Selfism](#), [Sorcery](#), and [Visions of Global Unity](#) are deceiving the Church.
13. The false gospels of [morality](#) and the [fleshly techniques](#) of men are deceiving the Church.
14. Visions of [political action and social action](#) to Unify the Church and Christianize the World are deceiving the Church.
15. Only by truly understanding the Grace of God and the sovereignty of God and the [Truth of the Bible](#) can we hope to [not be deceived](#) in these last days.
16. Only by trusting solely in the [Lord Jesus Christ](#) for my life and my eternity can I be saved from this evil age.

17. Only by having the [priorities of Noah](#) and looking forward to [the blessed hope](#) of Jesus' soon return can I truly be set free to be an instrument in God's hands in these [last days](#).

[The True Nature of the World System](#)

[Counterfeit Christianity, The World Religion, and The New World Order](#)

[What I Recommend](#)

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The Freedom to Read

Followers of Jesus have the freedom to read or listen to whatever they want. They answer to the Lord for what they spend their time doing and what they expose their hearts and minds to. If what I read leads to sin or temptation then I should avoid it. But no leader or religious system has the authority to control what believers read.

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Colossians 3:17

All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. 1 Corinthians 6:12

[Coercive Church Leaders](#)

[The Evangelical Subculture](#)

[Walking in the Spirit](#)

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History

[TWO ELEMENTS](#) - [SCHOLARLY HISTORY](#) - [HISTORY AS IDOLATRY](#) - [TRUE HISTORY](#) - [BIBLICAL VIEW OF HISTORY](#)

TWO ELEMENTS

World history is a matter of two elements:

Mankind rebelling against God, and

God reaching out in mercy and reconciliation to all who would humble themselves.

Every event in time relates to one of these two elements. There is nothing neutral. World history is the unfolding of God's sovereign purposes and plans in spite of the evil intentions of men and fallen angels.

Jesus Christ is the Lord of history. I agree with the cliché: it is “His Story”.

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SCHOLARLY HISTORY

To most people “history” is an academic discipline where scholars research documents and other evidence to compile an account of past events. This, of course, is a valid endeavor. Unfortunately, historians will always write based upon their own philosophies and presumptions about the nature of reality. Their “history” will always be written in the context of their own interpretations. So, when reading history books or watching historical movies

or TV programs, a person should always “step back” and consider the world view, the agenda of the writer, the producer, the publisher. Is the presentation really factual? And if the facts presented are accurate, is the interpretation of that history valid, or are the conclusions true?

From a human point of view, many things about history will be unclear “gray areas”, open to reasonable debate. But with God there are no gray areas, no uncertainties. We ought to want to view history from God’s perspective and with his understanding, as much as he wants to allow us.

History written and fed to the common folk is often described as if it were a chain of random events and spontaneous uprisings of the masses. However, the masses never do anything by themselves, they are always provoked and manipulated to act. A worldly historian writing for the masses mentions presidents, prime ministers, dictators, congresses, and parliaments but rarely will refer to the real powers behind the event, the actual “rulers”.

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HISTORY AS IDOLATRY

While popular history is often portrayed as a chain of random events, “History” for many is actually a form of mystical idolatry. People worship history. The history of the Cosmos. The history of the planet. The history of dinosaurs. The history of “human origins”. The history of ancient peoples. The history of civilization. The history of Science. Their own Genealogies. The history of their own tribe. They worship themselves. Worldly history is man’s own idol unto himself.

An idolatry of history that influences people far more than most realize is the “Philosophy of History” promoted by the German philosopher, G.W.F Hegel (1770-1831). Hegel taught that “history” is the onward and upward progression towards perfection: “Progressive Realization of Spirit”. Hegelian philosophy is the basis for Marxism, Nazism, Fascism, and Western “progressive” philosophies and social engineering. Many of the most influential theologians at the turn of the last century (1900) were Hegelian.

TRUE HISTORY

True history, as in the actual events that have happened, can only be understood from a Biblical perspective. And the future unfolding of world history can only be understood through the Word of God.

The initiation of events in world history must be understood on three levels:

1. The Sovereignty of God
2. The purposes of Satan and his Demons
3. The plans of human rulers.

The rich and the powerful among humans plan and execute their plans to achieve their own ends. They often coerce, deceive, and manipulate... working “both sides” where possible in order to ensure the outcome of events. Pharaohs, Caesars, Emperors, Popes, Kings, Bankers, the Super Rich, the Family Dynasties, Global Corporation CEOs and directors, the Brotherhoods, the Clergy, the Pharisees, the Chieftains, the Shamans, and all other forms of political, economic, and religious rulers have worked their purposes in human history.

Satan is the god of this world, the prince of this world, and the deceiver of the whole world. Lucifer and his demons have their agenda. They work directly in the lives of humans and they work through the lives of humans. All humans who are not children of God through Jesus are enemies of God and are, therefore, in rebellion against God. All enemies of God are instruments of Satan’s agenda of rebellion. The vast majority of the rulers and the powerful are enemies of God. They work Satan’s agenda: some unknowingly and some with full knowledge of who they work for.

But praise be to God for the Sovereignty of our Lord Jesus Christ over the unfolding of world history! In spite of the evil intentions of men and fallen angels, God works his purposes for His Glory and our good!

Joseph's brothers thought they were working their agenda. Pharaoh thought he was working his agenda. Caesar thought he was working his agenda. The Pharisees thought they were working their agenda. Judas thought he was working his agenda. But God works his purposes through men and in spite of men, and in spite of the demons who inspire men. Romans 8:28 is always true.

The reason God created humans and ALL of human history is simply a matter of:

1. God's Glory and his desiring our fellowship.
2. Humans rebelling against God.
3. God demonstrating his character and reaching out in grace, mercy, and reconciliation through Jesus Christ.
4. God judging the nations and destroying the evil world system.

Every event either promotes rebellion against God or draws people closer to God. There is nothing neutral.

People are deceived to see history as driven by chance: that is, random and without purpose. Or they are deceived into seeing history as being driven by impersonal forces such as Karma or Hegel's Realization of Spirit. Or even when they acknowledge the "providence of God" or "Christianity" people are deceived into visions of onward and upward to perfection, "heaven on earth", utopia. As if men can perfect society. As if rulers can create a wonderful New Order for the Ages, a New World Order, a New Age of peace and harmony, through education, mysticism, philosophy, imagination, creativity, innovation, process improvement, tolerance and unity. As if "the Church" will build a global system of peace through cultural and moral crusades and through global programs and global "revival" and usher in the "Millennium".

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BIBLICAL VIEW OF HISTORY

But God in his Word says no to these visions of men. He said no to Adam and Eve in the Garden. He said no to the World System in the time of Noah. He said no to the World System at the Tower of Babel. He said no to Apostate Israel. He will say no to the Apostate Church and to its Counterfeit Christ who will rule over a rebellious One World Political, Economic, and Religious System.

Only when our Lord Jesus Christ stands on the Mount of Olives will this present World System and its rebellion be brought to an end. Only then will the true Millennium begin.

As history unfolds, our only hope has always been to surrender to the God who created us and who loves us and who died to rescue us, who rose again, and is coming back soon.

God's Word outlines the entire history of the Universe for us. He has chosen to give us a glimpse of his perspective: from Creation in Genesis to New Heaven and New Earth in Revelation.

I exhort followers of Jesus to not be taken in by the World's presentation of history but to see history as God has outlined for us in his Word.

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[History: Rulers in Rebellion](#)

[Hegelian Dialectic](#)

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The Biblical View of Education

Education has no meaning except as it relates to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ (Matthew 16:26; Ecclesiastes 1:14 and 12:12, 13; Philippians 3:8). Education will either be Biblical and edifying to that relationship with Jesus, or it will be the “[wisdom of this world](#)” and therefore anti-Christ. Education cannot be neutral (1 Corinthians 1:20).

The first priority of learning is to [know God](#). “And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” (John 17:3).

Education should support our proclamation of the [Truth](#) (Matthew 28:18-20, 1 Peter 3:15); our [service](#) to God and to people (Matthew 22:37-39); and our desire to “watch out that no one [deceives](#) us” (Matthew 24:4, 5).

Learning should equip us to work for a living and to support our families (Genesis 3:19, Proverbs 14:23, Proverbs 31:10-31, 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12, Ephesians 4:28, 1 Timothy 5:8).

We should learn, first of all, the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16, 17). We ought to pursue whatever is true (Philippians 4:8) while evaluating everything in the light of the Bible (Acts 17:11).

[Parents are responsible to teach their children](#) (1 Timothy 5:8, Ephesians 6:4, Deuteronomy 4:9-10, 6:4-7, 11:18-19). The people who are [the Church](#) are responsible to edify and equip one another (Matthew 28:18-20, Ephesians 4:11-13, Titus 2:3).

The Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth (John 16:13).

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[Fathers: Teach your family the Bible!](#)

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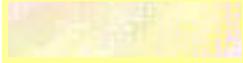
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Home Schooling

Lord willing, Kim will be writing articles on the following. In the meantime, if you have any questions or comments on any of these topics, please [email Kim!](#)

A note about intent and priorities: We do not advocate becoming part of the "home schooling movement", because we warn against Christians jumping on anybody's "bandwagon" or movement or crusade. The home schooling movement, unfortunately, is filled with most of the same deceptions as the rest of Christendom. We simply encourage followers of Jesus who are parents to teach their children rather than turning them over to Caesar or to a religious institution for an education. See [The Biblical View of Education](#).

1. [Choosing Curriculum](#)
2. [Lesson Planning](#)
3. Meeting State Requirements
4. Fitting it all into your life
5. "Socialization"?
6. Transcripts & High School Diplomas
7. Encouraging Others



[Fathers: Teach your family the Bible!](#)

[An article for a Homeschooling Newsletter](#)

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Three issues relating to Truth

1. **What is the Truth.**
2. **How to apply the Truth.**
3. **How to communicate the Truth.**

These three issues can get confused in discussions between Christians. One person might state an item of truth, but the other person says, "That would never work in our culture!" Or, the second person might say, "Oh, people will never accept that."

Well, first, let's at least agree on what the Bible teaches truth is! Then we can seek the Lord together as to how to apply the truth or how to communicate the truth to others.

[Thy Word is Truth](#)

[Three Choices for Truth](#)

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The Baumgaertel Family East Coast Trip

(Updated 4/6/06)

[John Witherspoon](#)

Princeton, NJ



In August of 2005 we flew to Newark, New Jersey, and rented a mini-van to drive to Princeton to see my oldest daughter who was finishing an internship.

I am grateful for those families who are missionaries or for those who go on mission trips instead of vacations. I respect various different convictions people may have about such priorities. I pray that our family trip was more than a vacation and that our Lord would bring fruit from who we talked to and what we saw and learned.

Empire State Building



There were many things we observed that provoked me to examine the complexities of being in the world but not of the world.

- Princeton, NJ
- New York City, NY
- Philadelphia, PA
- Amish country in PA
- Gettysburg, PA
- Mount Vernon, VA
- Washington, DC



Lower Manhattan

- Annapolis, MD
 - Williamsburg, VA
 - Jamestown, VA
 - Yorktown, VA
 - Virginia Beach, VA
 - Dulles Airport, VA
-

Obelisks, Pyramids, Skyscrapers, Roman & Greek Temples

- Princeton, NJ: Nassau Inn, Nassau Hall, John Witherspoon statue, Princeton University Chapel, Einstein's House, "Beautiful Mind" setting, Cemetery including Aaron Burr, Princeton Theological Seminary
- New York City, NY: Strawberry Fields Memorial, The Obelisk, Simon Bolivar Monument, Lincoln Center, Columbus Circle, Empire State Building, WTC Site - Ground Zero, Trinity Church building & Cemetery including Alexander Hamilton, Wall Street & NYSE, Federal Hall site where George Washington took his oath of office as the first President, Fraunce's Tavern site of George Washington's farewell to his officers, Battery Park and view of Statue of Liberty, United Nations, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Rockefeller Center & Prometheus statue, Times Square, Phantom of the Opera
- Philadelphia, PA: Liberty Bell, Independence Hall

- Lancaster County, PA: home to Amish & Mennonites, both of Anabaptist heritage
- Gettysburg, PA: The Battlefield, the site of Lincoln's Address
- Mount Vernon, VA: the home, the tomb
- Washington, DC: White House, Lafayette Square, Organization of American States, Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, Smithsonian Air & Space Museum, American History Museum, Natural History Museum, [Capitol Building](#), Library of Congress, Supreme Court, National Archives, National Art Gallery, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian
- Annapolis, MD: the town, the Naval Academy
- Williamsburg, VA: Governor's Palace, the Capitol, Raleigh Tavern, Bruton Parish Episcopal Church building
- Jamestown, VA: First permanent English settlement, Church building tower
- Yorktown, VA: the Battlefield, the town
- Virginia Beach, VA: Atlantic Ocean
- Dulles Airport, VA: Udvar-Hazy Center, an annex to the Smithsonian Air & Space Museum, the flight home

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- Princeton, NJ:
Nassau Inn, Nassau Hall
[John Witherspoon](#) statue: President of Princeton, The only clergyman and only college president to sign the Declaration

of Independence. Presbyterian. James Madison and Aaron Burr were among his students.

Princeton University Chapel

Einstein's House

"Beautiful Mind" setting

Cemetery including Aaron Burr

Princeton Theological Seminary

- New York City, NY:
Strawberry Fields Memorial

The Obelisk: "Cleopatra's Needle" in Central Park behind the Metropolitan Museum of Art:

[Obelisks](#) - A Wikipedia Article

Simon Bolivar Monument

Lincoln Center

Columbus Circle

Empire State Building

WTC Site - Ground Zero

Trinity Church building & Cemetery including Alexander Hamilton

Wall Street & NYSE

Federal Hall site where George Washington took his oath of office as the first President

Fraunce's Tavern site of George Washington's farewell to his officers

Battery Park and view of Statue of Liberty United Nations

St. Patrick's Cathedral

Rockefeller Center & Prometheus statue

Times Square

Phantom of the Opera

- Philadelphia, PA:
Liberty Bell
Independence Hall

- Lancaster County, PA:
home to Amish & Mennonites, both of Anabaptist heritage

- Gettysburg, PA:
The Battlefield: Seminary Ridge, Cemetery Ridge
The site of Lincoln's Address: "Four Score and seven years ago..."
- Mount Vernon, VA:
The home: Key to the Bastille from Lafayette, bust of John Paul Jones
The tomb
- Washington, DC:
White House
Lafayette Square
Organization of American States
Washington Monument: An obelisk
Lincoln Memorial: The Gettysburg Address, Second Inaugural Address
Smithsonian Air & Space Museum: The Spirit of St. Louis
American History Museum: Star Spangled Banner
Natural History Museum: Hope Diamond
Capitol Building: [The Apotheosis of Washington](#) painted fresco on the dome ceiling.
Library of Congress
Supreme Court
National Archives: Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, The Constitution, The Bill of Rights
National Art Gallery: Ginevra de' Benci by Leonardo Da Vinci, The Last Supper by Salvador Dali
Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian
- Annapolis, MD:
The town
The Naval Academy: Bancroft Hall, Chapel and Crypt of John Paul Jones
- Williamsburg, VA:

Governor's Palace

The Capitol: House of Burgesses - Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, George Washington
Raleigh Tavern

Bruton Parish Episcopal Church building:
George Washington's pew

- Jamestown, VA:
First permanent English settlement: John Smith, Pocahontas
Church building tower
- Yorktown, VA:
The Battlefield: The cannon and Lafayette
The town
- Virginia Beach, VA:
Atlantic Ocean
- Dulles Airport, VA:
Udvar-Hazy Center, an annex to the Smithsonian Air & Space Museum
The Flight Home - Brother in Christ from Auburn who's son is at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, PA on "Seminary Ridge".

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Fathers: Teach your family the Bible!

There are a lot of areas where I have had failures or weaknesses as a father. One area that the Lord has given me the grace and diligence to be consistent in is teaching my family the Bible. It has been one of the most important things I've done. I haven't gone hunting or fishing or camping with my wife and children as much as I would have liked. I've never taken my family on an official "short term missions" trip. But at least I've taught them the Bible! There are many fathers who have taught more, but I'm just grateful for the times we have gotten together. We have tried to have a family fellowship about once a week over the years. Sometimes it might be more like once a month.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." *Ephesians 5:25-27*

"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." *Ephesians 6:4*

If you're a father, and you haven't tried this yet, I recommend you pick an evening or a weekend morning and get your whole family together with their Bibles. You can start out by asking your wife and each child if there is anything they would like to talk about. Ask each for something they are grateful to the Lord about. Ask if there are any problems they would like to pray about. Ask your little kids what kind of animals they like. Consider singing some songs to the Lord: "Jesus loves me", "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet", "I know that my redeemer lives". Pray together.

Choose a book of the Bible: maybe Genesis, or Matthew, or Acts, or 1 John. And aim to read about one chapter a meeting. There are many times that my children seem bored. I try to be sensitive to that. On the one hand, I press on and try to encourage them and try to help them pay attention. But also, I may make it a half of a long chapter instead of going and going no matter what.

Sometimes I have each child, who can read, take part of the chapter and read it. Sometimes, I just read each section and discuss it. As my friend says, if all we did was open the Bible and read it there would be fruit from that, by the grace of God. You, as the Dad, can say a few words about each section to explain it. Also, you can ask your wife and children if they have any questions or comments on a section. It's ok if you can't answer all the questions. No human can answer all the questions about the Bible! But, you can take some of those questions and ask the Lord for wisdom and maybe research them sometime. Another possibility is for you to ask some questions about the passage, some simple, some hard, to get your family to think and discuss. You might have the motivation to prepare ahead of time. But even if you don't, it's far more important to keep getting together as a family anyway!

But keep it simple! The simpler you keep the format, the more likely you are to get together spontaneously or regularly or often.

The daughter of one of our friends recently was married and had her first child. She commented how grateful she was that her Papa taught them the Bible while they were growing up. Over the years our families got together to read and discuss the Bible, what a blessing of fellowship and being disciples of Jesus together.

In the latest "Media Spotlight" newsletter (July 2003), Al Dager has an excellent article on "The House Assembly". In this article he writes about how to begin to be the Body of Christ together in homes and he also has good advice for fathers:

"Do not allow fear from lack of experience or intimidation from those in the [institutional] churches to dissuade you. If you are seeking true biblical fellowship and you can find no one else to join you, start with your own family. Fathers are entrusted by God to teach their wives and children the Word of God. This does not mean all fathers are qualified to be elders in an assembly, but until such come along or the fathers can find a biblical assembly to join up with, they should start with what they have. The fellowship there will be the greatest blessing one can imagine."

I agree that you, as a husband and father, may not be gifted as a Bible teacher, but you are gifted and called as a husband and a father! Our Lord Jesus will help you to open up the Word and read it with your family. Walk by faith and not by sight. Trust God's Holy Spirit to empower you and to bring fruit from your family fellowships.

I'm available to discuss this further if you would like: please [email me](#).

[Spanking in Love](#) - [Grateful for our Family](#) - [Thy Word is Truth](#) - [The Biblical View of Education](#) - [Homeschooling](#)

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What I don't want to be...

or what you can use against me if you consider yourself my enemy!

If you're my friend, pray for me and my family. [Email me](#), whether friend or enemy, and let us be praying for you! Please refer to this page.

False Brethren	Defiled and Unbelieving
Speaking Lies of Hypocrisy	Being Condemned of Himself
He Is Proud, Knowing Nothing	Spots on Your Feasts, Clouds Without Water
Jannes & Jambres	Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning

False Brethren - Galatians 2:3-5

But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: And that because of **false brethren** unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

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Speaking Lies of Hypocrisy - 1 Timothy 4:1-3

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; **Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron**; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

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He is Proud, Knowing Nothing - 1 Timothy 6:3-5

If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; **He is proud, knowing nothing**, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: **from such withdraw thyself**.

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Jannes and Jambres - 2 Timothy 3:1-9

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, **Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers**, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as **Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth**: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.

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Defiled and Unbelieving - Titus 1:15-16

Unto the pure all things are pure: **but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure**; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

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Being Condemned of Himself - Titus 3:8-11

This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men. But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretic **after the first and second admonition reject**; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, **being condemned of himself**.

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Spots on Your Feasts, Clouds Without Water - Jude 3 - 25

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly [contend for the faith](#) which was once delivered unto the saints. **For there are certain men crept in unawares**, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and **denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ**. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Likewise also **these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities**. Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. **But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. And Enoch**

also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. These are **murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.** But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. **And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.** Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

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2/16/04

I Was a Leader of Women

Every one of us men is susceptible to inappropriate relationships with women who are not our wives. I believe that inappropriate relationships are rampant among clergymen and leaders and the women they presume to shepherd.

[Activism](#) - [Too Close a Friendship](#) - [Clergymen and Divorces](#)
- [So Many Lukewarm Men](#) - [Set an Example](#)

Activism

In the late 80's I was a prolife picketing organizer. Mostly women showed up to picket the abortionist or the county health family planning clinics that referred for abortion. I kept a list of volunteers and their phone numbers... mostly women. I called them regularly regarding scheduling and special events. I also spoke to groups and churches about "Christian Activism", along with representatives from a local pregnancy center and a post-abortion counseling group. We spent quite a bit of time together. My wife, Kim, often stayed home with our babies and small children. There was one couple that was good friends of ours. During one period of a couple of years, I called the wife of that couple almost every day to discuss prolife and conservative political action.

After the Lord began transitioning my wife and I out of social and political activism, we formed a local, informal group called, "Association for Biblical Christianity", with the intent of educating Christians about the Human Potential movement and motivational training and neo-paganism that were influencing Public Schools,

Corporations, Government, and professing Christians. There was one other couple that mostly worked with my wife and I in this new form of activism. Again, the habit developed where I would end up calling the wife of this couple almost everyday about issues and events and scheduling.

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Too Close a Friendship

With several of these ladies I've referred to, I developed a close friendship and we enjoyed talking and confiding.

It was wrong!

It's one thing to have friends and sisters-in-Christ. It's another thing to allow a friendship, between a man and woman who are not married, to become too close: intimate conversations or regular, frequent conversations without spouses being involved. At the very least, it usurps the relationship that should be reserved for the spouse. At worst, it brings the danger of infatuation, temptation, emotional adultery, and adultery.

I look back and I can't believe how I conducted myself, even if I only had "good" intentions. Not only was I robbing my wife, emotionally, but I had no idea what I was doing to the other people's relationships with their spouses.

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Clergymen and Divorces

It is a great discouragement to observe how many Christian couples have divorced over the 27 years I have been a believer. This has included supposedly mature believers, leaders in the churches, and clergymen and their wives. Sometimes it has involved emotionally drifting apart (agape love is not a matter of emotions!) to the point where the couple thinks they don't have a basis for a marriage. Sometimes it involves the seduction into adulterous affairs. In recent years there have been friends who have split because of email and chat room affairs.

“Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?”

Proverbs 6:27-28

It seems to me that clergymen and elders and deacons and other leaders in the assemblies are especially susceptible to relationships that are inappropriate. Clergymen in institutional church organizations, to a great degree, are leaders of women. It is a classic situation for young women to look up to the clergyman. He is important. He is sensitive. He pays attention to individuals. Women who feel their husbands do not have those qualities and are not the spiritual leader of the home might feel inclined to get involved in the machinery of church activities to be near the clergyman and maybe even seek out “counseling”.

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So Many Lukewarm Men

I’m concerned that this is one of the major reasons we have so many lukewarm men in the churches! With the unbiblical prominence of the position of “Pastor”, zealous women follow after the clergyman. Husbands who see this are discouraged from their responsibility to be a spiritual leader.

When we allow a friendship to become inappropriate we have no idea how that may be affecting the other marriage. Those who are in leadership positions may have contributed to the horrible tragedy of divorce by usurping the role of respected hero and leader and confidante in the lives of women in their congregation. Clergymen and other leaders should not think that it is their role to “disciple” or “counsel” women. Encourage and disciple the husbands and let them lead their own families. Let the mature sisters teach the younger ones (Titus 2:4).

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Set an Example

Mature brothers-in-Christ ought to set the example. We are called to

love everyone. We ought to be kind and friendly to everyone. But, we should also go the extra mile in avoiding even the appearance of evil. When does a friendly conversation become an intimate “heart-to-heart”? When does friendly humor become flirting? What situations should I plan to avoid such as finding myself alone with a woman not my wife in a car or a home? Whether it comes to email or phone calls or face-to-face conversations, we ought to keep in mind what is appropriate, what are the appearances, what are the effects.

“Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned...”

1 Timothy 1:5

Maybe there are young men who will read this and it won't take so long for them to come to their senses. I've repented and asked for forgiveness from the Lord and from my wife. I pray that, whatever damage I've done in the past, the Lord will continue to bless all involved and turn everything for good. I am grateful that our Lord Jesus protected my marriage and has continued to break me and remake me.

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

1 Corinthians 10:12

"For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

Hebrews 12:10-11

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Grateful for our Family

["Flesh and Blood" Relatives](#) - [The Truth Can Unite Families](#) - [The Truth Separates Families](#) - [Who is Jesus' Family?](#) - [The Family of God](#)

"Flesh and Blood" Relatives

I am so grateful to the Lord for my wife and my children. I could write volumes about them and sometime perhaps I will.

My family and I are also very grateful to the Lord for our extended (blood relative) family. Not all of our relatives are Christians and of those who consider themselves Christians, not all of them would share with us a lot of very important convictions about who Jesus is and what the Gospel means.

James teaches:

"**Every good gift** and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down **from the Father** of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning." (James 1:17)

And I consider our flesh and blood relatives to be examples of such gifts from God.

As a kid, growing up, I was very blessed to have parents who loved me and took care of me. My father was a Navy pilot so he was away a lot. But he took me fishing and camping and hunting and played sports with me. And as an elementary school kid, I would come home at the end of the day, and yell, "Anybody home?" and it was a great comfort to hear my Mom answer.

No matter how old I am, this is what God wants for me:

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. **Honor your father and mother**, which is the first commandment with promise: "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." Ephesians 6:1-3

More about our extended family...I had (and still have) two older sisters, growing up, whose arts and talents and personalities and interests have greatly influenced me. I had an uncle and an aunt and two

cousins who were very close to us.

My wife's Mom and step-dad and her Dad and step-mom and my wife's sisters are people we love and they are so good to us.

We have been grateful for all of these people, along with my niece and my nephew. Also, we have various uncles and aunts and cousins who we love and who have been a blessing to us. We just want to publicly thank the Lord Jesus for our relatives.

The Truth Can Unite Families

We love our relatives, and because of that, what we want most for them is that we all could be united in an eternal family reunion. According to the Bible, it is the Truth that makes that happen. Jesus is the Truth. Jesus prepares a place for us. Families that trust Jesus together spend an eternity together with Him.

Jesus says:

"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. **In My Father's house are many mansions**; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know. Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way? Jesus said to him, **"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."** John 14:1-6

The Truth Separates Families

Not Peace, but a Sword

"Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to 'set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law'; and 'a man's enemies will be those of his own household.' He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. **He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.**" Matthew 10:34-39

Some have had to leave their families to follow the Lord Jesus

"And **everyone who has left** houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or

children or lands, **for My name's sake**, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life." Matthew 19:29

Who is Jesus' Family?

Then one said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You." But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" And He stretched out His hand toward **His disciples** and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother." Matthew 12:47-50

The Family of God

John wrote:

But **as many as received Him**, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:12-13

Paul wrote:

Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom **the whole family in heaven and earth** is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, **that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith**; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height-- to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, **to Him be glory in the church** by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3:13-21

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SPANKING IN LOVE

Spanking our children at the right times, in the right way, and for the right reasons, has been one of the most important things we've done as parents. By the grace of our Lord Jesus, it helped them to be able to humble their hearts, to have a sense of remorse for bad behavior, and to want to start over with new hope.

[Jesus is our only hope!](#)

[Parents Wear Two Hats](#) - [Zero Tolerance for Disobedience, Disrespect, and Dishonesty](#) - [Start Young](#) - [Wooden Spoon](#) - [Spanking, Loving, Surrendering](#)

Parents Wear Two Hats

Our most important responsibility as parents is to be an evangelist to our children. We are called to teach them the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the gospel of grace, and to invite them to surrender their lives to Jesus, trusting in his work on the cross and not their own righteousness. And we are to teach them to walk in the Spirit by the grace of God and not walk in the flesh.

But, we also have been given the responsibility of a "magistrate" by God. We, as parents, are the "civil government" for the family. We are called to restrain evil in our family, and thereby create a just and peaceful family life in which the Gospel can be preached and lived out by who ever will respond. Spanking is one of the tools of discipline that we have to punish and restrain evil.

Zero Tolerance for Disobedience, Disrespect, and Dishonesty

We recommend “drawing a line”... a no-compromise line: zero tolerance for disobedience, disrespect, or dishonesty. For example, we didn’t permit our young children to say “no” to us. That word can tend to be a major expression of disrespect unless a line is drawn. Make it clear from the start that such things bring an automatic spanking. And then ask God for the courage and the competence to be consistent. And when the line is crossed by the child, spank the child with no further warnings. The trap all of us tend to get into is warning and warning and never really following through. Consistency means having the conviction to intervene and confront face-to-face EVERY time an example of disobedience, disrespect, or dishonesty is observed.

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Start Young

As soon as the child is old enough to know they’ve done wrong, we recommend starting some form of spanking. You can tell when it’s time. You can discern the situation. If you tell your child, “Don’t touch that lamp”, and they look at you and reach out and touch that lamp, you can tell if it is conscious disobedience and rebellion. For us, it was when they were around eighteen months of age.

Spanking each of our children appropriately at a young age was such a blessing for us because, after about a year, the spankings got fewer and fewer. By the time they are five or six, it’s hard to remember the last time they were spanked. Of course each kid is going to be different.

Wooden Spoon

It worked well for us to use a thin wooden spoon. We felt it to be safer than using our hand, though there were times we used our hand. With the hand there can be too much momentum. We would pull the pants down in the back and spank one, two, or three times on the bare bottom. The thin wooden spoon gives a sting without a large momentum impact. It was our view that the actual magnitude of the spanking was not so important. That is, we could afford to have the spanking be too mild rather than too severe, because it was the act of spanking that was the important thing, not the nature of the spanking itself.

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Spanking, Loving, Surrendering

The moment there was an act of disobedience, disrespect, or dishonesty, we would tell the child they were going to get a spanking and why. We would often tell them to go get the spanking spoon and go upstairs to their room. Once in their room we would explain again why, give the spanking, and then evaluate if there was an attitude of surrender and humility or an attitude of defiance and rebellion. While evaluating the child's attitude, we would hug our child and love our child and tell them we love them and tell them that Jesus loves them. If there was an attitude of rebellion, such as an arching of the back, or pulling away, etc., we would tell them they were going to get another spanking if they didn't relent and surrender with a humble attitude. We would then administer another spanking in the same way as the first. Each time the child would be given an opportunity to express remorse and surrender. If necessary, this process would go on through numerous cycles, lasting forty minutes or more. It was important to us to never let go a continuing defiant attitude. Continuing until there is a humbling of the heart is of the utmost importance.

When the child would surrender with a humble heart, we would encourage them to say "I'm sorry" to the Lord Jesus, but we wouldn't force that. We would encourage them to receive Jesus' forgiveness. We would then pray together. And we would pray that the Lord Jesus would help them with their problem and behavior and that the Lord would help Dad or Mom to be good parents. We would often acknowledge that we, as parents, often struggle with the same sins, and that Jesus "spanks" us, too. Using this time to discuss important things with the child is very valuable, teaching them what the Bible says about sin and repentance and walking with the Lord Jesus.

We pray that our Lord Jesus would give every parent who trusts in him the grace and wisdom to properly apply spanking in love as a tool of discipline. If you have any questions or comments on this or any subject, please email [Kim or Jim](#).

Jesus loves the little children!

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Critical Email about My Spanking Article

Representative of others I receive periodically.

(Received 8/3/05, Posted here 12/26/05)

"Jesus never hit children, please re-read your bible. Jesus taught love and tolerance.

"You hit your children for up to 40 minutes for arching there backs when you gave them a spanking with a wooden spoon. Wooden spoons hurt, normal human reaction is to pull away from pain, not to accept it. Even Jesus arched his back when he was nailed to the cross in pain. You hit your children until they became numb to the pain, or was so scared of another spanking they did there best not to react. You didnt humble them, you broke them like you would a dog.

"You want your children to be humble, well they are not the only ones who needs to eat some humble pie. You need to humble yourself down to their level and see what it feels like to be hit with a wooden spoon when you sin (which everyone does).

"You abused your children. You need to spend some more time with Christ teachings and even more time in pray asking for his forgiveness for the damage you caused your children. Jesus never hit anyone. Shame on you. M."

[My Reply](#)

My Reply to Spanking Article [Criticism](#)

But, M...

I didn't hit my children. I spanked them. And I never said that I spanked them for 40 minutes straight. I said the process took as long as 40 minutes. It is not true that I spanked my children until they were numb. Your accusations are irrational and without foundation.

I certainly understand that you and I disagree about spanking, but let's try to have a reasonable discussion.

What I recommend is applying the wisdom of Proverbs motivated by the love Jesus calls

us to.

To say that spanking my child, motivated by love, is the same as abuse, is just not true.

I agree with you that I also need to be humbled. That's why I say the following in my article:

<<And we would pray that the Lord Jesus would help them with their problem and behavior and that the Lord would help Dad or Mom to be good parents. We would often acknowledge that we, as parents, often struggle with the same sins, and that Jesus "spanks" us, too.>>

I would be interested to hear what your views are about how someone gains eternal life and how you view the Bible.

Thank you for taking the time to write. I truly appreciate people willing to discuss controversial subjects together.

Sincerely,

Jim Baumgaertel
Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning
<http://procinwarn.com>

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Bruce & Ellen Craswell **Christianity & Politics**

4/18/06 - Updated 4/27/06

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Two of the most loving and genuine people we have known are Bruce and Ellen Craswell. We greatly respect this precious couple. My wife and I had the privilege to know them in the late 1980's for a time, when we were prolife and political activists. We were among the grass roots while they played county and statewide roles that periodically reached to national influence. After 16 years as a state representative and state senator in Olympia, Washington State, Ellen was the Republican candidate for Governor in 1996 but lost to the Democrat, Gary Locke.

Bruce, a dentist, had been the politician early on. And yet, Bruce once told about how it was his unwillingness to run for the Washington state legislature that started his wife's long career. Ellen served as a state representative from 1977 to 1980 and in the state senate from 1981 to 1992. She was the first woman to serve as President Pro Tem of the state senate in 1991.

The Craswells were part of the "Reagan Revolution" in 1980. Bruce served as chief of staff of the King County executive in the early 1980s. Bruce and Ellen were already part of the Reaganite conservative wing of the Republican establishment by the time the "religious right" began to come to power.

Us Prolifers

Many of us Christians became political activists through participation in the "prolife movement" in the mid to late 1980s. Some of us were from the local Christian Action Council; some from the Crisis Pregnancy Centers; some from Women Exploited by Abortion (WEBA). I had been inspired by a Melody Green article in the "Last Days Newsletter" of the late Keith Green to become a prolife activist. Judge Steve Alexander encouraged me through my mother-in-law to become involved in a prolife initiative campaign in 1984. Statewide, we prolifters were being organized and mobilized by various initiative campaigns and by leaders such as Michael Undseth and Dottie Roberts. A number of us in Kitsap County who began to participate in county and state politics were encouraged by the Craswells. The Craswells were in a position to try to bridge the gap between the Reaganite right wing and the new Christian Right.

Bruce and Ellen had been participating for years in a conservative gathering every two years called, the "Sun Mountain Conference" named because of the lodge that was the location of the first meeting. The Washington State conservative elite would meet to plan strategy. There were mostly old guard Republican conservatives, but there were a few conservative Democrats. The Craswells invited some of us Christian activists to attend in the late 80s when a Silverdale hotel hosted the event. Former governor Dixie Lee Ray

was one of the speakers. John Carlson and his fellow University of Washington classmate Brett Bader were there. Carlson, who like Ellen lost a governor's race to Gary Locke (2000), was another one of the speakers.

For many years Ellen Craswell published a "Family in Touch" newsletter which was a vehicle for informing and mobilizing to action her constituents and supporters. Bruce and Ellen were the lightning rods for controversy as the Kitsap County Republicans were taken over by the Religious Right. Adele Ferguson, then a columnist for the Bremerton Sun newspaper, had a "love – hate" campaign going as she often wrote about the Craswells. Adele had been longtime close friends with Bruce and Ellen but could never get use to their increasing testimony for Jesus Christ. And she found it unforgivable that they would use their religious following to ruin the Republican party and county and state politics.

My wife, Kim, and a number of our friends were elected precinct committeemen in the elections of 1986 and 1988. We all went to the Kitsap County Republican conventions and to the State Conventions. So many of us were new to politics. We really only knew the dogma of the prolife movement. At the 1986 state convention, every time a resolution was up for a vote, Bruce Craswell and prolife leader, Dottie Roberts, took turns holding up "yes" or "no" signs so that all of us prolife newbies knew how to vote! It looked ridiculous, of course, to the establishment Republicans. But it was all the more galling to them because we usually won each vote.

At the 1988 state convention, the Craswells were among our leaders again and we heard speeches by presidential candidates, including [Pat Robertson](#). Some of our crowd were Robertson delegates and some were delegates for Donald Rumsfeld's bid for president, or Bob Dole, or Jack Kemp, or Alexander Haig, or the eventual winner, Vice President [George Bush](#). [Bob Williams](#), at the state convention, was the Republican candidate for governor and he relied quite a bit on us in the Christian Right. Lynn Harsh was his campaign manager. He ended up losing to the Democrat, Booth Gardner. Future U.S. Senate candidate, Linda Smith, was at the convention. During this period of our political activism was also when fellow Christians, Bob Oke and Lois McMahon, began their careers as state legislators.

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Their Conversion

Bruce and Ellen Craswell were not always "Right Wing Christians". They started out just as "Right Wing". It always blesses me to hear about how people came to put their trust in the Lord Jesus, whether I end up agreeing with their politics or not. Consider the following account of Bruce's conversion to Christ by political writer, Mark Matassa, in a 1995 article called, "Craswell's Crusade":

So it happened that anti-tax crusader [Ellen] Craswell fell into a quick kinship with Rep. Ron Dunlap, a tightfisted Bellevue Republican, and in 1979 they sponsored Initiative 62, a tax-limitation plan.

While Craswell and Dunlap campaigned around the state for their initiative, Bruce and Dunlap's wife, Allison, traveling with them, killed time discussing the Bible. Bruce loves a good-natured argument - "If it's Advil vs. Anacin," Allison Dunlap says, "he'll take you to the mat" - and he was sure he could prove the Bible was not absolute divine truth, as Allison had accepted it to be. But after several weeks of debate, Allison recalls, Bruce was astonished to see he hadn't shaken her faith. Intrigued, the Craswells agreed to join the Dunlaps and several other couples in a more thorough Bible study.

All of this was floating through Bruce's mind that Wednesday evening as he drove south after work. He was thinking about the Rev. Billy Graham's remark that it is harder for a rich man to get to heaven than for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. Suddenly, he says, he realized what the passage meant: It wasn't his money God wanted, but his life. He had to surrender his life to God.

And with that, he was so overcome with emotion that he had to pull the Mercedes over to the side of the freeway, somewhere around Fort Lewis. When he got out of the car he saw a vision, he says, that is still "just as clear and just as real as sitting here looking out the window."

There before him was Christ, nailed to the cross.

And for five minutes Bruce Craswell, who had been so proud of his skepticism and his logic and his impeccable debating skill, knelt, crying, traffic whizzing past, staring up at Him.

Mark Matassa goes on to write about Ellen's conversion:

ELLEN CRASWELL'S acceptance of Christ was not nearly so dramatic as her husband's. He told her what happened that day on the freeway; she watched him, liked the new sense of peace she saw, and six weeks later, April 15, 1980, decided she, too, would surrender her life to God.

"I remember feeling suddenly it was like the weight of the world was off my shoulders," Craswell says. "I think that's part of what gives you strength. You don't have to do it alone. You have this inner strength. Somebody else is there to hold you up."

In that sense, politics got easier for Craswell when she became a Christian. She could look to the Bible for guidance, and she felt God supporting her efforts, no matter what the earthly outcome.

At the same time, though, her devotion weakened her effectiveness in Olympia. Compromise is everything in a legislative body. But if every position you take is a matter of religious faith rather than mere political ideology, compromise becomes nearly impossible.

[I don't know anything about Mark Matassa so I can't endorse him in general, but look at his article about the Craswells for more good info about them: 1995 article called, "Craswell's Crusade" (<http://www.seanet.com/~matassa/craswell.htm>)]

Though not mentioned in the above article, Ellen use to often testify how she was miraculously healed of cancer in a charismatic ministry at Silverdale United Methodist church in the early 1980s. Since that time she has had to face at least one other bout with cancer, but the Lord has used each circumstance in both her life and in the lives of many who have come in contact with her.

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Bill Gothard & R.J. Rushdoony & David Barton

By the time my wife and I met the Craswells in 1985 or 86, they were a part of a small Baptist congregation. The two greatest influences on their lives seemed to be [Bill Gothard's](#) "Institute in Basic Life Principles" and the Reconstructionism of [R.J. Rushdoony](#). These two personalities and their doctrines and their systems had become the basis for the Craswells' world view about everything from diet and nutrition to their politics and vision for mobilizing Christians for political action.

During this period of our political activism the Lord had also been breaking me and remaking me and teaching me in many ways. I had become a Christian in 1976. In 1978, in my little Assembly of God church in Hawaii, I had heard a Human Potential seminar about visualizing your goals and creating your own reality. I completely bought into the views and techniques taught at that motivational seminar. I moved to Kitsap County, Washington state, in 1979. [Pat Robertson's](#) 700 Club was a huge influence on me at the time. Kim and I were married in 1981. I went with Kim to a Bill Gothard, Basic Youth Seminar which was required by my wife's employer, Bremerton Christian Schools.

By 1984 we were [prolifers](#) and getting into politics. While watching a Christian talk show one day, I heard the guest speaking about truth from the Bible that totally demolished, in my understanding, the deception of the [Human Potential movement](#). The guest's name was Dave Hunt. The "New Age" media hype was just beginning. In November, 1986, I was required to take a course where I worked, Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, that included guided visualization techniques and promoted the Human Potential movement philosophies. My [confronting](#) of this improper use of taxpayers' money was to have a huge impact on my life.

And yet, overlapping this period, I continued my social and political activism and became involved in the "Coalition On Revival" or COR, led by Jay Grimstead, which sought to unify and mobilize Christians to take dominion over all aspects of civilization, including politics and government. Eventually, through the ministry of Dave Hunt (Christian Information Bureau which turned into the [Berean Call](#)) and Al Dager ([Media Spotlight](#)) I realized the corrupt nature of the "Coalition On Revival" and how professing Christians were being manipulated and used and the Gospel was being perverted and idolatry was being promoted by unholy alliances in the name of "traditional family values" and conservative political agendas. I was also learning to what degree the [occult](#) and [Freemasonry](#) and other unbiblical traditions had had on the founding of America; the

many threads of deception within Evangelical Christianity; and the trends toward a false religious and political unity, preparing the world for a counterfeit Christ and global deception.

The Lord continued to transition my wife, Kim, and me out of social and political activism. We had our last get together with Bruce and Ellen Craswell when we had them over to dinner. I gave them what was developing into my presentation, “The World System and Rebellion Against God” which later was titled, “[Counterfeit Christianity, The World Religion, and the New World Order](#)”. As always our evening with them was precious fellowship because they are such gracious people. We spent time discussing our different views on what the Bible teaches about diet and whether the Old Testament [dietary laws](#) apply to Christians today and what the significance was of Peter’s vision in Acts 10. Bruce and Ellen encouraged us to look at some videos by David Barton of WallBuilders, an “organization dedicated to presenting America's forgotten history and heroes, with an emphasis on the moral, religious, and [constitutional foundation](#) on which America was built”.

The Baumgaertels and Craswells agreed to disagree. We parted ways. They were so kind to spend time with “grass roots” people like us. They are as sweet and unpretentious as anyone you will meet.

American Heritage Party to Ron Boehme

Eventually, after Ellen was unseated from the state senate in 1992 and then lost the governors race in 1996, the Craswells gave up on the Republican party. They helped to found the [American Heritage Party](#), which was associated with the national American Taxpayers Party. One of the things I have always respected about the Craswells was their consistency in what they saw as their Christian convictions. While many Evangelicals have been willing to compromise with and yoke with conservative Catholics and Mormons; and compromise with various pro-abortion conservatives, the Craswells have stood their ground even when it cost them politically. From their point of view, it became impossible to be a Republican and still stand for Biblical values. They simply could not support some of the Republican candidates as they were expected to do as good Republicans.

In 1998, Bruce Craswell ran for U.S. Congress in the First Congressional district as the American Heritage Party candidate. Bruce was bitterly condemned by conservative Republicans for siphoning off 7% of the vote to cause Republican incumbent, Rick White, to lose to Democrat Jay Inslee.

In 1999 the American Taxpayers Party changed its name to the Constitution Party and has a Washington State affiliate by that name. There is still an American Heritage Party that has tried to create itself nationally.

Bruce and Ellen Craswell are listed (April 2006) as Campaign Advisors for Republican candidate for state representative, [Ron Boehme](#) on his campaign web site. Ron is a

Youth With a Mission (YWAM) leader who teaches [Moral Government theology](#) and has promoted [Kingdom Now – Dominion](#) philosophies for years.

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Grateful Anyway

In spite of our differences, we continue to love and respect Bruce and Ellen Craswell. And even if I think that they have been misguided through the years by Bill Gothard and R.J. Rushdoony and David Barton, I know that our Lord Jesus has used them anyway. Our sovereign God brings fruit in our lives and uses us for His purposes in spite of ourselves! That doesn't mean the Lord Jesus endorses our unbiblical agendas. But we can rejoice that Bruce and Ellen have preached Jesus Christ many times over many years. Those of us who homeschool in Washington State should be grateful to the Lord for the freedom our state's excellent homeschool law affords. It is my understanding that Ellen Craswell is largely responsible for that law. The Craswells have been wonderful examples of loving parents and grandparents. We remember the house they use to live in on Dyes Inlet near Silverdale that had secret passage ways Bruce built for his children and a rope ride in the side and back yard. We praise the Lord for their extended family, including Jim and Denise. Bruce and Ellen live with some of their children and grand children on a large family compound.

In a January 2nd, 2005 article in the Seattle Times' Pacific Northwest Magazine, Lynda Mapes writes about Ellen:

At 72, Craswell still radiates the gracious serenity that charmed voters who wrote to say thank you for her campaign, even though they wouldn't vote for her in a million years. Now retired from politics, Craswell and her husband, Bruce — a former candidate for Congress — are enjoying 14 grandkids and their Poulsbo home, reached through a sign over the driveway that commands "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God" on the way in, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" on the way out.

See this article with a great photo of Ellen and the sign over their driveway at <http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/pacificnw/2005/0102/portraits.html>

I do pray that followers of Jesus would no longer be drawn away to worldly agendas in the name of American Heritage, in the name of Traditional Family Values or unbiblical concepts of unity, or taking dominion or reconstructionism.

And yet, we will always love and appreciate Bruce and Ellen Craswell.

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Christians Are
Deceived](#)

[Lucifer, the
Garden of Eden,
& the Tower of
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[Intro - Us Prolifers - Their Conversion - Bill Gothard & R.J. Rushdoony
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[KINGDOM NOW
OR NEW
WORLD
ORDER?](#)

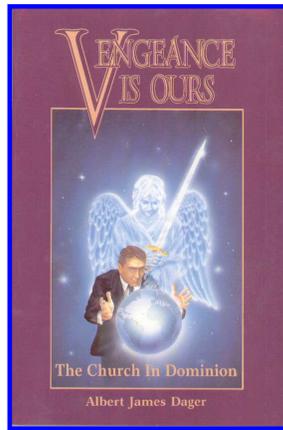
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VENGEANCE IS OURS THE CHURCH IN DOMINION

Albert James Dager - 283Pages

A new militancy is stirring in the breasts of Christians in response to the evils that beset society. Tens of thousands attend spiritual warfare seminars hoping to learn how to “take back from Satan what he has stolen.” A call for vengeance on God’s enemies and a restructuring of society under God’s Law is being heard in ever-widening circles.

But is it the Christian’s responsibility to take control of society and to reconstruct it in accordance with God’s Law? *Vengeance Is Ours* presents some startling revelations in this analysis of various forms of dominion theology from Manifested Sons of God to Christian Reconstructionism. [Media Spotlight](#)

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Our "Pro-life" Days

Kim and I, in the late 80's were "Pro-life activists". We organized picketing of abortionists and family planning clinics. I was president of a local pro-life organization affiliate of the Christian Action Council. We became "conservative", Republican activists, and recruited many to be precinct committeemen. Etc. Etc.

Then we began to see how Satan masquerades as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11) and we began to see how Satan works both sides of worldly, fleshly battles. We began to see how professing Christians were being seduced into worldly movements, in the name of saving babies and in the name of "family values", but the net result was a perversion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Christians, thinking they were serving God, were... and are, being used to build the structure of the counterfeit Christ.

Our convictions against murdering babies have not changed. But this pagan world system has always murdered babies and will always murder babies. It is a horrible symptom of mankind's rebellion against God. The Lord Jesus Christ will personally put an end to this evil some day.

I acknowledge what James says, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." (James 4:17) If we have an actual opportunity to rescue a baby... then may the Lord help us. But the Pro-life movement as a whole is not really about saving babies, in my view. It is inspired and promoted in order to manipulate and control people and to provide them with a counterfeit Christian religion, a cult mentality, a false gospel, a worldly agenda, and to unite religious conservatives.

At the very least, I am asking that followers of Jesus make sure that we are pursuing the calling that is laid out for us in the New Testament; proclaiming the real Jesus and the real Gospel; and not other agendas that the world (right wing or left wing) is trying to manipulate us into.

If you have any questions or comments about our "Pro-life" days and why

we now warn against the Prolife Movement, please [email us](#).

[Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism](#)

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Breakfast Pig Christians

Over the last year (1999) my wife and I had the privilege of ministering one Friday a month at a coffee house on a city street with the family who runs the coffee house. Every Friday night from 8:00 pm to midnight they open the coffee house to downtown teenagers where they play foosball, ping-pong, pool, board games or just hang out and talk with their friends. It is definitely not a "churchy" environment, but the adult and teenage volunteers have a heart for loving these kids with the love of Jesus and witnessing the Gospel that saves, with their words and their lives.

In addition to the Friday nights, the family who runs the coffee house also opens their home to these kids, as well as to adults who need a temporary home, for whatever reason. They have visited some of the teens in juvenile detention. Many of these young people come from very fractured, chaotic, and immoral family situations. Many of them are involved with lifestyles of the occult, and in immorality of every imaginable form.

Over most of the 23 years I've been a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, my experience has been in a subculture of middle class comfort "churchianity". Usually there is a choice to be made between two types of unacceptable institutions. There are middle class institutional church organizations who teach mostly sound doctrine but have little or no interest in the down and out, the poor, the needy. Or there are organizations who are devoted to the poor but with a social gospel... a false gospel... with no concern for the truth of God's Word.

This family and the people who volunteer with them have devoted themselves to loving and helping people in need AND doing it because of, and in context with, the real Gospel and the real Jesus and the truth of God's Word. This is very rare.

You have probably heard of the illustration about the difference in commitment that a chicken and a pig bring to a breakfast. The chicken's involvement only goes as far as providing eggs. But that's not much when you compare it to the devotion shown by the pig in supplying the bacon!

So it goes with most of us versus brothers and sisters in Christ like this family who runs the coffee house. Most of us, including me, are willing to "dip our toe in" (I'm mixing my metaphors!) or supply eggs like the breakfast chicken. But I praise God for people like this family who are "Breakfast Pig Christians"!

We're no longer volunteering at the coffee house. But I'm grateful for the example I've seen and what the Lord has done in our lives through the past year. I do want my family and I to be more like Breakfast Pig Christians. I want us to learn to give our lives away, by the grace of God. I pray the Lord Jesus will continue to keep this family, and the others who work with them, on track as far as the Truth of God's Word and the centrality of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and him crucified.

And I pray the Lord would give his priorities to each of us in these last days.
Jim B.

Is There Any Hope for a Ghetto Child?

It was such a stupid mistake. Already stoned, but not high enough, she was on her way to the "jungle" with a friend to get higher. Rock in hand. Walking by some cars. Goofing off. Messing around like she was going to scratch the cars. No real intention of doing it. A friend's dare. Several cars scratched. The wrong done. The result. A felony on her record at age 14, and \$8,500 required for restitution and court costs. Though she was hardly aware of what she was doing...she was destroying a future dream. "Of all the things I've done," she commented, "I got caught for that!"



[[Download](#) PDF 2.5 mbs]

Please consider visiting the [Coffee Oasis site](#) and making a donation via paypal for Ghetto Girl's restitution.



The Coffee Oasis
Hope in Christ Ministries

<http://www.thecoffeeoasis.com/>



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To my Catholic Neighbors and Co-workers

I consider you to be gifts from God. I am not against you. I am against bigotry and prejudice of any kind. I desire to love you with the love of Jesus.

It is the Roman Catholic religious system that I differ with. It is Roman Catholicism's false gospel of works, its false Christs, and its pagan veneration of Mary that I consider to be unbiblical. It is Roman Catholicism's global empire religious system that has prostituted itself with the political and economic systems of this world for centuries that I oppose.

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[Are There Any Believers in the Catholic Church?](#)

[The Roman Catholic Empire](#)

[Counterfeit Christianity](#)

[A Cinematic Crucifix? Mel Gibson's Catholic Movie](#)

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I Support the U.S. Constitution

I support the Constitution of the United States of America. When I entered the U.S. Naval Academy to begin my Navy career, I swore an oath to support the Constitution. I have since repented of swearing oaths because Jesus said to "let my yes be yes and my no be no" (Matthew 5:33-37). But I still am letting my "yes be yes" that I support the Constitution!

It is because of Romans 13:1-7 that I choose to support the Constitution. I don't consider it to be a Biblical document. It and the Declaration of Independence are actually Masonic documents. While I warn against the deceptions of Freemasonry, I trust the sovereignty of God in establishing the civil government of the United States through the Constitution. That is not an endorsement by God of the rulers, or the U.S., or the Constitution. But he has chosen that means and this system to provide civil government of this worldly nation for his purposes in spite of the rulers and the system itself.

The Constitution has been violated and ignored repeatedly by the rulers throughout the country's history. But because of my submission to my Lord Jesus, I submit to the magistrates that function or ought to function under the authority of the U.S. Constitution.

I am grateful to the Lord that my family and I live in this country. Unfortunately, it is a pagan nation in rebellion against God and will be judged by God. Christians, however, should support the government as far as its God established duties to protect life and property and should never be in rebellion against its rightful purposes.

[Christians & Civil Government](#)

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The Manifold Wisdom of God

Ephesians 3:10-11

- The manifold wisdom of God...
- Is being made known through the assembly (called out ones) of Believers, the Body of Christ, the Bride of Christ...
- To the Principalities and Powers in Heavenly places...
- According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. Revelation 10:7

- ...even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish...This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Ephesians 5:25-32

- ... the gospel of God, (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: Among whom are ye

also the called of Jesus Christ...
Romans 1:1-6

[Important Principles to Understand](#)

[Out of the Depths](#)

The Mystery of Suffering
(pdf file: 300 kb)

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The Household of God!

Ephesians 2:11-22

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to the New
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Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the **commonwealth of Israel**, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain **one new man**, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but **fellow citizens with the saints**, and of **the household of God**; And are **built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone**; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an **holy temple** in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

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Assemble with the Saints

And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the **assembling of ourselves** together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Hebrews 10:24-25

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The Ekklesia of Christ is the
Pillar and Ground of the
Truth

1 Timothy 3:14, 15

"These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is **the church of the living God**, the pillar and ground of the truth."

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Every Tribe & Tongue

Followers of Jesus, no matter what their race, are called to love everyone, no matter what their race. It's cool to read in Revelation how every tribe and tongue are represented in eternity

"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation..."

Revelation 5:9

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True New Testament Fellowship is not New!

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something new](#)

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In the New Testament, the brethren met in simplicity in local assemblies. The professional clergy system did not yet exist. The Roman Catholic Priesthood did not yet exist. I believe that there has always been, since New Testament times, a remnant chosen by grace, following the Lord Jesus Christ, who met outside of the religious systems, in simplicity. The "Reformation" did not really restore anything. The people in the reformation either left the religious systems to join the remnant that was already outside the camp, or they left one corrupt religious system to start more corrupt religious systems. Some of the groups that may have been examples of the remnant outside the establishment religious systems were some of those who came to be called Waldensians (1000-1200 AD) or Anabaptists (1500s) or the Plymouth Brethren (1800s). I don't necessarily endorse any modern groups by those names. But our heritage is awesome!

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Stop looking for the "perfect church".

In fact, I recommend that you stop, "looking for a church"... period.

Be the Church!

Meet regularly with friends and be all the New Testament has called you to be as brothers and sisters in Christ.

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Meetings of Christians

And they continued steadfastly in **the apostles' doctrine** and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Acts 2:42

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; **teaching and admonishing one another** in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Col 3:16

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in **psalms** and **hymns** and **spiritual songs**, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

Eph 5:18-21

How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, **every one of you** hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. **Let all things be done unto edifying.**

1 Corinthians 14:26

And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this **do in remembrance of me.**

And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and **breaking bread** from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Acts 2:46-47

Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. **For ye may all prophesy one by one**, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.

1 Corinthians 14:29-31

Let all things be done **decently and in order**.

1 Corinthians 14:40

And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, **Paul preached unto them**, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

Acts 20:7

Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house. And **when this epistle is read among you**, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.

Col 4:15-16

Is any among you afflicted? let him **pray**. Is any merry? let him **sing psalms**. Is any sick among you? let him **call for the elders of the church**; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. **Confess your faults one to another**, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

James 5:13-16

As **every** man hath received the gift, **even so minister the same one to another**, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Pet 4:10-11

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Politicking in the Assembly

I am opposed to any politicking in the assembly of believers. Decisions should not be made by dictators in a vacuum or the rule of the majority. Doctrine or policy or decisions should not be made by one person lobbying others and trying to get them on his side. I recommend that Biblical elders seek out other brothers for counsel and that all brothers in the assembly have an opportunity to speak to the assembly about doctrine, policy, and decisions. But no one should be campaigning for or against things. Speak the truth in love. Stand for truth. Proclaim the truth to whoever will listen and leave the results in God's hands. Our Lord Jesus can be trusted.

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Who Causes Division?

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[Walking in the Spirit](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

Is it the one who warns against false doctrine that causes division?

Or is it the one who brings false doctrine into the assembly that causes division?

Of course, anyone quarreling about words, being "in the flesh", is divisive whether right or wrong.

So, always one who would warn must not only be truthful according to the Bible, but be motivated by love, according to the Bible.

On the other hand, speaking the truth in love, even if it is in the nicest, gentlest, kindest way... can often be

like lancing a boil!

The world and the
religious systems
will still want to
shoot the
messenger!

The people react
viciously when you
bring down their
idol... and accuse
YOU of being
divisive!

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<http://procinwarn.com>

Shipwrecked on an Island

Let's say there were ten families shipwrecked on an island
with their Bibles.

Would they have EVERYTHING they needed to be the
Body of Christ together?

[email me](#)



[Assemble with the Saints](#)

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Four Feasts of the Lamb

[The Passover Feast](#) - [The Last Supper](#) - [The Lord's Supper](#) - [The Marriage Supper of the Lamb](#)

A Song

God will provide the Lamb.

(See Genesis 22:8)

1. The Passover Feast

**Your lamb shall
be without
blemish... And
they shall take of
the blood, and
strike it on the
two side posts
and on the upper
door post of the
houses, wherein
they shall eat it.
And they shall
eat the flesh in
that night, roast
with fire, and
unleavened
bread; and with
bitter herbs they
shall eat it.**

And thus shall

**ye eat it; with
your loins
girded, your
shoes on your
feet, and your
staff in your
hand; and ye
shall eat it in
haste: it is the
LORD's
passover.**

**And the blood
shall be to you
for a token upon
the houses where
ye are: and when
I see the blood, I
will pass over
you, and the
plague shall not
be upon you to
destroy you,
when I smite the
land of Egypt.
And this day
shall be unto you
for a memorial;
and ye shall keep
it a feast to the
LORD
throughout your
generations; ye
shall keep it a
feast by an
ordinance for
ever.**

Exodus 12:5, 7, 8, 11, 13, 14

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Now the first
day of the feast
of unleavened
bread the
disciples came to
Jesus, saying
unto him, Where
wilt thou that we
prepare for thee
to eat the
passover? And
he said, Go into
the city to such a
man, and say
unto him, The
Master saith, My
time is at hand; I
will keep the
passover at thy
house with my
disciples.

And the disciples
did as Jesus had
appointed them;
and they made
ready the
passover. Now
when the even
was come, he sat
down with the
twelve.

Matthew 26:17-20

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3. The Lord's Supper

And as they
were eating,

Jesus took
bread, and
blessed it, and
brake it, and
gave it to the
disciples, and
said, Take, eat;
this is my body.
And he took the
cup, and gave
thanks, and gave
it to them,
saying, Drink ye
all of it; For this
is my blood of
the new
testament, which
is shed for many
for the remission
of sins.

But I say unto
you, I will not
drink henceforth
of this fruit of
the vine, until
that day when I
drink it new
with you in my
Father's
kingdom. And
when they had
sung an hymn,
they went out
into the mount
of Olives.

Matthew 26:26-30

For I have
received of the
Lord that which
also I delivered

unto you, That
the Lord Jesus
the same night in
which he was
betrayed took
bread: And
when he had
given thanks, he
brake it, and
said, Take, eat:
this is my body,
which is broken
for you: this do
in remembrance
of me. After the
same manner
also he took the
cup, when he
had supped,
saying, This cup
is the new
testament in my
blood: this do ye,
as oft as ye drink
it, in
remembrance of
me.

For as often as
ye eat this bread,
and drink this
cup, ye do shew
the Lord's death
till he come.
Wherefore
whosoever shall
eat this bread,
and drink this
cup of the Lord,
unworthily, shall
be guilty of the
body and blood
of the Lord.

4. **The Marriage Supper of the Lamb**

And a voice
came out of the
throne, saying,
Praise our God,
all ye his
servants, and ye
that fear him,
both small and
great. And I
heard as it were
the voice of a
great multitude,
and as the voice
of many waters,
and as the voice
of mighty
thunderings,
saying, Alleluia:
for the Lord
God omnipotent
reigneth.

Let us be glad
and rejoice, and
give honour to
him: for the
marriage of the
Lamb is come,
and his wife hath
made herself
ready. And to
her was granted
that she should
be arrayed in

**fine linen, clean
and white: for
the fine linen is
the
righteousness of
saints.**

**And he saith
unto me, Write,
Blessed are they
which are called
unto the
marriage supper
of the Lamb.
And he saith
unto me, These
are the true
sayings of God.**

Revelation 19:5-9

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Church is People

Editor, The Sun

(October 1997 - In response to a forum about why more in the Northwest don't "attend church".)

Church is not something you "attend". Church is something you are. Church is people. Biblically, the Church is all individuals who have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and who are called to be in relationship with each other.

I have no desire to criticize mainline Protestantism or Roman Catholicism in this context. My concern is with my own subculture, Evangelicalism, which has obscured the Gospel with partisan politics and mass media false-gospel-of-the-family events in the nation's capital.

Evangelicals have set themselves up for these dissipations by pursuing institutional "churchianity" driven by a professional clergy system. It is no wonder that "church" is irrelevant to most people on the west coast or anywhere else. The ones who should be ambassadors for Christ are pushing institutionalism instead of relationships.

[What is the Church?](#)

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Counterfeit Christs

Is your Pastor a one-man show?

The whole world is being prepared for a counterfeit Christ, described in Revelation 13. Jesus warned us that there would be many who would attempt to come in the place of Christ, usurping his role:

"For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many."

Matthew 24:5

The Apostle John warns us that in addition to the coming antichrist, many antichrists are already among us:

"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

1 John 2:18-19

John says these antichrists "went out from us". Satan is portrayed as a clever deceiver. If he inspired someone to walk among Christians saying "I am against Jesus Christ", those who profess to love the Lord would not be deceived. An effective deception is well disguised.

In what ways might we be led to follow one who usurps the role of Jesus Christ? I am convinced that the world and professing Evangelical Christians are being prepared to follow the antichrist by getting use to following gurus. As I say in the article, "Four Ways Christians Are Being Deceived":

We are much more likely, these days, to not refer to our Bible for our convictions and world-view, but instead to follow the opinions of leaders we look up to. In these days of "Christian mass media", celebrity ministers are likely to draw our attention and our allegiance. It is a dangerous thing to set up gurus within the Body of Christ who are beyond criticism.

Is your "pastor" a one man show? I would be greatly concerned about this. If you go to your fellowship's website, is he the only leader mentioned? Is his the only photograph prominently displayed? Is he the only one free to speak about truth and error? Must all others agree with him or face the consequences? Does your fellowship revolve around his personality and the personalities of his wife and family? Do this man and his wife act like benevolent royalty? Do his wife and children have more influence in the church than the elders? Is he the only teacher? Does he have veto power over every detail of the functioning of your fellowship? Are the "elders" yes-men who really just act as his staff? Or is there a continuing line of former elders who have tried to speak up and were slammed? Did your fellowship begin by a gathering of people at this man's feet? Or if he were to go on to bigger and better things, would half to three quarters of his audience leave? Do people refer to your fellowship as "John's Church" or "Pastor John's Church" or "Pastor Smith's Church"? Are people induced to stand in line to speak to him? To shake his hand? Does their heart go pitter-pat when he mentions their name from the pulpit? Do they wonder if he's thinking about them? Do they yearn for his approval and fear his wrath?

Are you a husband or a father? Does the clergyman who rules over your church induce your wife or your children to have an emotional attachment to him with a blind emotional loyalty that causes them to become defensive at the slightest hint of criticism of their Pastor? I would be concerned about this. It is cult-like for your wife to respect and admire this man more than her own husband. It is adulterous and idolatrous for your wife to be so emotionally attached to this man. It is wrong for a clergyman to usurp the role of husband in the

lives of the women of the congregation. It is wrong for a clergyman to usurp the role of loving and wise father in the lives of the children and youth of a congregation.

Worse yet! It is idolatry and blasphemy for this man to usurp the role of Christ among the believers in your fellowship! That is exactly what he does if he functions as a guru beyond critique or a dictator beyond question. And that is exactly what he does if he is more than just a brother in Christ; if he is more than just one of multiple leaders and overseers; if he is more than just one of a number of men free to teach the truth; if the life of the congregation is focused on and revolves around him.

Of course, not every leader in a church that fits some of these descriptions is an antichrist. We all walk in the flesh to varying extents at various times. We all need to grow closer to Jesus in our daily walk and mature in our ministries and gifts and callings. But these are serious issues. And if any of these descriptions fit, they ought to be dealt with. No one should be in such a place of prominence and celebrity that they usurp the role of Christ.

We know the names of the Apostles and various apostolic representatives, but when we read about the church in Ephesus or Corinth in the Bible, for example, we never hear about "Pastor Smith". Acts 14:23 tells us that Paul and Barnabus appointed elders in every church. The Body of Christ is a fellowship of brothers and sisters with Jesus as the Shepherd and only Lord.

Jesus says in Mark 10:42-45 that leaders in the assembly of believers should be different than leaders in the world. Therefore, as Paul says in Romans 12:2, let us be:

"...not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Let us fellowship in simplicity looking to Jesus as Lord, continuing, "...steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Acts 2:42

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CHURCHIANITY

Dictionary Definition

[Churchianity](#) - [Ecclesiastical](#) - [Sectarian](#) - [Clergy](#) - [Clerical](#) - [Lay](#) - [Parochial](#) - [Profession](#)

Churchianity

Overemphasis on [ecclesiastical](#) and denominational matters in Christianity.

The World Book Dictionary - 1990

The usually excessive or [sectarian](#) attachment to the practices and interests of a particular church [institution - *procinwarn.com editor*].

Merriam-Webster - College Dictionary (online)

Main Entry: **church·i·an·i·ty**

Pronunciation: "ch&r-chE-'a-n&-tE

Function: *noun*

Etymology: *church* + *-ianity* (as in *Christianity*)

Date: 1837

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Ecclesiastical

of or having to do with the church or the [clergy](#); churchly; [clerical](#); not [lay](#): *ecclesiastical courts*.

The World Book Dictionary - 1990

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Sectarian

of, relating to, or characteristic of a sect, limited in character or scope

Main Entry: **¹sec·tar·i·an**

Pronunciation: sek- 'ter-E-&n

Function: *adjective*

Date: 1649

1 : of, relating to, or characteristic of a sect or sectarian

2 : limited in character or scope : [PAROCHIAL](#)

- **sec·tar·i·an·ism** /-E-&-"ni-z&m/ *noun*

Merriam-Webster - College Dictionary (online)

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Clergy

persons ordained for religious work; ministers, [pastors](#), or rectors, priests, and rabbis.

The World Book Dictionary - 1990

Clerical

1. of a clerk or clerks; for clerks: *Keeping records or accounts and typing letters are clerical jobs in an office.* 2. of a clergyman or the clergy: *The minister performed clerical duties in church. The priest wore clerical robes in church.* 3. supporting the power or influence of the clergy in [politics](#).

The World Book Dictionary - 1990

Lay

1. of the people of a church not belonging to the [clergy](#): *The lay preacher this Sunday is a businessman during the week.* 2. of the people who do not belong to a particular [profession](#): *Doctors feel the lay mind understands little of the causes of diseases.*

The World Book Dictionary - 1990

Parochial

confined or restricted as if within the borders of a parish : limited in range or scope

Main Entry: **pa·ro·chi·al**

Pronunciation: p&- 'rO-kE-&l

Function: *adjective*

Etymology: Middle English *parochiall*, from Middle French *parochial*, from Late Latin *parochialis*, from *parochia* parish -- more at PARISH

Date: 14th century

1 : of or relating to a church parish

2 : of or relating to a parish as a unit of local government

3 : confined or restricted as if within the borders of a parish : limited in range or scope (as to a narrow area or region) : **PROVINCIAL, NARROW**

- **pa·ro·chi·al·ly** /-kE-&-lE/ *adverb*

Merriam-Webster - College Dictionary (online)

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Profession

1. an occupation requiring special education, such as law, medicine, teaching, or the ministry. 2 any calling or occupation by which a person habitually earns his living

The World Book Dictionary - 1990

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Questions About

Churchianity vs. The Church

(These are general questions and not meant to be taken personally by any specific organizations or individuals.)

1. Should the life of a congregation of Christians revolve around the [personality of a man](#)?
2. Should [human leaders try to be the Holy Spirit](#) in peoples lives?
3. Should [meetings of believers](#) be productions for spectators to watch?
4. Who is truly [our Pastor](#)? Whose sheep are we?
5. Must a Christian Fellowship be operated like a [business corporation](#)? Must it have a CEO? Must it have assets to acquire and control? Should leaders act like employers? Should Christian brothers be treated like employees?
6. Is frantic, unrelenting activity, [projects, programs](#) necessarily the same thing as Holy Spirit-led ministry?
7. Is [the Church](#) a human organization that must be "controlled" or "operated" or is the Church simply the individuals who belong to Jesus and who are called to be in a relationship with each other?

8. Should there be a [priesthood-class](#) of men over the laity or does the Bible teach the priesthood of all believers?

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The Professional Clergy System

[Who should care about the truth](#)

[When you hear something new](#)

[True New Testament Fellowship is not New](#)

[The Cult of the Clergy](#)

The New Testament does not command the establishment of a Professional Clergy System.

When the Professional Clergy System acts as a priesthood over the laity, as a mediator between God and Man, it is in rebellion against God.

Elders or evangelists receiving support from other believers, in a Biblical way for Biblical purposes, are different issues than the Professional Clergy System.

["Some of my best friends" are Clergymen](#)

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The Cult of the Clergy

[True New Testament Fellowship is not New](#)

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In what ways does the Professional Clergy System act like an Occult Brotherhood?

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Megachurches are not New Testament Assemblies

They are Megabusineses.

A Megachurch is a Circus.

They are almost always (always?) built around
the personality of a man.

[Counterfeit Christs: Is your pastor a one-man show?](#)

I rejoice when Christ is preached, even within a
Megachurch system, which happens in some
Megachurches.

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The Church or the Para-church?

Shouldn't our highest priority, after our personal relationship with Jesus, be **our participation as the Bride of Christ**; the local Ekklesia, the local assembly of Believers?

And shouldn't our priority be to apply everything the New Testament teaches about being **the local assembly** of Believers?

Shouldn't everything else flow from that?

Of course, when I speak of a local assembly of Christ, I'm not referring to the institutional organization - business franchise - "church growth" - Madison Avenue marketing - polished - affectatious - selling-a-product entity that calls itself a church.

Is there any commandment in the New Testament to create "para-church" organizations?

Turning a relationship with Jesus into a career path in an organization is the kind of fleshly ambition that causes many of these organizations to exist. The world of para-churches promotes this kind of worldly thinking: a corporation, career ladder "vision" for life.

A para-church organization will always be led by a hierarchical structure and is likely to be run by a CEO dictator who treats fellow brothers like employees or his personal staff. Of course, in many cases, since para-churches ARE businesses, the brothers ARE employees; the CEO has a personal staff.

Most clergyman, who lead most institutional church systems, cannot operate like a New Testament leader either. The clergy and the para-church leaders come out of the same institutional mind-set. The leader as dictator is from the world. These brothers seem to have no clue that the New Testament teaches that leaders in the Body of Christ are to be servants, not lords; examples, not dictators; and fellow brethren, not an elite class over the rest of us.

The concept of brothers as fellow elders and fellow decision makers is a foreign concept to them.

Some brothers, who have a zeal, might say that the "churches" have failed to minister and therefore I must step out to do what God has called me to do.

Does the end justify the means?

Has not our Lord Jesus already told us the means He has chosen to pursue His ends?

Has not our Lord chosen the Ekklesia of Christ?

Does not the New Testament tell us how the Ekklesia of Christ is to be led and how we are to function?

Shouldn't that be more important than evangelism or feeding the poor or "transforming lives"?

When someone is converted, are they converted into the Ekklesia of Christ or into the Parachurch? Do they become disciples of Jesus or of a para-church guru?

I certainly am not saying that every ministry must be in the context of a program of an (institutional) church.

The brethren come together to edify one another. We minister to the Body of Christ together and as individuals and we minister to the world together and as individuals.

Why can't we be co-workers in Christ, submitting one to another?

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Do Evangelical Christians still witness to anyone?!!!!

I recently became aware of a situation where there had been a number of Christian families in social contact with a Roman Catholic family. When I tried to talk to the father of this family about trusting in Jesus in terms of the Biblical Gospel of grace through faith, it became clear to me that no one had reached out to this man with the Gospel in a way that confronted his lost condition.

[The Good News](#) - [The Evangelical Subculture](#) - [To my Catholic Neighbors](#) - [The Roman Catholic Empire](#) - [The Bahai Faith](#) - ["What Must I Do to be Saved?"](#)

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Building a Building?

1/29/05

[Questions About Churchianity vs. The Church](#)

At the very least, please...

[Church is People](#)

Call it a "building" instead of "[the Church](#)".

[What I Recommend](#)

Call it the "main meeting room" instead of the "sanctuary".

[The "House Church Movement"](#)

And please, please...

[The Manifold Wisdom of God](#)

Don't call the Pastor's office the "Holy of Holies" !!!

[House Church Links](#)

[The Pilgrim Church](#)

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A new [Media Spotlight Report](#)

"The Purpose-Driven Program"

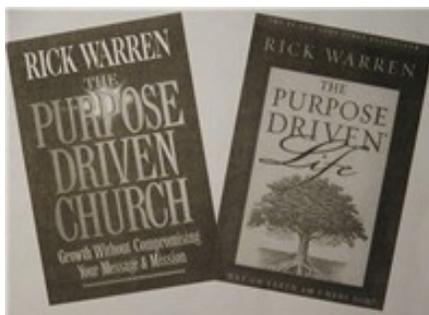
"A Growing Phenomenon in the Churches"

by Al Dager

This article examines the unbiblical nature of Rick Warren's books and programs... along with some of his good points.

"His brand of ministry has been likened to a melding of corporate business sense with spiritual fervor. He has even trademarked the term 'purpose-driven'. Without a doubt, Rick Warren is having the greatest impact upon churches of every theological persuasion since [Promise Keepers](#) first came on the scene in 1991...Easily, this is the most prolific enterprise for church growth that we have seen."

I recommend you request a copy of this report from the [Media Spotlight](#) web site. Use the "contact us" link at the bottom of the left frame on the Media Spotlight site.



You can now view the article on-line at Steve Muse's site: [Easter Regional Watch](#)

[THE PURPOSE-DRIVEN PROGRAM](#)

Also see the Berean Call's resources on this topic: <http://www.thebereancall.org/topics/assets/Purpose%20Driven%20Critique.pdf>

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Why is it that people don't feel like they got their ticket punched unless they've been to a show?

Ticket Punched: A legalistic view of "church service" attendance versus true fellowship among friends in Jesus' name.

Show: A Sunday Morning Production.

[Assemble with the Saints](#) - [What is the Church?](#) - [Meetings of Christians](#) - [Church is People](#) - [What I Recommend](#) - [Questions About Churchianity vs. The Church](#) - [Be the Church](#)

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Women Leaders & Teachers

Consider the women listed below who have been leaders and teachers. Perform an internet search for their names and examine to what degree any of them stood for false gospels and to what degree any of them preached the truth. One is still leading and teaching. What does the New Testament say about women in authority in the Church and women teaching in the Church?

"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety. This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop [elder], he desireth a good work."

1 Timothy 2:11-3:1

"The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that

the word of God be not blasphemed."

Titus 2:3-5

As you read about some of the alleged prophecies of some of these women, consider the following verses:

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son..."

Hebrews 1:1-2

[Mary Baker Eddy](#) - [Ellen G. White](#) - [Aimee Semple McPherson Hutton](#) - [Henrietta Mears](#) - [Kathryn Kuhlman](#) - [A. Wetherell Johnson](#) - [Kay Arthur](#)

[Top of article](#)

1. Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910) Founder, "Church of Christ, Scientist"

"Christian Science" is a form of paganism, not Biblical Christianity. From the official website of the "Church of Christ, Scientist":

"The Church of Christ, Scientist, is designed to make the healing and educational system known as Christian Science available and accessible to everyone. Christian

Science enables us to understand our relationship to a loving God and our relationship to each other. This understanding improves our lives, our communities and the world. The complete explanation of Christian Science, which is practiced by people of all faiths, is contained in the book Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures by Mary Baker Eddy."

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2. Ellen G. White (1827-1915) Founder, Prophetess, Seventh-Day Adventism

Ellen G. White is called "the Lord's messenger" by Seventh-Day Adventism. The following is in the statement of Fundamental Beliefs on the official website of the Seventh-day Adventist Church:

"One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen. G. White . As the Lord's messenger, her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth which provide

for the church
comfort, guidance,
instruction, and
correction. They also
make clear that the
Bible is the standard
by which all teaching
and experience must
be tested. (Joel 2:28,
29; Acts 2:14-21;
Heb. 1:1-3; Rev.
12:17; 19:10.)"

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3. Aimee Semple McPherson Hutton (1890-1944)

Founder, International Church of the Foursquare

Gospel (ICFG)

There are a number of people who are a part of the Foursquare denomination who I greatly love and respect. I rejoice that the real Jesus and the real Gospel are preached by many in the Foursquare assemblies.

Aimee Semple McPherson claimed to have received a vision from God which gave new meaning to Ezekiel's vision. From the official ICFG website:

"The term "Foursquare Gospel" came about during an intense revival in the city of Oakland, California in July 1922. As thousands had gathered to hear the gospel, the evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson described a vision God had given her, taken from

Ezekiel's vision in the book of Ezekiel, chapter one.

"Ezekiel saw the revelation of a totally powerful God. He saw four faces – those of a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle. To Aimee, those four faces were like the four phases of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In the face of the man, she saw Jesus our Savior, the "man of sorrows" (Isaiah 53:3); in the face of the lion, she saw Jesus the mighty Baptizer with the Holy Spirit and fire. In the face of the ox, she saw Jesus the Great Burden-bearer, who Himself took our infirmities and carried our sicknesses. In the face of the eagle, she saw reflected the Coming King – Jesus the Bridegroom, who is returning in power for His bride, the Church. It was a perfect, complete gospel for the body, soul, spirit and eternity. It was a gospel that faces squarely in every direction: thus, the name Foursquare."

The Foursquare "Declaration of Faith" on the ICFG website was written by Aimee Semple McPherson.

Sister Aimee, as she was sometimes called was first married to Robert Semple in 1908 who died soon after they began life on the mission field in China in 1910. She married Harold McPherson in 1912. They were divorced in 1921. Aimee married David Hutton in 1931 and they were divorced in 1934.

Much of Sister Aimee's life was spent as an itinerant evangelist. In 1923 she built "Angelus Temple". She was known for holding "revivals" and incorporating drama and Hollywood-style productions in her meetings of the church she served as pastor.

In 1926 Sister Aimee disappeared for 32 days. She claimed she was kidnapped. Investigative reporters claimed she was having an affair and a grand jury was convened to investigate. The district attorney eventually dropped the charges.

Aimee Semple McPherson Hutton died in 1944 of an overdose of barbiturates. Her son, Rolf K. McPherson, became leader of the Foursquare denomination for 44 years.

On June 3rd, 2004, Jack Hayford was elected president of the ICFG.

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4. Henrietta Mears (1890-1963) Public school teacher & principal, Sunday School & "Christian Education", "Fellowship of the Burning Heart"

The following is from the Gospel

Light publishing company's website:

"The Gospel Light Heritage

Henrietta C. Mears was one of the great Bible teachers of the 20th century. While Christian Education Director at First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood, she built one of the largest Sunday Schools in the world and wrote curriculum that was in such high demand that to publish it she founded Gospel Light in 1933. Such notable Christian leaders as Richard C. Halverson, Luis Evans, Jr. and Bill Bright were among her students. Miss Mears developed "cradle-to-grave" age-appropriate curriculum, published a new style of Vacation Bible School, and lent her support to distributing Gospel materials around the world.

"Gospel Light has expanded into a multi-faceted publisher of fun and creative Sunday School curriculum... , exciting Vacation Bible School programs and inspiring biblical books (Regal). The mission of Gospel Light is still the

same today as it was in
1933: "To know Christ
and to make Him
known."

""There is no magic in
small plans. When I
consider my ministry, I
think of the world.
Anything less than that
would not be worthy of
Christ nor of His will
for my life. " —
Henrietta C. Mears"

The following is from Al Dager's
"Media Spotlight" [articles](#) and and
his book: [The World Christian
Movement - A Great Delusion
Leading to the Religio-Political
State of the Anti-Christ](#)

Dr. Henrietta Mears:

Director of Christian
Education at Hollywood
First Presbyterian
Church in Hollywood,
California (1928).

Founded the Forest
Home Christian
Conference Center in
the San Bernardino
Mountains of Southern
California.

Founded Gospel Light
Press, now Gospel
Light Publishing,
including Regal Books.

"Mears became famous for developing
Sunday School curricula, much of

which is still in use today. Among her admirers she was dubbed "Mother of Sunday School." Her methods, revolutionary at the time, included the use of pictures to portray Bible stories, and the assignment of students into grades."

She incorporated many public school concepts and priorities and attitudes into "Christian Education".

"Born to wealthy parents in Fargo, North Dakota, October 23, 1890, Henrietta exhibited at an early age a remarkable intelligence and a desire to know God. At age 11 she taught her first Sunday school class to beginners at the Berean Mission in Minneapolis. She became a student of Bible, earned a degree in chemistry, and was a teacher and principle in public school systems as a young woman. Her teaching methods were used to a great extent in formulating her revolutionary approach to Sunday school."

From Al Dager's analysis of Henrietta Mears' influence on Evangelicalism, he writes: "Today we have women's ministries to teach women the Bible, and we have Sunday school to teach the children, but little if any biblical discipleship for men."

"Henrietta Mears was completely sold out to what she called "the Cause of Christ." By "the Cause of Christ." she meant winning the world to Christ and establishing Christianity as the guiding force in society through evangelization of the world."

"Mears established the Fellowship of

the Burning Heart, wherein she encouraged her students to be willing to die for "the Cause of Christ." She laid her hands on them to receive her mantle. Thus they received within themselves a "burning heart."

The Vision: Dr. Mears claims to have received a vision from God, that Al Dager quotes in reference to, from a biography: Dream Big: The Henrietta Mears Story by Earl Roe.

Present when the vision was given was Richard C. Halverson, Louis H. Evans, Jr., John L. Franck, and William R. (Bill) Bright.

Quoting from the biography:

"Then,
the fire
from
heaven
fell, for
God
answered
their
prayer
with a
very real
vision.
Before
them,
they saw
the
college
campuses
of the
world,
teeming
with

unsaved
students
who held
in their
hands the
power to
change
the world.
Yes, the
college
campuses-
they were
the key to
world
leadership,
to world
revival."

"Theirs
was a
world to
conquer
for
Christ,
and the
time for
conquest
was now!"

Al Dager, says, "Mears
and her charges saw the
college campuses as the
key to world revival. In
order to accomplish
this, it would be
necessary to anoint
"accepted evangelists"-
men and women who
had Mears's vision to
"win the world to
Christ.""

Some famous Evangelicals influenced
by Henrietta Mears: Bill Bright of
Campus Crusade for Christ, Jim

Rayburn of Young Life, Richard Halverson, Senate Chaplain, Louis Evans, Jr. of the Hollywood Group, and Billy Graham who was prayed over to receive the "mantle" of D.R. Riley, Henrietta Mears's pastor.

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5. Kathryn Kuhlman (1907-1976) Evangelist, Healer, The Kathryn Kuhlman Foundation

Kathryn Kuhlman died on February 20th, 1976. I became a follower of Jesus later that summer. As a new Christian I would hear her on the radio from time to time. I don't remember knowing that she had already gone to be with the Lord. I remember falling in love with her as a sister in the Lord, and I was encouraged by her words.

But, in spite of that, it's still important to evaluate what's Biblical and what's not. Of course the Lord uses all of us as imperfect vessels. Of course the Lord turns even bad things for good. But that is not an endorsement of everything He uses! I rejoice when Christ is preached but we still must judge things according to the Bible in these perilous times!

From the official web site of the Kathryn Kuhlman Foundation:

"It was on July 4, 1948 that the first Kathryn Kuhlman "miracle service" was held at Carnegie Hall, North Side - the first of many such services to be held

regularly over the years of her ministry in Pittsburgh. Kathryn Kuhlman moved from Franklin, Pennsylvania to Pittsburgh, after the roof of Faith Temple in Sugar Creek (where she had been conducting services since 1947) fell in under the weight of the greatest snowfall in area history on Thanksgiving Day, 1950. And it was in 1954 that she founded The Kathryn Kuhlman Foundation.

"Kathryn Kuhlman was once asked, "What do you regard as the ultimate goal of your ministry?" To which she replied: "MY PURPOSE IS THE SALVATION OF SOULS. Divine healing is secondary to the transformation of a life. Today, that is still the PURPOSE of The Kathryn Kuhlman Foundation, as we continue to minister to the needs of people in this country and abroad through the outreaches of the Foundation.

"Kathryn Kuhlman was born-again at the age of fourteen in the Methodist Church of Concordia, Missouri. In

her own words, she said of that experience and her ministry: "It was the beginning of something that changed my whole life. All that I knew was the glorious new birth experience, and (as a young girl) when I went to preach to those farmers in Idaho, I could tell them nothing more than what I had experienced: that Jesus would forgive their sins. So, I preached salvation all across Idaho to every farmer, to everyone who would listen; but gradually I began to realize there was someone besides the Father and the Son - there was this Third Person of the Trinity. I felt compelled to know more regarding Him and, as I began searching and studying God's Word, I could see that divine healing also was in the atonement.""

From the "Billy Graham Center" archives comes this portion of a biography of Kathryn Kuhlman:

"In 1937, Kuhlman met evangelist Burroughs A. Waltrip, who had been invited to preach at the Denver tabernacle. Waltrip and Kuhlman formed a professional alliance which later led

to their marriage. It also resulted in the deterioration of Kuhlman's ministry in Denver and Waltrip's in Mason City, Iowa. The central issue was the fact that Waltrip had left his children and wife in Texas and was shortly afterward divorced by her.

Gulliford resigned her post over the issue, and Kuhlman's business manager and substitute preacher, speaking on behalf of the congregation, informed her that she would no longer be welcome in Denver. Despite the urgings of friends and the congregation, Kuhlman and Waltrip married in 1938.

Shortly afterward they established their base at the Radio Chapel in Mason City, where the news of Waltrip's divorce had not spread. Waltrip's supporters in Mason City eventually learned of his divorce and drifted away from his ministry as well. He and Kuhlman thereafter left Mason City and traveled throughout the country, although their ministry was held at a virtual standstill by the fact that they could not contain the news about

their past. Having been married six years, Kuhlman finally left Waltrip in 1944 and in 1948 Waltrip divorced Kuhlman."

The following is from a biography of Kathryn Kuhlman on the "Marilyn Hickey Ministries" website. Is this article trying to justify Kuhlman's divorce?

"Waltrip divorced his wife and abandoned his two young sons shortly after meeting Kathryn. He moved to Iowa, started a radio program and church, and kept his past a secret. When he and Kathryn married on October 18, 1938, she gave up her church in Denver and tried preaching at revivals around the Midwest. Her attempts to preach were thwarted, however, when church leaders discovered her past and asked her to leave.

"Kathryn's rejections made her realize she could not preach and remain married to a scandalously divorced man. She decided to leave Waltrip in 1944. Kathryn said she died to the flesh that day and put aside the desires of her heart so she could

fully serve God."

6. A. Wetherell Johnson (1907-1984) Bible Study Fellowship
7. Kay Arthur (1933-) [Precept Ministries](#)

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Restoration Movements

Mormons

"Church of Christ"

Shepherding Movement

Avoid Prideful Crusades

Restore a Right Relationship

When you see the term "Restoration Movement", it's usually a tip off to an unbiblical organization or doctrine. I have seen a few brothers-in-Christ, who are mostly sound, use the term "restoration" to describe what they stand for, but I would rather they didn't use the term. I don't believe that just the use of the term makes a person or group corrupt. But I do recommend examining closely (as always!) what they claim to be restoring.

Mormons

Mormons, for example, claim to be restoring the only true Church. They claim that until the 1830s, there had been no true Church on the earth since a falling away in the first century. But the religious system they "restore" is based on ancient occult doctrine and rituals that have no basis in the Bible! They teach that each person can eternally progress to godhood!

"Church of Christ"

The "non-denominational" denomination called the "Church of Christ" claims that theirs is a "restoration movement". Also started in the 1800s, their movement claims to be restoring "primitive Christianity"... true first century New Testament Christianity. Sounds good at first, until you realize that their religious system is every bit as institutional as any other

denomination. And they are often steeped in legalism. Many of them refuse to allow instrumental music. Some of them teach that you are not saved until you're baptized. And you must be baptized by one of their ministers.

Shepherding Movement

The "Shepherding Movement" or "New Wine" of the 1970s and 80s also billed itself as a "restoration movement". It was guilty of great excesses in the name of "discipleship" with leaders who lorded it over the people, with "translocal authority" and hierarchies. It was closely associated with the Kingdom Now - Dominion movements who advocated (and still do advocate) a "take over the world for Christendom" mentality. They were also associated with "Bible Accountability Group" concepts of the "Coalition On Revival" (COR) and they were loosely associated with the Reconstructionist Movement.

Avoid Prideful Crusades

We ought to avoid the prideful crusade attitude of "movements" seeking to take over the world or Christendom with religious agendas. With Jesus as our sovereign Lord and his Holy Spirit in charge of the true Church of Jesus, we can trust him and be content in doing the simple callings of evangelism, making disciples, fellowshiping in his name, ministering to the needy, and contending for the faith. We don't need to take upon our shoulders the burden of changing the world or reforming Christendom. We can simply proclaim the Truth to whoever will listen and leave the results in God's hands.

Restore a Right Relationship

What each of us are called to "restore" is a right relationship with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We are called to fellowship in Jesus' name with one another in accordance with the New Testament. For 2000 years there has been a remnant chosen by grace who have done just that. Each generation of believers has been accountable to Jesus and his Word, the Bible, to follow him and fellowship as the Body of Christ. The previous generation made disciples of the next, but each generation has been accountable to the Lord; not to the last generation, or the last century, or the first century, or any traditions of men, or any organization, institution, or "restoration movement".

Like I said at the start, not everyone who uses the term "restoration" is necessarily unbiblical. I just think it is unnecessary, and I would rather they not because of the

association of that term with the Mormons, the "Church of Christ", and the Shepherding Movement.

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Dave Hunt Refutes Calvinism. Calvinists Refute Dave Hunt.

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Author and Lecturer: Dave Hunt

A centuries old debate about the sovereignty of God versus human responsibility (or free will) is being renewed as the result of a new book by Dave Hunt and the response by a number of Calvinists. I'm concerned about possible divisiveness among many people I respect who will advocate differing views in this discussion.

Dave Hunt has been important in my own life. As I say on my [links page](#):

"The Lord used Dave Hunt's ministry to rescue me first from "motivational training" and "human potential" deceptions, and then later from "Christian activism" and the "Coalition On Revival". It was through this ministry that I learned the importance of following the Lord Jesus, alone, and not "gurus"; and about comparing EVERYTHING to God's Word as the standard of Truth."

My Own Examination of These Issues

My own examination of these issues began in 1982. It was then I discovered that the newly ordained clergyman, who was leading the small fellowship we were attending, was secretly teaching some of the people that God did not know the future with a certainty and that God changes his mind. I had been a Christian about six years and was very ignorant of many of the historic controversies within Christian theology. I knew enough to realize that this was contrary to my understanding of what the Bible teaches about the foreknowledge and omniscience of God. Through this discovery I became aware of Charles Finney's "[Moral Government](#)" theology and a number of authors and teachers of Moral Government and their influence on several youth-oriented organizations. Much of the extreme version of these teachings taught

the "limited foreknowledge" of God and an emphasis on Holiness that effectively taught a salvation by works. This movement was rooted in a hyper-Arminianism that was reacting to what it saw as the evils of Calvinism. Through my research in response to this Moral Government movement, I came to have a much deeper appreciation of the sovereignty of God and the doctrine of grace. I never had a desire to call myself a "Calvinist" but I was much more likely to emphasize sovereignty and grace than before.

To this day I am not interested in jumping on anyone's bandwagon. And I certainly don't want to be identified by a man's name, other than Jesus. I don't want to be a Calvinist or a Lutheran or an Arminian or dispensationalist or preterist, etc. It may sound naive or simplistic or reductionist, but I really want to just be a follower of Jesus who rightly divides the plain meaning of scripture. Theological bandwagons can easily become idolatrous crusades for zealots who now go to their movements' creeds and gurus for their standard of truth instead of God's Word.

I have never wanted to reduce the Word of God into trite phrases such as, "Once saved always saved" or "You can lose your salvation".

I am content to proclaim both Romans 9 and Romans 10:

"What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Romans 9:14-18

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Romans 10:13

I've had this conversation, about God's sovereignty and human responsibility, so many times with Christians over the years and I think I can recognize when someone is wrestling with the issues of God's Sovereignty and human responsibility in good faith, as opposed to someone who ends up in heresy in either the direction of hyper-Calvinism or hyper-Arminianism. I have seen some who as hyper-Calvinists turn humans into robots or who preach easy-believism, sloppy agape, anything goes. And I have also seen hyper-Arminians who teach that God doesn't know the future and a false gospel of works.

As the next chapter of this debate unfolds, time will tell if people are driven to the Word of God with a sincere desire for Truth or whether they just pick sides and parrot their gurus' words and

party lines. I'm sure Satan would love to try to play both sides like he does with every worldly conflict. Below are excerpts of how this controversy is developing.

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Dave Hunt's Book

Dave Hunt, author, lecturer, and publisher of the Newsletter, "The Berean Call", has written several articles during the last two years refuting Calvinism. His next book is titled: What Love is This? - Calvinism's Misrepresentation of God. A description from the Berean Call website (<http://www.thebereancall.org>) reads:

"It is imperative that one's belief about God be true to the Scriptures, God's only written revelation concerning Himself, since our beliefs affect everything from how we relate to Him and what He expects of us, to where we will spend eternity. In this latest book by Dave Hunt, Calvinism is examined from the time of the Reformation to its rather aggressive resurgence today. Not all Calvinists hold to all the basic tenets of this theology, yet each point says something significant about the character of God and His gospel."

In the February 2001 issue of the "Berean Call" newsletter, Dave wrote:

"Luther wrote The Bondage of the Will to prove that the very idea of man's free will is a fallacy and an illusion. In fact, Bondage is full of fallacies, both logical and biblical, which I point out in Sovereignty, Mercy, and Love [I think this title became "What Love is This?" - editor, procinwarn.com], my book in defense of God's character, currently in process of publication. Calvin states no less dogmatically than Luther that foreknowledge leaves no room whatsoever for free will. Period. We are astonished that Calvin repeatedly makes fallacious, unbiblical statements; and doubly astounded that so many leading evangelicals continue to praise him for being so logical and such a great exegete. If God cannot know by His foreknowledge what every person will think and do by their free will, then He is not God. Moreover, the fact that God is able to allow man freedom of choice while still effecting His eternal purposes unhindered is all the more glorifying to His sovereign wisdom, power and foreknowledge."

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Rob Schläpfer and the Calvinists' Response

Some of the response to Dave Hunt's writings can be viewed at Rob Schläpfer's website, <http://>

www.whatloveisthis.com which was created specifically to refute Hunt's book. Rob Schläpfer is a friendly brother with whom I have briefly corresponded. He is the founder of the Christian Counterculture Project (<http://www.christiancounterculture.net/>). On one of Rob's websites he offers a free copy of James R. White's book, The Potter's Freedom, to anyone who sends in the cover of Dave Hunt's book! In a recent issue of his email newsletter, "The Discerning Reader", Rob writes:

"In the past few weeks we have gotten numerous email messages from people concerning our May Issue on "The Doctrines of Grace." While most have been extremely positive, a number of our subscribers are "alarmed" that we have a "Calvinist Slant." Others have warned us against publishing our pending review of Dave Hunt's new book, What Love Is This: Calvinism's Misunderstanding of God [sic] as it would represent a vicious "attack" on this humble servant of God. (See the upcoming issue of our [Christian Counterculture](#) newsletter.) We seem to be heading "carelessly into controversy" -- as one subscriber put it.

"With that in mind, I hope those of you with such concerns might indulge me a few moments of your time to clarify what we intend in our effort here. To that end, I have included (see below) my response to a particular email that came our way this evening. It is typical of the many we have received expressing "concern" -- although, much shorter.... (and kinder!)"

Later in the same email Rob continues:

"We are promoting "the doctrines of grace" during May because

"(1) The new James Boice book is a major title that we felt was important to promote at this time. In addition to providing an outstanding (and accurate) description of "Calvinism" , it does an excellent job speaking to much of the "ugliness" that goes on in Calvinist circles. [Our lead article in the Christian Counterculture newsletter on Calvinism did the same. "The Practical Implications of Calvinism" is a rebuke to arrogant, "Calvinism-centric" Reformed types who go on and on about these matters -- as if there were nothing more important.... we have no patience for that. We should be consumed with Christ -- not Calvin. (In fact, Calvin is a good example for us to follow here!)

"(2) Dave Hunt has released a book to "fight Calvinism" (his words, not mine) which is such a distortion of both Scripture and historic fact that we felt a "prophylactic" was in order. We fear this book is only going to stir up more "ugliness" in the Christian community, as people reading it imbibe Hunt's slanderous rhetoric and further divide the collective body of Christ. (We have launched a web site to show how he misrepresents Reformed Theology: <http://>

www.whatloveisthis.com. "We report, you decide.")"

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Some Words for a really nice

[Hyper-Preterist](#)

I do appreciate being able to learn about your branch of [preterism](#). I'm sure that our Lord Jesus will use this for good regardless of how much validity it may or may not have.

Genesis through Revelation, 66 books written by multiple people over 1500 years, is God's complete and unique written communication with humans. In it is a perspective of reality that only the Creator of the Universe could provide, as opposed to some human writing a book that he claims is cosmic and from god. That unique perspective of reality, in the Bible, includes a global perspective of people: all nations, tribes, and tongues; an all encompassing analysis of the human condition and commandments for governing every area of human existence; and an overall outline of the history of creation and human history from creation to New Heaven & New Earth. Genesis through Revelation is about Jesus from eternity to eternity.

Most certainly God's perspective is not our perspective; His ways are not our ways; His understanding is beyond our understanding. 2 Peter 3 speaks that, to our Lord, a day is like a 1000 years and 1000 years is like a day.

It is clear to me that when Peter explained the events of Pentecost to the observers; he said that these events were the fulfillment of the Prophet Joel's words about the last days. The last days had begun. For the 2000 years since, that same political, economic, and religious system that crucified Jesus has been preparing the world for a counterfeit Christ. Nothing could be clearer to me than that the whole world is prepared for a universal religious vision built on Self and the lie of the Garden of Eden and the vision of the Tower of Babel. And like in the time of Noah, every inclination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil all the time.

Just like there is no hope for the "flesh" of a man, but rather it must die and that man must be born again of the Spirit; similarly, there is no hope for this world system. It must be destroyed and created anew as a New Heaven and New Earth.

["The Last Days"](#)

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Biblical Encouragement

This world system wants to give you false philosophies and techniques for "motivation" and success and happiness and reaching your potential and "achieving your dreams".

But what does the Bible teach?

*Biblical encouragement is telling one another,
"Jesus loves you"... and all that means.*

*All the motivation I need, is to know that the
Creator of the Universe loves me and wants to use
me for His purposes.*

*I don't deserve God's love. I am not worthy of His
love.*

I don't know why Jesus loves me... He just does!

**But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest
any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.**

Hebrews 3:13

Encourage your children.

Encourage your spouse.

Encourage one another.

All of life's problems come down to not trusting Jesus Christ
or not obeying Jesus Christ.

[Techniques and the Wisdom of Man](#)

[Confronting "Motivational" Training Programs](#)

Some examples of unbiblical philosophies & techniques: _

[Transcendental Management](#) - [Share and Network](#) - [Global Transformation](#) - [High Touch Need](#) -
[Look "Within"](#) - [Deep Breathing and Visualization](#) - "[Explain How the Subconscious Mind Works!](#)" - "[Your Subconscious Mind is Programmed in Two Ways](#)"

Facing up to the fact that we're deceived: _

[The Human Potential Movement](#) - [A State Religion?](#) - [Humanistic & Transpersonal Psychology 1 of 2](#) - [The False Gospel of Self Esteem](#) - [Questions for Christians about Psychology](#)

[Abide in the Vine](#) - [Walking in the Spirit](#)

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Weddings

When a man and a woman commit their lives together as one before our Lord, it can be an opportunity for great blessing in the fellowship of the Body of Christ. The saints can gather in a home or a park or a building of convenient size in order to encourage the couple and to exhort them and bear one another's burdens together and to be witnesses to their commitment and to celebrate a joyous occasion with gratitude to our Lord. The focus can be on the Lord Jesus Christ, the man and woman to be wed, and the Bride of Christ with whom they belong. Parents of the couple can take part in the reading of scripture and praying and exhorting and encouraging. Others in the fellowship can also serve and participate. There can be music and singing and flowers and beauty and rejoicing.

- [*For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.*](#)
- [*There was a marriage in Cana of Galilee.*](#)
- [*He that hath the bride is the bridegroom.*](#)
- [*Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.*](#)

In the world and among religious systems there are so many traditions associated with weddings. So much money (thousands of dollars), are spent for lavish weddings. Even the not-so-lavish ceremonies can be expensive. For the followers of Jesus there is no requirement to "break the bank" for a wedding! Why are there such worldly, ritualistic traditions surrounding weddings? Why are people convinced that they must have such an expensive, public spectacle? Is it fleshly pride? Do we just not know any better? Is this what it takes to "make a memory"? Perhaps we're desiring to "be all things to all people", with our relatives in mind. So, how should we best be a witness to others as we gather for this wedding?

Usually, by tradition, there is a clergyman who presides. And it's often the clergyman who is the center of attention when it should be the couple getting married! There is no Biblical requirement for a wedding to be presided over by a clergyman and there's no requirement for the ceremony to be held in a "church building". The way the civil government system is set up

in this country (in Washington State), a couple must get a marriage license which then must be signed by an agent of the government: a clergyman or a judge. For followers of Jesus who fellowship in house churches without a professional clergy, there must be various ways to comply with Caesar's law. But at the very least, Caesar's law could be complied with in front of Caesar's representative, for example a judge, and then the couple could have their wedding with the Body of Christ.

According to God's Word, a wedding ceremony is not a "sacrament" or a "means of grace". It is not a religious ritual that requires a priest/clergyman. A wedding is a public commitment to Jesus Christ and before the witness of his people. It is a family affair. Since, the Bible does not tell followers of Jesus how we should conduct our weddings, we have great freedom. We even have freedom to follow the traditions of the world if we want, as long they don't violate some other clear teaching of scripture, and as long as our motivations are Love and Truth. But, we also have the freedom to NOT follow the traditions of the world.

I certainly don't intend to force my convictions upon my daughters and son and their spouses. But I will advise and advocate because that's part of my calling as a father and a member of the Body of Christ. Let each of us seek to please the Lord, and to encourage and exhort and rejoice with the Bride and Bridegroom.

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"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband." (Ephesians 5:31-33)

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"And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. And there were set there six water pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and

knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.” (John 2:1-11)

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“John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease.” (John 3:27-30)

“And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.” (Revelation 19:9)

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Matthew 18: "If your brother sins against you."

Verses 15-17

Notice that these verses never mention a clergyman, a board of directors, the elders, or anyone in leadership. Jesus is speaking to just regular Christians as individuals and as the Church.

Jesus said:

1. Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.
2. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.
3. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church:
4. But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

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Pastors

Do you know how many times the word "pastor" shows up in the New Testament (KJV)?

Zero.

How many times does the word "pastors" appear in the New Testament (KJV)? Just once! In Ephesians 4:11.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, **pastors** and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Ephesians 4:11-17

Only once does the word, "pastors" appear in the New Testament, and yet look how central the "office" of "Pastor" is in the modern Catholic, Protestant, and Evangelical subcultures!

The Greek word in Ephesians 4:11 translated, "pastors", is "poimen" which means shepherd. All of the other uses of that Greek word in the New Testament are translated, "shepherd" or "shepherds". All of these instances either refer to literal shepherds or to Jesus as our shepherd:

For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the **Shepherd** and Bishop of your souls.

1 Peter 2:25

When thinking of the term, "pastor", most professing Christians have come to think of a professional clergyman who [rules over the congregation](#) and is "[The Teacher](#)" who primarily does the teaching for the congregation. Most people address this man as "Pastor" or "Pastor Smith" or "Reverend Smith" or "My Pastor".

But no where in the New Testament is there taught the concept of a professional clergyman or a professional clergy system!

And no where is there taught in the New Testament the concept of one man called a "pastor" being hired to rule over a congregation and serve as the primary teacher.

The New Testament teaches that [overseers/elders](#) are to serve as leaders in the [Body of Christ](#). And both Paul and Peter exhort them to shepherd the flock. It is the overseers/elders who are to pastor the flock. There is not some other office called "pastor" that is distinct from the overseers/elders!

If the concept of the office of pastor being a professional clergyman, different from the elders, did not come from the Bible... where did it come from? It was inherited in the reformation from the Roman Catholic religious system.... the priesthood class of Catholicism.

This unbiblical concept of "pastor" has done immeasurable damage to the life and maturity of the Body of Christ and has served to separate the brethren into "laymen" and the [elite priesthood class](#) of the clergy. I'm not saying that the Lord has not used men who are part of the

professional clergy system. I have seen many who are clearly called to be overseers to help shepherd the flock and who are precious brothers in the Lord. But I believe God uses them in spite of the religious system, not because of it. And I believe this concept of pastor as clergyman is being used to build [religious systems](#) in the last days that are preparing the world for the [counterfeit Christ](#).

I exhort followers of the Lord Jesus to [be the Church](#); to fellowship in terms of the simple teachings of the New Testament, serving one another in love; not lording it over one another from the position of "clergy" OR elder.

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Who Should Lead in the Body of Christ? - Commentary

Please let me raise the issue of who should lead in the Body of Christ. This is another crucial question to see what the New Testament says as opposed to how we have been conditioned by the traditions of this world system.

The New Testament tells us the church is to be led by "elders" or "overseers" (same thing)... and notice that this is plural. There is no teaching in the New Testament that a congregation is to be led by one dictator who is the center of attention, and the life of the Christians revolve around his personality. That is not taught in the New Testament, and yet that is the pattern in the vast majority of religious system organizations.

Look what Acts 14:23 says:

"And when they had ordained them **elders in every church**, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed."

Acts 14:23

Every church had elders. That is every local assembly had elders. The New Testament never mentions anything about "clergymen" or appointing one clergyman over each congregation. It says elders... plural.

Next, when it comes to the question who should "pastor" the flock:
Look at
what Paul says to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:28:

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock,
over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you **overseers**,
to **feed the church** of God, which he hath purchased with
his own blood."

Acts 20:28

Paul is calling to the elders to shepherd the flock. He didn't say there
was
a separate office called "Pastor" that is different from elders. He told
the
elders to pastor the flock.

Look at what Peter says to the elders:

"The **elders** which are among you I exhort, who am also
an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and
also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: **Feed
the flock** of God which is among you, taking the
oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for
filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; **Neither as being lords**
over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. And
when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a
crown of glory that fadeth not away."

1 Peter 5:1-4

And this is key, because a committee of dictators is no better than one
Celebrity Dictator! Peter says to the elders: don't be Lords over your
fellow Christians. So, somehow, leadership in the Church must be
different
than the worldly Lords. See what the Lord Jesus says:

"But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles **exercise lordship over them**; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. **But so shall it not be among you**: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Mark 10:42-45

There should be multiple Brothers-in-Christ who should serve as overseers in each assembly... and NONE of them should attempt to act as a Lord over anyone else. This all comes down to trusting in the Holy Spirit to rule in each other's hearts.

Do you see this teaching in scripture? Do you see any other teaching in the New Testament different from this? [Let me know.](#)

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Who should lead in the Body of Christ? - Scriptures

And when they had ordained them **elders in every church**, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

Acts 14:23

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made **you overseers**, to **feed the church of God**, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Acts 20:28

The **elders which are among you** I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: **Feed the flock of God** which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; **Neither as being lords** over God's heritage, but being **examples to the flock**. And when the **chief Shepherd** shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

1 Pet 5:1-4

But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise **lordship over them**; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. **But so shall it not be among you**: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Mark 10:42-45

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Elders in the Church

But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise **lordship over them**; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Mark 10:42-45

Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: Which also they did, and sent it to the **elders** by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Acts 11:29-30

And when they had ordained them **elders in every church**, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

Acts 14:23

When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and **elders** about this question.

Acts 15:2

And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called **the elders of the church**.

Acts 20:17

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to **feed the church of God**, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Acts 20:28

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and **ordain elders in every city**, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; **not self-willed**, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose **mouths must be stopped**, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

Titus 1:5-11

This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he **desireth a good work**. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to **rule** his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

1 Timothy 3:1-7

Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

Hebrews 13:17

Is any sick among you? let him **call for the elders of the church**; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord...

James 5:14

The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: **Feed the flock of God** which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; **Neither as being lords** over God's heritage, but being **examples to the flock**. And when the **chief Shepherd** shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

1 Peter 5:1-4

Let the elders that **rule** well be counted **worthy of double honor**, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his reward. Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three

witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

1 Timothy 5:17-20

Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called **Rabbi**: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your **father** upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called **masters**: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

Matthew 23:1-12

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Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.

Deut 25:4

The above words of God spoken through Moses are quoted twice in the New Testament: [1 Corinthians 9:9](#) and [1 Timothy 5:18](#).

In Matthew 10, Jesus sends out the twelve to preach the Gospel:

These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: **for the workman is worthy of his meat.**

Matt 10:5-10

In Luke 10, Jesus sends out seventy disciples to preach the Gospel. Jesus told them not to be burdened by provisions but to trust God for support from the hosts in whose homes they stayed:

And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: **for the laborer is worthy of his hire.** Go not from house to house.

Luke 10:7

Support for Evangelists

For it is written in the law of Moses, **Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.** Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.

1 Corinthians 9:1-10

Paul, as an Apostle, a missionary, an evangelist, is saying that it is reasonable for brothers and sisters in Christ to provide physical support for him. He quotes Moses' words showing that God intended them to be symbolic, not literally out of concern for the oxen, but out of concern for those who minister on behalf of God. Paul goes on to say

If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? **Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.** But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void. For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me. What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel. For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

1 Corinthians 9:11-19

Paul says in verse 14, above, that Jesus, "ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." Paul could be referring to Jesus' words in sending out the twelve, "for the workman is worthy of his meat", and his sending out the seventy, "for the laborer is worthy of his hire".

Again, Paul, as an Apostle, a missionary, an evangelist, is saying that those who are SENT OUT to preach the Gospel, to be missionaries and evangelists; these should live from the Gospel. They should receive support from God's people for the purpose of furthering the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Honor for Elders

In 1 Timothy 5, Paul writes about Elders (presbuteros) who rule well be given "double honor":

Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, **Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.** And, **The laborer is worthy of his reward.**

1 Tim 5:17-18

And to justify the double honor to these brothers who are elders, Paul quotes both Deuteronomy 25:4 and (apparently) Luke 10:7.

It may be that, in this case, the double honor is figuratively being likened to food and monetary support. This section of scripture does not expressly refer to physical support.

It is possible that the double honor does include food and monetary reward.

Good things for Teachers

Paul says in Galatians:

Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

Gal 6:6

The Greek word translated "communicate" is koinoneo, which means to share with others (from Strongs). And what Christians are to share with teachers are "all good things". This can mean that we are to share the benefits we gain from the truth that teachers teach us; the fruit, the encouragement, the fellowship of our lives. It can also mean that we are to share food and support and the benefits of living, with our teachers.

The above scriptures that deal with evangelists, elders, and teachers are often read with the previous indoctrination of institutionalism and the professional clergy system in mind. Because of the indoctrination of the traditions of men, we read the above scriptures and just assume that they are talking about a system of paid professional clergymen.

But none of these scriptures are talking about a professional clergy system! No where in the New Testament is there taught that the Body of Christ should set up a system of professional clergy!

It's important to realize that when the Bible is talking about evangelists, it's talking about just plain brothers-in-Christ who are called and equipped and used by God to preach the Gospel to the unsaved, to be missionaries among the pagans. When the Bible refers to elders, it's referring to brothers-in-Christ who are called and equipped and used by the Lord Jesus Christ to oversee a congregation of believers. And when teachers are referred to, these are just brothers who are used by God to open the scriptures to others; to encourage others to be Bereans; to help others to study the Word for themselves; to help others to understand the Bible.

None of these are referring to professional clergy. Even if [1 Timothy 5:17-18](#) is referring to monetary "double honor" it is not teaching a professional clergy system.

And realize that some are called to be evangelists, some elders, some teachers. But the same brother who serves in one capacity may or may not serve in the other capacities.

The support and the benefits that evangelists or elders or teachers are to receive from the Body of Christ are to be given to WHO EVER serves in these capacities and has nothing to do with whether they are "ordained" clergy or "just laymen". In the New Testament there are no such distinctions.

May the Lord Jesus set us free from the traditions of men and the way in which these traditions pervert our understanding of God's Word. May we be set free to encourage one another according to the words of these scriptures!

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Young Christian Women Dressing Like J. Lo and Beyonce

Why? Who we trying to impress?
Why are you showing off your body?

Now, I truly respect those who don't even know who the above celebrities are. But people like these celebrities appear to have a serious influence on professing Christian young women.

Tight tops, tight pants, short skirts...
Why not just attend fellowship meetings in your underwear?

Why do you WANT to look like a prostitute?

What constitutes modest dress is a disputable matter among followers of Jesus. I have no authority to force my convictions on anyone. I don't want to, because I don't want to be a pharisee.

So how do we deal with this issue? I don't want to destroy friendships by their perceiving that I'm laying my "legalism" on them. But, somehow we must examine these things together!

I am no goody-good myself. But I pray that I can properly represent my Lord and I want to please Jesus in

everything I do, think, or say.

Young sisters, won't you please consider these concerns about tight tops, tight pants, and short skirts? Fathers and young husbands, don't you have the courage to speak up to your wife and daughters? Mothers and young wives, won't you submit to your husband and won't you have the courage to speak to your daughters?

We are the Bride of Christ, NOT the Whore of Babylon!

[Why are Homosexuality, Fornication, Harlotry, and Adultery Sin?](#)

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"Some of my best friends" are clergymen...

Some of the men I have respected most have been clergymen. I do not support the concept of a professional clergy system, but I do love and appreciate many who might be considered clergy. Not all clergymen are truly elders/pastors, called of God. Many clergymen have not really even believed in the real Jesus in terms of the real Gospel.

There are other brothers who have desired to minister within the churchianity but not of the churchianity. They've gone the route of ordination and maybe seminary, but they minister as true brothers, not as part of the elite priesthood ruling over the "laity".

All should recognize, also, that there are many brothers who have never been "ordained", who clearly are not clergymen, but who have been called by God and who currently serve as elder/pastor and/or teacher with at least as much validity as any clergyman.

I support the freedom of an assembly to provide financial support for one or more of their elders. It's not required in scripture and it's not prohibited. This freedom has nothing to do with a professional clergy system.

I've lost a number of friends and co-workers in Christ to the professional clergy system. It doesn't have to be that way. Many brothers who have a zeal and dedication for the Gospel and for making disciples and for edifying the Bride of Christ think they must naturally go on to become a professional clergyman. But it doesn't have to be that way. Mothers, don't let your children grow up to be clergymen!

There is no greater calling than to simply be a brother in Christ who desires to serve God and serve people.

"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." 1 Timothy 3:1

There is no greater calling than to simply be a brother willing to lead and set an example, whether as an elder who helps to shepherd the flock, or an evangelist willing to live from the Gospel in a foreign land; or a brother willing to serve as a deacon, or who simply works for a living, functions as a father and husband, and fellowships with the Body of Christ.

There are many brothers, some clergy, some not, who have had a major impact in my life, for whom I am grateful to our Lord for their example and ministry and service.

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"Church" as Business Franchise

Who profits?

What are the products?

Who are the customers?

Who are the salesmen?

What is the business model?

What are the brand names?

What does the Bible say?

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It is wrong for a man to turn the fellowship of the saints into a religious system that revolves around himself.

It is wrong for a man to consider himself a dictator over a congregation of Christians.

It is wrong to create a totalitarian system where there is no freedom to differ and to discuss important things as Bereans.

We are called to be brothers and sisters in Christ, not followers of an earthly king.

[Cult Isolation Techniques](#)

Does the clergyman who rules over your church induce your wife or your children to have an emotional attachment to him with a blind emotional loyalty that causes them to become defensive at the slightest hint of criticism of their Pastor? I would be concerned about this. It is cult-like for your wife to respect and admire this man more than her own husband.

It is adulterous and idolatrous for your wife to be so emotionally attached to this man. It is wrong for a clergyman to usurp the role of husband in the lives of the women of the congregation. It is wrong for a clergyman to usurp the role of loving and wise father in the lives of the children and youth of a congregation.

Counterfeit Christs: Is your pastor a one-man show?

Don't try to be a Lord over your brothers and sisters

But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise **lordship over them**; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and

Everything that I might criticize someone else for, I have been guilty of sometime in my life to some degree.

To the Church Leader:

It's wrong for you to take credit for what our Lord is doing in and through other people's lives.

It is destructive to shift into a prosecutor attack mode every time someone disagrees with you.

Just because someone leaves "your church", does not necessarily mean they are in sin.

There is no need to slander everyone who leaves "your church" to fellowship somewhere else.

Disagreeing with you is not necessarily being divisive.

Disagreeing with you is not the same as disagreeing with God.

It's wrong for you to have other

to give his life a ransom for many.

Mark 10:42-45

The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: **Feed the flock of God** which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; **Neither as being lords** over God's heritage, but being **examples to the flock**. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

1 Peter 5:1-4

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Do whatever it takes to keep your power and

men's wives in your church office for meetings on controversies without their husbands present.

It's wrong for you to call other men's wives to discuss controversies.

It's wrong for you to attempt to drive a wedge between relatives and between parents and their children.

There is hope for every one of us!

Jesus helps us!

We each can be reconciled and love one another. We can love the Truth together, while giving each other the freedom to disagree.

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extend your power.

Machiavelli and How Rulers Think

**Saddam invited the
praise of his followers
and cultivated their
adulation.**

Saddam Hussein & the Coercive Church Leader

**I'm grateful to our Lord for all his blessings:
my wife, our family, our friends, and every
member of the Ekklesia of God in Christ.**

Thank you, Jesus!

-
-
Is your Pastor a One-man Show?

Counterfeit Christs

**Shall we be disciples of Jesus together?
Or would you rather just participate in a
Religious System?**

The Evangelical Subculture

*** If someone hasn't understood Biblical Truth in such a way that they separate themselves from the false christs and false gospels of this world, then they haven't understood! ***

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Calvary Chapel Clergy & Moses Authoritarianism

Many people have been blessed and edified by the teaching and fellowship in Calvary Chapel church organizations. Many people have testified to being saved at Calvary Chapel music concerts. I rejoice when Christ is preached. Even though there is a lot of good that people can point to about the “Calvary Chapel Movement”, no organization, movement, institution, or individual, can be beyond critique. It is a cult-like mentality that says that all criticism or all dissent is division; or that anyone who criticizes a leader or an institution is necessarily a divisive person.

[Affiliated Clergy](#) - [The Calvary Chapel Philosophy of Ministry](#) - [Fire Your Elders?](#)
[Dangerous to Follow a Modern Moses](#) - [It's Blasphemy](#) - [Church leaders are not to be Lords](#)

Affiliated Clergy

Most people do not realize that Calvary Chapel church organizations are not, themselves, affiliated with the original Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, California. It is the clergymen who are affiliated. They submit a request to become affiliated and then are supplied with a form to fill out. The form contains many questions about doctrine and philosophy of ministry. The form is submitted along with the recommendations of other Calvary Chapel clergymen. If the staff at Costa Mesa accepts the person, he becomes an affiliated clergyman in a global network led by Chuck Smith.

Chuck Smith is the founder of the mega-church, Calvary Chapel, in Costa Mesa, California. He exerts influence throughout the system via audio tapes, videos, radio programs, a website, printed material, and regular “Pastor’s Conferences” in different regions of the country. Clergymen who have served on the Calvary Costa Mesa staff go on, in many cases, to have congregations of their own. Many of these have become mega-churches in their own right.

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The Calvary Chapel Philosophy of Ministry

I believe the Biblical Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached by most of the Calvary Chapel clergymen. There is much sound Bible teaching that followers of Jesus can benefit from. But it is of grave concern that this network of clergymen are taught to see themselves as having the mantle of Moses over their congregations. Most people who attend Calvary Chapels only see the presentation on Sunday mornings and are never in a position to experience the direct effects of this Moses Authoritarian approach.

Calvary Chapel clergy are given many opportunities to learn the philosophy of leadership taught by Chuck Smith. There are certain classic audio tapes that are distributed among the clergy. There is also a booklet called, "THE PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY OF CALVARY CHAPEL" by Chuck Smith. In this booklet, which can also be found online, Chuck Smith teaches that a Calvary Chapel should be ruled similar to how Moses ruled over the people of Israel:

"As a theocracy, God established the nation of Israel, but He called Moses to be the earthly leader over the nation, and God, through Moses, led the people. Moses was the recognized instrument of God in leading the people. When things became too heavy for Moses, the responsibilities too great, he gathered seventy of the elders of Israel, representatives from the twelve tribes, and the Spirit of God, Who was upon Moses, came upon them also. And they began to rule with Moses.

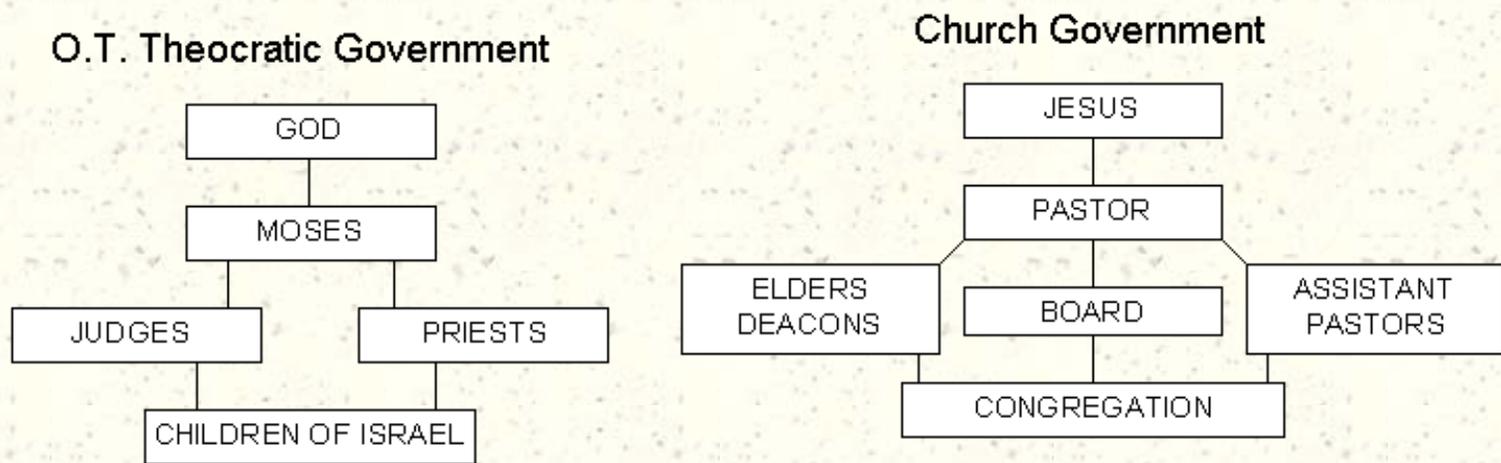
"However, there were times when the people would bring an issue to one of the elders that they were not able to resolve. In that case the issue was then brought to Moses and Moses, in turn, went to God and God gave Moses the answer to the problem. Reversing the process, Moses would then pass the answer to the elders, who passed it to the people.

"Also, under Moses' charge was Aaron and the priesthood from the tribe of Levi who oversaw the spiritual aspects of the nation. As the elders were overseeing the legal and business squabbles and differences of the people, the priests were overseeing the spiritual aspects of the people."

In order to illustrate Chuck Smith's teaching on "Moses"-style authority he provides a graphic.

"The following is a diagram of the type of government God established with His nation Israel, and a diagram of what Calvary Chapel understands as the New Testament counterpart as God's government for the church:

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"We feel that this is the form of government God desires for His church: Jesus Christ is the head of the body, the church;

He established the episkopas or bishop, who we call the pastor, who is responsible to Jesus and whom must recognize and bear the responsibility to guide and to direct the ministry of the local church, guided directly by Jesus Christ. Under the pastor, in some cases, you have the assistant pastors, equivalent to the priests under Moses' rule.

"You also have a board of elders. The board of elders discuss and decide the business aspects of the church, the spending of the church funds, the requests for help that they have from various missionary groups, and ministries."

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Fire Your Elders?

In this same booklet Chuck Smith goes on to emphasize just how far this Moses Authoritarianism goes in Calvary Chapels.

"The man who was in charge of the Korean fellowship at our church is a medical doctor. He did not get any salary for his ministry to the Koreans. He makes his living as a pediatrician and an allergist. The Korean fellowship was growing quite large, so they said, "We really need to get a board established for the Korean fellowship." So, the man appointed board members and asked me to come to the service that I might lay hands on these men that he had chosen for his board, and I did. The very same week that we laid hands on these men and prayed for them and appointed them as board members, they had a meeting and asked the pastor to resign. They said, "Either give up your medical practice or resign as the pastor. We feel that we need a full-time pastor and your medical practice is taking you away from your ministry here." The man was devastated; he didn't know what to do. So he asked me what I thought. I said, "Fire the board. God has called you to pastor that fellowship; the board didn't call you to pastor it. Let them go." So, we ordained them one week, and defrocked them the next. That's just one of the problems you can run into if you haven't really prayed together and really know the men who are serving on the board with you."

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Dangerous to Follow a Modern Moses

In these last days, it is extremely dangerous to follow religious leaders who are convinced that they have the authority of Moses over the Body of Christ. This is the essence of the Priesthood. This is the essence of a Papal system. This is the basis for many coercive and blasphemous cults. To repeat what I say in the article, "The Moses Cults", many religious groups exercise unbiblical control over their people. They are authoritarian cults. Often there is a single leader around whose personality the religious group revolves. One way that such power and control is justified is by stating or implying that the leader has assumed the mantle of Moses. They teach that the leader is called to exercise similar authority among the people as Moses' authority among Israel.

This is the pattern in the Mormon Church, the Unification Church (Moonies), and was the pattern in Jim Jones', The Peoples' Temple.

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It's Blasphemy

But it is more than just coercive control of the people to assume the mantle of Moses. For any man to presume to take upon himself the mantle of Moses is not only a possible sign of an authoritarian cult, but it is blasphemy. God's Word clearly teaches that Moses was intended to be a type of Christ, NOT of modern day religious leaders.

The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

Deuteronomy 18:15

For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

Acts 3:22

This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.

Acts 7:37

Church leaders are not to be Lords

As I said at the beginning of this article, many people have been blessed and edified by the teaching and fellowship in Calvary Chapel church organizations. Many people have testified to being saved at Calvary Chapel music concerts. I rejoice when Christ is preached. But we ought to fellowship with one another according to God's Word, not anyone's traditions. And regardless of the outer trappings of an organization, there will always be trouble and perhaps serious deception eventually when a human leader raises himself above his brethren in unbiblical authority.

"But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Mark 10:42-45

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Consider Participating in a [Discussion Board](#) about Applegate

Jon Courson

Applegate Christian Fellowship

10/6/02 - Modified 10/10/06

Jon Courson has been appreciated over the years by many people who are my friends and whom I respect. I believe that he preaches the real Jesus and the true Gospel, for which I rejoice. I also believe that his ministry and church organization is a reasonable example with which to examine important issues together.

Consider listening to Jon Courson's teaching at Applegate below:

03-26-06 Jon Courson **A Word From Jon** [rm](#) / [wma](#)
Jeremiah 31:33

http://www.applegatefellowship.org/rec_main.asp

What are Jon Courson's views of the "Seeker Friendly" movement? The Emergent Church Movement? Contemplative Spirituality?

What is Jon Courson's view of the Word of God?

Should a room in a church building be called a "Sanctuary"?

Should a disciple of Jesus be taught to depend on a "Pastor" to learn what the Bible says?

The Coursons

In an article in a Medford, Oregon newspaper, the reporter writes:

"The Rev. Jon Courson, the evangelical pastor who built the Applegate Christian Fellowship into the biggest church in Southern Oregon, will leave his post to become a pastor with the 25,000-member Calvary Church in Costa Mesa, Calif. Courson's surprise move was announced at evening services Wednesday, along with the naming of his son, Peter John Courson, 25, as pastor of the Applegate ministry. The younger Courson has been an assistant pastor there for almost two years. The elder Courson, 49, will work as right-hand pastor to his longtime mentor, the Rev. Chuck Smith, leader of the huge Southern California congregation with satellite television and radio broadcasts reaching all over the world, said Peter Courson...The Costa Mesa church is the "mother church" of several thousand smaller Calvary Chapels, including Applegate Fellowship, all over North America...Starting from scratch, [Jon] built the Applegate Christian Fellowship into a sizable following of 5,000 to 7,000 attendees each week, the largest in Southern Oregon, Peter Courson said...His son was chosen to replace him "without any question" by the 150-man assembly of deacons and elders, said Bob Thornley, 46, one of Applegate's pastors...The congregation was both sad and happy about Jon Courson's leaving, said his son, 'because it's time to share him with the whole church and the whole body of Christ.'" ("Applegate Fellowship pastor takes new post" By John Darling for the Mail Tribune, July 19th, 2002)

Jon Courson, the father, explains in "A Special Message From Pastor Jon", on the ACF website:

"For these past 25 years, the Lord has given me the greatest privilege I could ever imagine, that being able to serve such an incredible, wonderful, Jesus-loving, congregation like you. You have blessed me more than

words can express. Just thinking about your kindness towards me and my family, your friendship, your generosity, your prayers, and patience with me brings a lump in my throat and puts a smile on my face!

"And now, as I go to serve with Pastor Chuck Smith in Costa Mesa, California, please know you all will always be on my heart and in my prayers. With my son Peter-John stepping up and stepping in, I know that the Applegate Fellowship is in for a whole new season of fresh fruit-fullness and even greater growth in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus . . . for He always takes us from "glory to an even greater glory, by the Spirit of the Lord."

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Should an assembly of believers be ruled by a Dynasty of Royalty?
By a figurehead leader?

Should a fellowship be run as if it were a family business? A
business franchise?

To what degree is any megachurch run in this way?

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Three Coursons

Update 7/29/06: There are now three "Teaching Pastors" at Applegate Christian Fellowship, according to their web site. Jon Courson is now back at Applegate. The other two listed as Teaching Pastors are Jon's two sons: Peter John and Ben Courson. Seth Gilbert, listed as the Worship Pastor, is Jon's son-in-law according to a southern Oregon newspaper article in the [Mail Tribune](#).

"In 2002, Courson accepted a request to join his longtime mentor and friend Chuck Smith at Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa in California. In 2005, Courson moved on to teach at a pastor training school in Carmen Serdan, Mexico for young men.

"In March of 2006 Jon left Carmen Serdan to move back to southern Oregon to join his son Peter-John Courson pastoring at Applegate Christian Fellowship. He also continues to teach the pastor training school which was relocated to the Mountaintop Retreat Center, which is a part of the ministry of Applegate Christian Fellowship. Along with this move came the transition away from the standard Senior Pastor role at Applegate for Peter-John, his eldest son. Applegate now has three Teaching Pastors, Jon, Peter-John, and Jon's youngest son, Ben."

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Calvary Chapels and Purpose Driven - Emergent Church - Contemplative Sprituality Techniques

From a [Lighthouse Trails](#) Special Report

6/4/06

"Roger Oakland, of [Understand the Times](#), has been ministering to Calvary Chapel pastors around the world for 20 years. As Roger has observed the growing influence of contemplative and emerging in both Calvary Chapel churches and the body of Christ, he believes what we are witnessing in much of evangelicalism today is a subtle return to Roman Catholicism. Roger has counted the cost as he has continued to speak up and warn the church, often being criticized for his stand. On the eve before Calvary Chapel pastors head to California for their annual meeting, Roger has written a powerful and important report that we are presenting to you now:

**[The Emerging Church:
Another Road to Rome"](#)**
**["For more information on
contemplative and emerging,
please refer to Lighthouse
Trails Research Project"](#)**

[Calvary Chapel Critique](#)

Some Actions to

be the Church

instead of succumbing to Churchianity

(These are general statements and not meant to be taken personally by any specific organizations or individuals.)

1. Be led by the Holy Spirit, not controlled by men and the organizations of men.
2. Be disciples of Jesus, not of a guru.
3. Pursue New Testament relationships not a career path in an organization.
4. Be ministers of the Gospel starting with your families, not neglecting your family for spiritual sounding excuses.
5. Recognize the priesthood of all believers, not just an elite brotherhood of professionals.
6. Be more like New Testament believers and less like the Roman Catholic Empire.
7. Meetings of Christians should be patterned more after the New Testament than traditions of men.
8. Proclaim freedom in Christ instead of the cult-like mentalities of the

world.

9. Be the Church of Jesus Christ... instead of controlling or "operating" the people of the Body of Christ.

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The Moses Cults

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Introduction

Many religious groups exercise unbiblical control over their people. They are authoritarian cults. Often there is a single leader around whose personality the religious group revolves. One way that such power and control is justified is by stating or implying that the leader has assumed the mantle of Moses. They teach that the leader is called to exercise similar authority among the people as Moses' authority among Israel.

Mormons

Mormonism ("The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints") is such a religious organization that teaches its leader has the authority of Moses over its people. The Mormons teach that Moses came to earth to take part in giving the keys of the Kingdom to Joseph Smith in 1836. And they say that the gathering of Mormons in North America is, "... visible proof that Moses did return and that the keys which he first exercised in his mortal ministry are again being used by his successors in interest, the modern prophets." (Mormon Doctrine, p. 516, by Bruce R. McConkie, 1966)

The "modern prophets" are considered to be the succession of Church Presidents. Each Mormon Church President is considered to have the authority of Moses: "His duty is 'to preside over the whole church, and

to be like unto Moses" (This is a quote from the Mormon Doctrine & Covenants as quoted in Mormon Doctrine, p. 592)

Moonies

The Unification Church, the "Moonies", are also an example of a Moses Cult. Their religious system revolves around the personality of a man, their founder and leader, Sun Myung Moon.

"Today, Rev. Moon is in the position of Moses." (from the Unification Church website on a page entitled "The Words Of Rev. Sun Myung Moon" Subtitled, "Our Destiny" accessed 5/21/99)

Jim Jones

In 1978 at Jonestown in Guyana, 913 people committed suicide or were murdered due to the "vision" and leadership of their "Moses", Jim Jones. Jim Jones clearly considered himself to be the absolute ruler that a cultist would presume that Moses was.

Jim Jones began his ministry as a somewhat evangelical clergyman. His religious system, the Peoples' Temple, revolved around the personality of a man: Jim Jones. After moving his congregation to San Francisco he began to blend his religious system with left wing politics. He gradually exercised increasing power and control over the people, culminating in the tragedy in Jonestown.

The Real Moses: Type of Christ

The writer of Hebrews gives the following overview of Moses' life and ministry:

"By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned"

Hebrews 11:23-29

For any man to presume to take upon himself the mantle of Moses is not only a sign of an authoritarian cult, but it is blasphemy. God's Word clearly teaches that Moses was intended to be a type of Christ, NOT of modern day religious leaders.

The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

Deut 18:15

For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

Acts 3:22

This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.

Acts 7:37

Church leaders are not to be Lords

While God certainly gave Moses unique authority over the people of Israel, Jesus gave clear direction that New Testament Church leaders were not to be Lords over the people.

"But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles **exercise lordship over them**; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. **But so shall it not be among you**: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Mark 10:42-45

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Youth Group Cults

Stealing the children instead of discipling the fathers.

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What does it take for a cult follower to realize he's worshipping the cult leader?

You wonder if, at the Nuremberg rallies, there was somebody... anybody... who looked around at the people with their arms out raised and crying, "Sieg heil!", and said to themselves, "What am I doing here?". Or better yet, cried out to the Lord, "Open their eyes!".

Or how about the people that followed Jim Jones to Guyana, and either drank poisoned Kool-aid for him, or shot people in the head for him? Was there anyone among them that came to their senses, by the grace of God, and realized their sin of idolatry for following a counterfeit christ?

How can anybody, after examples such as these, exalt a man?

With all the warnings of scripture, how can anybody sit by and allow a fellowship to be built around the personality of a man?

There is hope for the cult follower. There is hope even for the cult leader.

Jesus must set us each free of the fleshly desires for power, prestige, or wanting to be appreciated by the leader.

We're all susceptible! Please don't ever give me power to lord it over the people... I'll abuse it!

What freedom there is to simply be brothers and sisters in Christ... to be free to build up and encourage everyone, rather than just being the sycophant (servile flatterer) of one man.

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Cult Isolation Techniques

A cult leader seeks to isolate his followers from outsiders. In the name of pastoring or shepherding or protecting the flock, he seeks to ensure that his followers will only hear the cult leader's propaganda.

The cult leader tries to control the flow of information to his followers and between his followers. If the cult leader has his way, his followers will only hear his slant on the Bible, because he has set himself up as THE teacher...actually the Guru. Literature and books are closely controlled. And in the age of email and the world wide web, the cult leader will ensure as much as he can that his followers will be ingrown and inward looking by the control of authorized mailing lists and approved web sites.

The cult leader will pervert the Biblical teaching of gossip in such a way that his followers are controlled by fear and guilt. They become trained to no longer be Bereans (Acts 17:11). They no longer truly bear one another's burdens. Individuals will suffer alone rather than risk being accused of gossip. They can no longer discuss important things together. They can no longer evaluate the doctrine and behavior of their leader or leaders. The cult leader seeks to establish a Stalinist totalitarian system that suppresses honest differences and reasonable critiques... all by the use of fear and control.

Eventually the relationships between friends are interfered with, micromanaged, and controlled by the cult leader. If adequate zeal and loyalty for the leader and his system are not sensed by the leader, the leader brings the power of his system down on the individual in the form of withholding of affection, verbal attacks, and threats of various

kinds. The individual is likely to be dragged before a tribunal for interrogation which itself brings threat of expulsion.

Once an individual and his family are fully invested through friendships and relationships within the social system of the group, it is indeed a feeling of deep despair and hopelessness that comes with the Cult leader's threat of expulsion. Many are willing to compromise convictions and give up all freedom in order to maintain the comfort of the social system and all their friends.

The cult leader not only uses threats but also the "carrots" of position, public recognition, power, and prestige. The cult leader entices his allies and those he considers "assets" with affection, periodic exposure in the spotlight, and the pride of being able to "rub shoulders" with the leader.

When I see trends among Evangelicals that seem to have these traits, it greatly concerns me.

It is wrong for a man to turn the fellowship of the saints into a religious system that revolves around himself. It is wrong for a man to consider himself a dictator over a congregation of Christians. It is wrong to create a totalitarian system where there is no freedom to differ and to discuss important things as Bereans. We are called to be brothers and sisters in Christ, not followers of an earthly king.

Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

John 8:31-32

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Galatians 5:1

For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an

occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.
Galatians 5:13

Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.
2 Corinthians 3:17

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.
Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.
Psalms 51:12-13

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What if you found yourself in a Cult?

An illustration: Consider a group of Moonies. These Moonies live in a particular locality. Let's say there are 10 families and several single people who are part of this congregation of Moonies. There is a local Moonie leader in this group who presides over the group. What if one day, one of the men began to realize things about the Unification Church, The Reverend Sun Myung Moon, and the local group. What could this man do? Who could he talk to? What would happen if he did try to talk to someone about it? How would the others react? How would the local leader of the group react?

Now what if you were in an Evangelical organization or fellowship that you thought had "mostly" sound doctrine? But then you began to realize that there were definite signs of a coercive cult in this group? And what if you realized that they weren't nearly as interested in Biblical truth as you thought, but were more interested in their group's traditions and the agenda of "the leadership" or "The Teacher" or "The Leader"? And what if they continually repeated the mantra, "trust the leadership"? What could you do? Who could you talk to? What would happen if you did try to talk to someone about it? How would the others react? How would the local leader of the group react?

These are perilous times. Our only hope is to be a lover of the Truth and to speak the truth in love. Let's search the scriptures to see how followers of Jesus should react as Acts chapter 17 "Bereans".

If you have experienced this type of scenario in a "cult" please [email me](#) and let me know. If you've experienced this in an Evangelical church or organization please [email me](#) and tell me about it.

[Cult Isolation Techniques](#)

[Idolatry](#)

[Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

[Return to Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

<http://procinwarn.com>

Reverend? Pastor? His Holiness? Bagwan?

Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying:

"The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments.

"They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' But you, **do not be called 'Rabbi'**; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. **Do not call anyone on earth your father**; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. **And do not be called teachers**; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Matthew 23:1-12

[Pastors](#)

[The Professional Clergy System](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Return to Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

<http://procinwarn.com>

Saddam Hussein & the Coercive Church Leader

To the coercive and abusive and controlling Church Leader:

Do you see the similarities between how you operate and how Saddam Hussein, the dictator of Iraq, is being portrayed?

4/18/2003

Saddam Hussein built a political system that revolved around his personality.

Saddam demanded complete loyalty to himself, and controlled the people by fear and intimidation.

Anyone who disagreed with Saddam was branded an enemy and risked death.

Saddam invited the praise of his followers and cultivated their adulation.

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[The Moses Cults](#)

[Counterfeit Christs: Is your pastor a one-man show?](#)

[Cult Isolation Techniques](#)

[What does it take for a cult follower to realize he's worshipping the cult leader?](#)

[Machiavelli and How Rulers Think](#)

[Who Should Lead in the Body of Christ? - Commentary](#)

[Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

[Return to Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

<http://procinwarn.com>

Which [Evangelical leaders*](#) were most responsible for:

- Promoting [psychology](#) & [self esteem](#) among Christians?

James Dobson, Norman Vincent Peale, Robert Schuller, Bill Gothard, Tim LaHaye, Gary Smalley? Organizations: Focus On the Family, Minirth-Meier

- Mobilizing Christians into the world system's [political agendas](#), culture wars, [crusades for morality](#)?

Francis Schaeffer, Jerry Falwell, Cal Thomas, Tim LaHaye, Pat Robertson, Bill Gothard, R.J. Rushdooney, James Dobson, Charles Colson, Rush Limbaugh? Organizations: Anatole Conference ("Fellowship"), Council for National Policy, Coalition On Revival, Focus On the Family, YWAM? Trends & Movements: Reconstructionism, Kingdom Now, Dominion, Talk Radio Guruism, National heritage idolatry

- Promoting compromise with the [Roman Catholic Empire](#)?

Billy Graham, Charles Colson, Paul Crouch? Organizations: Evangelicals & Catholics Together, TBN, YWAM?

- Promoting [Mega-Church](#) [Guruism](#) [Churchianity](#) or [Church Growth Movement](#), [Seeker Friendly](#) [Compromise](#)

Norman Vincent Peale, Robert Schuller, Chuck Smith, Bill Hybels, Rick Warren?

- [Infecting Christianity with deceptions from the "New Thought" movement](#) or popularizing the [occult](#) or [occult](#)

fantasy or mysticism or the human potential movement?

E. W. Kenyon, Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, Agnes Sanford, C.S. Lewis, Norman Vincent Peale, Robert Schuller, Pat Robertson, Paul Yonggi Cho, Paul Crouch, M. Scott Peck, C. Peter Wagner, John Wimber, Richard Foster, Zig Ziglar? Organizations: TBN, Renovare, AMWAY, YWAM? Trends & Movements: Positive Confession, Health & Wealth, Inner Healing, "Spiritual Warfare", Multi-Level Marketing, Contemplative Spirituality, Motivational speakers

- Promoting a New World Order and "Tower of Babel" Unity Vision?

Jimmy Carter, George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Henrietta Mears, Billy Graham, Bill Bright, John Naisbitt, M. Scott Peck, C. Peter Wagner? Organizations: TC, CFR, Freemasonry, Skull & Bones, Parliament of the World's Religions, Williamsburg Charter Foundation, YWAM, Promise Keepers? Trends & Movements: Prolife Movement, Conservative Movement, Liberal Social Gospel Movement, The World Christian Movement, Empire idolatry

*Those leaders who professing Evangelicals follow.

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<http://procinwarn.com>

Broken Cisterns

"Be astonished, O heavens, at this, And be horribly afraid; Be very desolate," says the LORD. 'For My people have committed two evils: They have **forsaken Me**, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns — **broken cisterns** that can hold no water."

Jeremiah 2:12-13

- Right wing politics
 - Left wing politics
 - Rush Limbaugh Commentary
 - Michael Moore Commentary
 - Counterfeit Christ Politicians
 - Culture Wars, Crusades for "Traditional Family Values", The false gospel of Morality
 - "Founding Fathers" Heritage, Americanism
 - Psychology & Self Esteem
 - Yoking with Rome, Counterfeit Unity
 - Positive Confession, Prosperity, Health & Wealth, Mystical Techniques, Sorcery & Witchcraft
 - Churchianity, Celebrity Gurus, Movements, Parachurch Organizations, the Evangelical Subculture, Counterfeit Christ Clergymen
 - The latest "Christian" Best Seller or Movie hyped among Evangelicals
 - Visions of Tower of Babel Heaven on Earth
-

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[The True Nature of the World System](#)

[Important Principles to Understand](#)

[Site Map](#)

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<http://procinwarn.com>

The Idol of the Masses

"And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and **throw down the altar of Baal** that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it: And build an altar unto the LORD thy God upon the top of this rock, in the ordered place, and take the second bullock, and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the grove which thou shalt cut down. Then Gideon took ten men of his servants, and did as the LORD had said unto him: and so it was, because he feared his father's household, and the men of the city, that he could not do it by day, that he did it by night. **And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, behold,** the altar of Baal was cast down, and the grove was cut down that was by it, and the second bullock was offered upon the altar that was built. **And they said one to another, Who hath done this thing?** And when they inquired and asked, they said, Gideon the son of Joash hath done this thing. **Then the men of the city said unto Joash, Bring out thy son, that he may die:** because he hath cast down the altar of Baal, and because he hath cut down the grove that was by it. And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead for Baal? will ye save him? he that will plead for him, let him be put to death whilst it is yet morning: if he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar. Therefore on that day he called him Jerubbaal, saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar."

Judges 6:25-32

"**God**, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath **in these last days spoken unto us by his Son...**"

Hebrews 1:1-2

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<http://procinwarn.com>

Evangelicals Prostituting Themselves with Roman Catholicism

How is it happening that so many supposedly Bible-believing Evangelical Christians are prostituting themselves by endorsing the Roman Catholic Church in various ways to varying degrees?

[*Mass Media*](#) -
[*Celebrity Leaders*](#) -
[*Emotional Attachment*](#)
- [*Justifying*](#)
[*Compromise*](#) -
[*Straining at Gnats*](#)
[*and Swallowing*](#)
[*Camels*](#)

It seems that this has been happening over the last fifty years or so after many centuries of clear-cut distinction between the Roman system and born-again believers in Jesus Christ.

1. Over the last fifty or so years, the institutions of **mass media** have created celebrity leaders among the Evangelicals.

2. The **celebrity leaders** have appeared to be heroes of the faith, but then gradually moved toward compromise and yoking with Roman Catholicism and other of the world's religions.

3. As Evangelicals have grown more and more accustomed to following celebrities as gurus, their **emotional attachment** to these leaders has become more important to them than their commitment to the Bible as the standard of truth in following Jesus Christ.

4. **Justifying compromise** with unbiblical messages and methods becomes the Evangelical's goal so that they do not have to stand against their celebrity guru.

5. Professing
Evangelical
Christians end up
**straining at the
gnats** of being
“tolerant” and
being “positive”
and being
“inclusive” and
being part of the
“emerging church”
and **swallowing
the camels** of the
false gospel of
works, and
salvation through
the
sacramentalism of
the Roman
Catholic
institution, and the
gradualism that
leads to the Tower
of Babel vision of
global unity.

[The Roman Catholic Empire](#)

[What do you want to be known
for?](#)

[Return to Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

<http://procinwarn.com>

The Roman Catholic Empire

SIX ROMAN CATHOLIC DOCTRINES THAT NULLIFY SALVATION BY GRACE

[To my
Catholic
Neighbors](#)

The Blasphemy of the Council of Trent

The Sacramental System of Roman Catholicism

[What must I
do to be saved?](#)

You, who profess to be a follower of Jesus, but want to yoke with and endorse Roman Catholicism - Realize that the above "anathemas" are still in a effect and prove that Catholicism preaches a different gospel.

A friend had told me that I hadn't given him any convincing evidence that Roman Catholicism teaches that salvation is caused by faith plus works. The Catholic Catechism does give ample evidence. I refer below to the , "Catechism of the Catholic

[Are There Any
Believers in
the Catholic
Church?](#)

[Evangelicals
Prostituting
Themselves
with Roman
Catholicism](#)

[Counterfeit
Christianity](#)

[A Cinematic
Crucifix? Mel
Gibson's
Catholic Movie](#)

[Do Evangelical Christians
still witness to anyone?](#)

IN GOD'S NAME

*An Investigation into
the Murder of Pope John
Paul I*

Are We Like Christ?

(pdf file: 2 mbs)

Facing the

We do not do ANYONE any favor by condoning this corrupt

**Truth,
Holiness &
Love of the
Lord Jesus
Christ
Personally &
Historically**

*By Steve
Phillips*



[U.S. Asks Court to Dismiss Abuse Suit That Names Pope](#)

[Unite against terror, Pope says in Christmas speech](#)

"[Berean Beacon](#) Ministries proclaims the Good News of Salvation (the Gospel of Jesus Christ). The President and founder is Richard Bennett, a former Roman Catholic Priest. A number of articles are posted to help those in Catholicism to find the true Gospel of Jesus Christ."

"The greatest obstacle to the Gospel is silence. By remaining silent and hoping that our Christian life will testify for itself we fail to keep the Lord's commandment. The commandment, "go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." means to go and speak the Word to the Catholic! The majority of Nuns and Priests and former Catholics that I know who have been saved out of Catholicism all testify to the fact that no Bible believer ever approached

religious system leading a billion people to the Lake of Fire.

[History: Rulers in Rebellion](#)

[Other Occult Brotherhoods](#)

[Pope John Paul II, the Dalai Lama, Liberal Protestants, and Evangelicals](#)

[Deceptions within Christendom](#)

[Important Principles to Understand](#)

[The Crusades](#)

[Islam, the Pope, and the World Religion](#)

[The Evangelical Subculture](#)

Church" published by Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Liguori Publications 1994.

On page 292, in the section called, "Section One, The Sacramental Economy", Article 2, "The Paschal Mystery in the Church's Sacraments", item 1129, it says: "**The Church affirms that for believers the sacraments of the New Covenant are necessary for salvation.**"

The footnote 51 refers to the Council of Trent (1547).

On page 289: "There are seven sacraments in the Church: Baptism,

them about their salvation. Christ's commandment to give the good news is a commandment, not a request!"

[What do Islam, Roman Catholicism, Freemasonry, & Mormonism have in common?](#)

[The Good News](#)

[Good News](#)
(PDF 54 kb)

[Do You Have Hope?](#)
(PDF 147 kb)

Confirmation or Chrismation, Eucharist, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony."

The first night I listened to a Catholic Radio station the speaker spoke of how the life of Christ is given to us through the Sacrifice of the Mass when it is administered by a valid priesthood. He stated that Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodox have valid priesthoods and no one else does.

Nothing could be clearer to me, and more serious, than the fact that the Catechism is saying that salvation is

caused by
faith plus
works.
There are
pages of
quotes from
the
Catechism
that can
confirm what
is stated
above as
well as
many other
documents
in addition to
the
Catechism.

[Return to Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

<http://procinwarn.com>

What do Islam, Roman Catholicism, Freemasonry, & Mormonism have in common?

A false gospel of works that leads to eternal hell.

They are effectively the same religion.

[Islam](#) - [Roman Catholicism](#) - [Freemasonry](#) - [Mormonism](#)

... the doctrine of Jihad is not nearly the most dangerous aspect of Islam whether the “good” or “bad” kind. By far the most dangerous deceptions of Islam are of the same nature as those of Roman Catholicism and Mormonism and Freemasonry and the rest of the world's religions: They promote false Christs and a false gospel of salvation by works.

For years Evangelical leaders have been promoting unity with Roman Catholicism. There are two types of propaganda we can expect. First, the unity of Evangelicals and Catholics together can now be promoted by provoking both Evangelicals and Catholics to take a Crusader’s stand against the onslaught of Islam. On the other hand, the “Unity of the People of Faith” can be promoted by finding “common ground” among Evangelicals, Catholics, Jews, and “good” Muslims. In the Babel of the New World Order I expect to see both types of propaganda.

[The September 11th Turning Point](#)

[Who Jesus is](#)

[The Good News](#)

["What Must I Do to be Saved?"](#)

[Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

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<http://procinwarn.com>

Hegelian Dialectic

*Islamic Morality vs. Western
Hedonism vs. Christendom's
Morality*

*Satan Works Both
Sides...
Every side of every
worldly, fleshly
conflict*

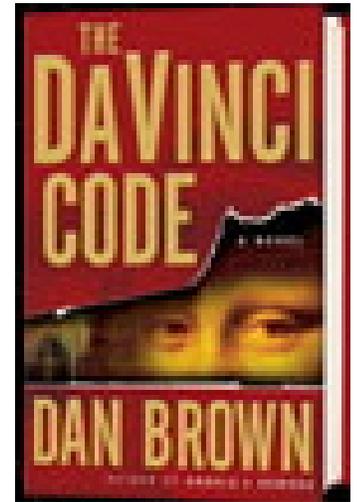
*Hegelian Dialectic -
The Crusades -
Freemasons and
Other Occult
Brotherhoods - The
Roman Catholic
Empire - What do
Islam, Roman
Catholicism,
Freemasonry, &
Mormonism have in
common? - History -
Important Principles
to Understand*

Da Vinci Code Deception

Da Vinci Code Deception

Two Effects

- * **Denying who Jesus is**
- * **Yoking with Roman Catholicism**



The greatest deception is in portraying Jesus as just a good teacher; just a man, while Genesis through Revelation reveals that God loved us so much that He became one of us to rescue us.

But denying the deity of Jesus Christ, while the greatest deception, is not the greatest danger associated with this novel. Pagans have never believed that Jesus is uniquely God. Pagans have always taught that Jesus was only a man.

The greatest danger of the Da Vinci Code deception is that professing Evangelical Christians, in reacting against the pagan message will be seduced into yoking with Roman Catholicism in this polarized battle, and thereby perverting the proclamation of the Gospel to the world. The Gospel of the Bible is incompatible with the gospel of Roman Catholicism.

[Satan works both sides of these worldly conflicts.](#)

Hegelian Dialectic

The Da Vinci Code

**Opus Dei vs. Freemasonry?
vs. Agnostic "Scientists"?**

**Dan Brown vs. Baigent and Leigh?
vs. Random House?**

*Satan Works Both Sides...
Every side of every worldly, fleshly conflict*

*Which side are professing Evangelical Christians
being manipulated to join and defend, instead of
recognizing the true nature of this book and its thesis?
Satan wins no matter which "side" Evangelicals pick.
We are called to NOT be polarized and controlled by
such conflicts but to stand apart; set apart to expose
the evil deeds of darkness of both sides, all sides, and
to be undistracted from our Heavenly calling.*

[Hegelian Dialectic - Freemasons and Other Occult Brotherhoods -
The Roman Catholic Empire - Pseudo-Science - History - Cracking
the Da Vinci Code - Important Principles to Understand](#)

[Who Jesus is](#)

The Sacred Feminine?

One of the clever deceptions of The Da Vinci Code...

**The novel claims that Roman Catholicism suppressed the
worship of the pagan goddess, the "sacred feminine".**

**But Roman Catholicism did not suppress it, but
incorporated it into a syncretism of "Christianity" and
paganism. The Roman Catholic "Mary" IS the sacred
feminine who is "venerated" and supposedly hears and
answers prayer!**

[Satan Works Both Sides of Worldly Fleshly Conflicts](#)

*Endorsing Roman Catholicism is
A Greater Deception
than endorsing the "Da Vinci Code"*

[The Roman Catholic Empire](#)

[The Sacred Feminine?](#)

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<http://procinwarn.com>

Motivational Seminars Promote a False Religion

(8/1/04)

In the newspaper, The Sun (Bremerton, Washington), there has been a full page ad for weeks:

"Get Motivated... Attend this dynamic seminar to increase your productivity and income... Motivation! Inspiration! Career Skills! Wealth Building!"

The speakers at the Seattle event scheduled for August 23 or 24, 2004 are Zig Ziglar, Dick Vitale, Goldie Hawn, Tom Hopkins, Matt Hasselbeck, Rudolph Giuliani, and "Special Mystery Speaker... One of the five most recognizable people on the planet."

Included in small print at the bottom of the article is a, "special optional 15 minute bonus session on the Biblical secrets of success."

This seminar is advertised on the CRISTA Ministries' [Spirit 105.3](#) website:

"The following events have been advertised and announced on SPIRIT 105.3 FM."

"Take your entire office, as many people as you want, to a blockbuster event featuring Mayor Rudy Giuliani, Zig Ziglar, Dick Vitale, Goldie Hawn, and business gurus George Ross (Sr. VP of Trump Industries) and America's #1 sales trainer, Tom Hopkins. They'll motivate everybody in productivity, winning and selling. All this for your entire office for only \$49. Call to reserve your seats now, if you wait, the cost goes to \$200."

Zig Ziglar is the "head liner" for the "Get Motivated" seminar. He has been closely associated with James Dobson and "Focus on the Family"

for years which promotes the Humanistic Psychology concept of "Self Esteem". One of Ziglar's famous books is See You At The Top. On the back of the 1982 edition of the book is a photo of Zig Ziglar shaking hands with the 33rd degree Freemason, the late Norman Vincent Peale, who is endorsing the book. Peale was famous for promoting "Positive Thinking".

Over the years I have seen so many professing Evangelical Christians drawn away from a pure devotion to Jesus Christ and the truth of His word to this "broken cistern that cannot hold water."

"Be astonished, O heavens, at this, And be horribly afraid; Be very desolate," says the LORD. 'For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns — broken cisterns that can hold no water."

Jeremiah 2:12-13

Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, &
the Tower of Babel

Four Ways Christians Are
Deceived

The Human Potential Movement

Confronting "Motivational"
Training Programs

Humanistic & Transpersonal
Psychology 1 of 2

The False Gospel of Self Esteem

Multi-Level Marketing

Speaker in an AG Church in
1998

Re-written Hymns

"As a Man Thinketh" ???

The Universal Vision of
Rebellious Mankind

Positive Thinking

["HUMAN POTENTIAL", THE
RULERS, AND IDOLATRY](#)

[Megatrends](#)

[The True Nature of the World
System](#)

[Freemasons and Other Occult
Brotherhoods](#)

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[Commentary on Current Events](#)

[Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

A Leader Shows Up On the Scene



1. Jesus warns us about deceptive leaders in the last days.
2. A leader shows up on the scene claiming to be a Christian.
3. The leader is a member of the occult secret society, the Order of the Skull & Bones.
4. The leader promotes the unity of many religions as the "people of faith".
5. The "Angel of Light" uses our legitimate concerns, e. g., for unborn babies, to draw us in; to pervert the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
6. Professing Evangelical

Christians
follow this
man as if he
were a
messiah.

[The Symbol of the
Skull & Bones](#)

[Site Map](#)

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The Symbol of the Skull & Bones

Where is it found in history?

Knights Templar, Occult & Murderous Pirates, Nazi SS, Order of the Skull & Bones



Templar Grave



Jolly Roger



Nazi SS



Adolf Hitler Flag

The "Death's
Head"

What groups? What movements? What do they have in common?

What significance does it have today?

[Both Presidential Candidates in 2004 were Members of the Same Occult Brotherhood](#)

It's not a college fraternity. It's a life-long secret society.

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[The True Nature of the World System](#)

[Freemasons and Other Occult Brotherhoods](#)

[THE NEW WORLD ORDER - Part I](#)

[Machiavelli and How Rulers Think](#)

[Important Principles to Understand](#)

[About "Conspiracies"](#)

Wikipedia article: [The Order of the Skull & Bones](#)

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Warning:
Information Awareness Office

*Defense Advanced Research
Projects Agency (DARPA)*

11-24-02

Note: The IAO website has now disappeared. But below is a link to a page explaining about the "Terrorist Information Awareness" program, including why they changed to that name instead of the original name: "Total Information Awareness" program. (1-3-04)

NOTE: The Information Awareness Office has discontinued its occult logo. In their FAQ they explain why. (3-29-03)

See the link at the bottom to go to their site.



The logo to the right is from the relatively new organization, called the Information Awareness Office (IAO). The IAO is a part of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) which invented the internet. The IAO is headed by former Navy Admiral John Poindexter who was President Reagan's National Security Advisor and Oliver North's boss. Poindexter was convicted by a jury for several felonies associated with the Iran-Contra affair. The people convicted of that affair were later pardoned by George Bush. The IAO logo includes symbols of the ancient mystery religions of Babylon and Egypt, including the occult "All Seeing Eye" of the hideous god, Osiris.

IAO Mission

The following is IAO's description of its purpose:

"IAO Mission: The DARPA Information Awareness Office (IAO) will imagine, develop, apply, integrate, demonstrate and transition information technologies, components and prototype, closed-loop, information systems that will counter asymmetric threats by achieving total information awareness useful for preemption; national security warning; and national security decision making.

"IAO Vision: The most serious asymmetric threat facing the United States is terrorism, a threat characterized by collections of people loosely organized in shadowy networks that are difficult to identify and define. IAO plans to develop technology that will allow understanding of the intent of these networks, their plans, and potentially define opportunities for disrupting or eliminating the threats. To effectively and efficiently carry this out, we must promote sharing, collaborating and reasoning to convert nebulous data to knowledge and actionable options. IAO will accomplish this by pursuing the development of technologies, components, and applications to produce a proto-type system...The key to fighting terrorism is information. Elements of the solution include **gathering a much broader array of data than we do currently**, discovering information from elements of the data, creating models of hypotheses, and analyzing these models in a collaborative environment to determine the most probable current or future scenario. DARPA has sponsored research in some of these technology areas, but additional research and development is warranted to accelerate, integrate, broaden, and automate current approaches." [Emphasis mine]

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Quotes from William Safire Column

Consider the following quotes from a New York Times column (November 14, 2002) by William Safire, titled, "You Are a Suspect":

"If the Homeland Security Act is not amended before passage, here is what will happen to you:

Every purchase you make with a credit card, every magazine subscription you buy and medical prescription you fill, every Web site you visit and e-mail you send

or receive, every academic grade you receive, every bank deposit you make, every trip you book and every event you attend — all these transactions and communications will go into what the Defense Department describes as "a virtual, centralized grand database."

To this computerized dossier on your private life from commercial sources, add every piece of information that government has about you — passport application, driver's license and bridge toll records, judicial and divorce records, complaints from nosy neighbors to the F.B.I., your lifetime paper trail plus the latest hidden camera surveillance — and you have the supersnoop's dream: a " Total Information Awareness" about every U.S. citizen.

This is not some far-out Orwellian scenario. It is what will happen to your personal freedom in the next few weeks if John Poindexter gets the unprecedented power he seeks.

Remember Poindexter? Brilliant man, first in his class at the Naval Academy, later earned a doctorate in physics, rose to national security adviser under President Ronald Reagan. He had this brilliant idea of secretly selling missiles to Iran to pay ransom for hostages, and with the illicit proceeds to illegally support contras in Nicaragua.

A jury convicted Poindexter in 1990 on five felony counts of misleading Congress and making false statements, but an appeals court overturned the verdict because Congress had given him immunity for his testimony. He famously asserted, "The buck stops here," arguing that the White House staff, and not the president, was responsible for fateful decisions that might prove embarrassing.

This ring-knocking master of deceit is back again with a plan even more scandalous than Iran-contra. He heads the "Information Awareness Office" in the otherwise excellent Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, which spawned the Internet and stealth aircraft technology. Poindexter is now realizing his 20-year dream: getting the "data-mining" power to snoop on every public and private act of every American."

William Safire is a former speech writer for Richard Nixon.

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Followers of Jesus should not have anything to hide. We should not be so concerned about the government gathering information about us. Also, we are not called to oppose the governments of the world, politically, and certainly not by force. The only reason I take any time to warn Christians about these things is because so many are idolatrously attached to the political rulers and their nation's heritage because of deception and myths within Evangelicalism.

What is exciting is that world history is unfolding just as the Bible said it would. The world system is developing toward a one world government, economic, and religious system. The buying and selling of everyone will be controlled. Followers of Jesus will suffer at the hands of this system. The whole world is being prepared for a counterfeit Christ.



We need to recognize this world system for what it is and do all we can to rescue people from this world system.

Jesus is our only hope!

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

1 Corinthians 1:18-21

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[Information Awareness Office - website](#)

(This web page disappeared sometime before 1-3-04)

[Terrorism Information Awareness Program](#)
(formerly "Total Information Awareness Program")

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[The True Nature of the World System](#)

[The September 11th Turning Point](#)

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[You Are a Suspect](#) By William Safire

(This is not an endorsement of the article's author)

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

[Machiavelli and How Rulers Think](#)

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What is Rick Warren up to?

[Items from the
Lighthouse Trails
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Christians Are
Deceived](#)

[Megachurches are
not New
Testament
Assemblies](#)

[Billy Graham](#)

On a recent flight I noticed three magazines that featured his goings-on: Fortune, Time, and Ladies Home Journal.

I don't think we have seen such media hype over an evangelical celebrity since the newspaper empire of William Randolph Hearst made Billy Graham the Evangelicals' figurehead leader.

(11/8/05)

RICK WARREN'S GLOBAL P. E.A.C.E. PLAN

vs.

SCRIPTURAL TEACHINGS ON PEACE

BY JAMES SUNDQUIST

Director
Rock Salt Publishing

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Hebrew Roots?

God powerfully revealed Himself through His relationship with His chosen, the Jewish people. The history of the Jewish people is objective evidence for the existence of the God of the Bible.

The mystery revealed is that the Good News was for the Gentile as well as the Jew.

The people of God is made up of both believing Jews and believing Gentiles: those who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Galatians, Romans, and Hebrews, for example, were written to put all of this into proper perspective.

We are saved by grace through faith; not by the law.

We are not called to be Pharisees or Judaizers. We are called to be new creations in Christ.

[Applying the Old Testament to the New Testament Church](#)

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Frank Viola Promoting Contemplative Spirituality

4/8/06

[*The Emergent Church Movement*](#)

[*Items from the Lighthouse Trails Research Project Newsletter*](#)

[*The "House Church Movement"*](#)

[*Four Ways Christians Are Deceived*](#)

[*Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel*](#)

[*Gene Edwards articles*](#)

In the April 2006 newsletter of "Present Testimony Ministry", Frank Viola discusses how he became acquainted with the techniques of mystics in "contemplative" prayer.

[*See the text of his newsletter.*](#)

I sent [an email to Frank Viola](#) raising my concerns and suggesting a discussion between him and the [Lighthouse Trails](#) people.

Frank Viola is a long-time leader among some segments of the House Church movement.

While not supporting the "house church movement" I am an advocate of house churches.

I am greatly concerned about the infiltration of ancient Catholic mysticism into the professing Evangelical churches, whether they be institutional churches or house churches.

Jim Baumgaertel

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"One Church, One Family"

Alliance yokes Evangelicals with [Oneness Pentecostals](#) in the name of providing social services to Hurricane Katrina victims, according to a Kitsap [Sun article](#) by Eric D. Williams (9/15/05).

The following is an email I recently (9/17/05) sent to a local clergyman:

Brother _____ ,

I left you a message on your answering machine, and I wanted to follow up with this email. Like I have said before, I have always respected and admired you as a brother in Christ so it is in that context that I approach you with some controversy.

I recommend that you not yoke in ministry with Oneness Pentecostal groups such as Emmanuel Apostolic in Bremerton.

Emmanuel Apostolic is a member organization of the denomination called the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World. They teach that you are not saved unless you are baptized in "Jesus' name" only. That you must speak in tongues as an evidence of salvation. They do not believe in the Trinity, but teach that there is "Jesus only".

I believe it is very serious to preach a different Jesus and a different gospel or to appear to endorse those who do. If we do not consider such differences important then it seems to me that **we have effectively become Unitarian-Universalists.**

There is nothing more important than who Jesus is and what is the Gospel.

I recommend that we trust our Lord Jesus for wisdom as to how to be "good Samaritans" and respond to crises and

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

["Salad Bowl Sunday" Ecumenical Event Corrupts the Gospel](#)

Moonies Have Promoted "One Church One Family" Movement Across the Country

"Followers Encouraged to Join Other Houses of Worship"

Rev. Moon is now urging his followers to join local houses of worship in order to spread his teachings: "Now in many cities almost 50 % of our families are participating actively in the One Church One Family movement in which each family takes one church as their extended family."

-from a letter sent to Unification Church members by Rev. Michael Jenkins, President of the FFWPU" 2/7/2002

From a website that warns Jewish People against Christian Missionaries and Cults: Task Force on Missionaries & Cults [Posted on this site 10/15/05]

help needy people without also compromising or
confusing our message and our calling.

Please consider discussing this with me via email or
phone or in person.

Sincerely,

Jim Baumgaertel

(Posted on this site: 9/24/05)

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Disney and The Chronicles of Narnia?

It's a perfect match, I'm afraid...

5/3/05

"When the first trailer for *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* makes its U. S. premiere Saturday night during ABC's showing of *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*—airing at the same time in 30-plus countries — viewers are apt to gaze in wonder. And be taken aback." (USA Today 5/3/05)

[Harry Potter & The Chronicles of Narnia](#)

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[It was reported that the trailer for Disney's Narnia movie was part of the previews at this last week's premier of the last Star Wars movie, "Episode III - Revenge of the Sith".
5/22/05]

Disney, since it's beginning, has been devoted to magic, sorcery, and the occult.

The Chronicles of Narnia is all about white magic and black magic, including the "deeper magic" of the Emperor Across the Sea. This is the nature of the "occult fantasy" genre.

Another phase of global brainwashing is upon us...

Promise Keepers

Purpose Driven

Lord of the Rings

Passion of the
Crucifix

Disney and The Chronicles of Narnia

Disney, since it's
beginning, has been
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The Chronicles of
Narnia is all about white
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including the "deeper
magic" of the Emperor
Across the Sea. This is
the nature of the "occult
fantasy" genre.

The commentators and the marketers
are hyping and drooling about what
they see as a double whammy of
"Lord of the Rings" meets "Passion of
the Crucifix".

Just like Evangelicals, Catholics, & Mormons were merged in the last phase, now you get Evangelicals, Catholics, Mormons, along with the Occult fantasy/Lord of the Rings/ Dungeons & Dragons/Society for Creative Anachronism/New Age/ Unitarian/Wicca crowd.

The Disney machine is trying the same marketing technique that Icon Productions used for Passion: to use Evangelical Clergymen and their congregations to market the movie. The clergymen have been given the same prestige building pre-release previewing of Narnia that they got for Passion. Deceiving even the elect if that were possible...

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12/18/05

I just took my wife and daughters to see
"The Chronicles of Narnia"

It was a very good production in many ways; Very enjoyable in many ways.

When we first saw Aslan, the Lion, who Evangelical Christians tend to see as a Jesus figure, I thought of the Ten Commandments:

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them,

nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." Exodus 20:4-6

Also, when Aslan was describing how the "Deep Magic" controlled everything, it reminded me of the Force of Star Wars and the ancient pagan concept of Karma.

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Gandalf is a Sorcerer! A Wizard; A Witch

[Deuteronomy 18:9-12](#)

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[Disney and The Chronicles of Narnia](#)

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have

Trouble in Narnia: The Occult Side of C.S. Lewis

by Mary Ann Collins

On the Kjos Ministries web site

**I don't
know
anything
about
Mary Ann
Collins. I
have heard
good things
about
Andy and
Berit Kjos.**

*right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs , and **sorcerers**, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."*

Revelation 22:14-16

**But the above article is very well worth considering.
Jim B.**

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Harry Potter & The Chronicles of Narnia

[Introduction](#) - [Christianity Today & Charles Colson](#) - [Warnings Against the Occult](#) - [Taking A Stand](#)

We are seeing an [ever increasing, overt promotion](#) of witchcraft, sorcery, and the occult in our society. One of the latest media-hyped examples is the Harry Potter book series by a woman named J. K. Rowling. And as usual, whatever the world's media is hyping, that is what the Evangelical subculture is soon hyping.

I believe that followers of Jesus have the freedom to read whatever they want. No one has the right to create a list of do's and don'ts that other Christians must follow. Christians are accountable to the Lord to pursue what is edifying. Often, it is disputable as to how to be in the world but not of the world. While followers of Jesus have the freedom to read Harry Potter books, it is another thing altogether to endorse them or promote them. Rather we ought to warn against what they promote: infatuation with the occult.

Incredibly, there are those in the Evangelical subculture who endorse and promote Harry Potter books. Others are rightly taking a stand against Harry Potter, but in their writings they try to show a distinction between Harry Potter and the [Chronicles of Narnia](#) by C.S. Lewis, and they attempt to justify the Narnia series.

Definitely I agree that Harry Potter books are pagan and occult. But so are the [Chronicles of Narnia](#).

Christianity Today & Charles Colson

The apostate magazine, "Christianity Today" writes, in a January, 2000 editorial, titled: "Why We Like Harry Potter", "Third, and this is why we recommend the books, Rowling's series is a Book of Virtues with a preadolescent funny bone. Amid the laugh-out-loud scenes are wonderful examples of compassion, loyalty,

courage, friendship, and even self-sacrifice. No wonder young readers want to be like these believable characters. That is a Christmas present we can be grateful for." (<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2000/001/29.37.html>)

[Chuck Colson](#), who endorses Roman Catholicism, Amway, and advocates "culture wars" and [crusades for morality](#), also endorses the Harry Potter series: "Take this occasion to introduce [your children] to C. S. Lewis's The Chronicles of Narnia, J. R. R. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings, and George MacDonald's The Princess and the Goblin. These books not only recognize this yearning for wonder and magic, they also reflect a well-developed understanding of the majesty and mystery of God." From a "BreakPoint" commentary with Chuck Colson entitled: "Harry Potter and the Existence of God" (<http://cbn.org/SpiritualLife/HarryPotter/CharlesColsonHarryPotter.asp>)

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Warnings Against the Occult

God's Word clearly teaches against followers of Jesus having anything to do with the occult. For example in Deuteronomy 18:9-12, our Lord speaks to the children of Israel:

"When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD..."

And in the New Testament in Galatians 5:19-21:

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

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Taking A Stand

I appreciate that many Christians are taking a stand against the Harry Potter series which promotes the occult in a most blatant manner.

But I want to also point out that C.S. Lewis' books, The Chronicles of Narnia are also Occult Fantasy dealing with witches and spells and so-called white magic and black magic and even ascribing the "deeper magic" to the "Emperor Across the Sea" who some believe that C.S Lewis meant to represent God the Father. It is blasphemous to ascribe to our miracle working God a "deeper magic". The deception within the Evangelical Church is more dangerous than the deception in the world at large.

Our only hope in these last days is to trust in our Lord Jesus, be Acts 17:11 Bereans, and Love the Truth of God's Word more than the fads and bandwagons both inside and outside the Church.

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“Salad Bowl Sunday”

Ecumenical Event Corrupts the Gospel

(2/27/05)

Another [Kitsap Pavilion](#) ecumenical event is promoting a false unity that perverts the Gospel and helps to merge professing Christians into the global religious amalgam. The “6th Annual Salad Bowl Sunday”, scheduled for February 27th, was advertised in the Bremerton Sun newspaper. The ad included the photos of six area clergymen and the event was said to be sponsored by: Sylvan Way Baptist Church, House of Refuge Fellowship Church, Emmanuel Apostolic Church, Crossroads Neighborhood Church, Bremerton Church of the Nazarene, Sinclair Missionary Baptist Church, BAAMA, Grace Pentecostal GOGIC, and Kingston Christian Church.

Last years “Salad Bowl” was sponsored by Emmanuel Apostolic Church.

The purpose of the Salad Bowl Sunday is said to be, “... to come and celebrate the many ethnicities that make up Kitsap County...” The ad goes on to say, “The nature of the event focusing on community participation and interaction has caused the Salad Bowl to grow from a one church orchestrated program to a celebration coordinated by several churches.”

It is very Biblical for followers of Jesus to love everyone and to be involved in the lives of the people in society. It is very Biblical for followers of Jesus to fellowship across the ethnic and racial boundaries that divide the world. But these Biblical priorities should not be used to promote clergy-driven, institutional events that yoke Biblical Christians with those that preach a different

Jesus and a different gospel.

As an example of the corrupt nature of such events: Emmanuel Apostolic is a member organization of the denomination called the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World. They teach that you are not saved unless you are baptized in "Jesus' name" only. That you must speak in tongues as an evidence of salvation. They do not believe in the Trinity, but teach that there is "Jesus only".

As followers of the Jesus of the Bible we ought to love everyone but not yoke in ministry with those who teach a different Jesus and a different gospel.

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[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived - Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

[**Professing Evangelical Christians are effectively becoming Unitarians.**](#)

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Items from The Berean Call

I agree with most that the editors of [The Berean Call](#) have to say, but every once in awhile I disagree with something. If you have any comments or questions please [write me](#).

Jesus as Messiah

Glory to God!

[From TBC Today](#)

<<Dr. Tony Wright, a dentist in South Africa, musing on his website how the prophecies of the Bible incontrovertibly point to Jesus as the expected and manifested Messiah:

"As groups such as Answers in Genesis point out, there is an increased reliance upon what is called Ultra-Semitic translations of the Scriptures. What this means is that such translations are opposed to any literal understanding of such passages as Genesis 1. There is a reason for this as the following commentary points out:

"Most of [the prophetic scriptures] point directly or indirectly at Jesus Christ, who fulfilled 371 Tanaach Messianic prophecies. 371 Coincidences? Surely not.....!!!

"We read in the TALMUD (Sanhedrin 97b):That the Sanhedrin wept and said, "Woe to us! Where is the Messiah? He had to have come by now." Even the Holy leaders of Israel realized the fact that, according to the Tanakh, they had missed their Messiah! To cover up their error, they banned Jews forever from reading or interpreting Daniel 9 - because Daniel 9 gives the date, to the day, that the Messiah was supposed to have come. According to Judaism (the midrash Bereshith on page 243 of the Warsaw edition), the Messiah was to exit in 33 AD.">>

[TBC Today Item 7/12/05](#)

Rick Warren, Tony Compolo, & Brian McLaren

*"Is Emerging Church Leader, Brian McLaren,
Turning His Back on the Cross?"*

[From TBC Today 3/22/05]

"March 20, 2005

"Is Brian McLaren becoming an enemy of the Cross of Jesus Christ? While his signature and endorsement on the back of such books as Tony Campolo's *Speaking My Mind* and Dave Fleming's *The Seeker's Way*, was horrible enough, that was mild compared to what he has now done.

"In the midst of Purpose Driven mania and an apparently sleeping church, Brian McLaren has endorsed a book that calls the doctrine of the Cross a vile doctrine.

"That book? None other than Alan Jones' new book, *Reimagining Christianity*. Alan Jones is an interspiritualist and mystic in every sense of the word. Take a look at the Living Spiritual Teachers Project, of which Jones is involved. This group of about twenty-five includes Zen and Buddhist monks, New Agers and even Marianne Williamson and her *Course in Miracles*. The goal of this group is to destroy the belief that Jesus Christ is the only way for redemption and to integrate other world religious beliefs into Christianity.

"Not only does Alan Jones believe the Cross to be vile, he says that the spiritual practice of contemplative prayer will draw Christians into the realms of all other world religions. Now on this point, we have to agree with Mr. Jones. He couldn't be more right.

"Right now there are two groups of people who are rushing interspirituality and contemplative prayer into the world's midst. The first group consists of those who are not afraid nor do they keep secret the beliefs they hold. They include such as Thomas Merton, Thomas Keating, Wayne Teasdale, Bede Griffiths, Robert Schuller, Tilden Edwards, Alan Jones, Marcus Borg and the list goes on.

"The second group, and in a sense a far more dangerous group because they outwardly wear the clothing of sheep, are nothing more than disciples of the first group. They include, to name a few: Richard Foster, Brennan Manning, Bruce Wilkinson, Eugene Peterson, John Ortberg, John Eldredge, Bill Hybels, and yes Rick Warren and Brian McLaren.

"In time, we believe this second group will merge with this first group, proudly and openly. With Brian McLaren's help that task will be accomplished far sooner than some had expected.

<http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/SpecialNewsAlertMarch202005.htm>

"[TBC: Contact us for a copy of our Purpose Driven Life critique or read it online at our website: <http://www.thebereancall.org>.]"

<http://www.thebereancall.org/topics/assets/Purpose%20Driven%20Critique.pdf>

YWAM & ISLAM

"Man Says... God Says..."

"Man Says: "Messianic Muslims, who continue to read the Koran, visit the mosque and say their daily prayers but accept Christ as their Savior, are the products of the strategy which is being tried in several countries." A YWAM staff writer wrote: "They continue a life of following the Islamic requirements, including mosque attendance, fasting and Koranic reading, besides getting together as a fellowship of Muslims who acknowledge Christ as the source of God's mercy for them... YWAM is also adopting this approach in India, where a team is working with a Hindu holy man." (YWAM in Foundation, May/June 2000, p. 39).

"God Says: "It is a faithful saying: for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us."" [2 Timothy 2:11, 12]

From [TBC Today](#) 11/4/04

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TBN & Money

"Bogus Beliefs"

"Los Angeles Times (USA), Sep. 20, 2004, excerpted from www.religionnewsblog.com/8717-.html

"By William Lobdell, Times Staff Writer
Excerpts, Part 2

"Ole E. Anthony, founder of the Trinity Foundation in Dallas, a televangelist watchdog, said he knew people who had given the last of their savings to TV preachers, hoping for a windfall that never came.

""The people on TBN are living the lifestyle of fabulous wealth on the backs of the poorest and most desperate people in our society," Anthony said. "People have lost their faith in God because they believe they weren't worthy after not receiving their financial blessing."

"Time went by and he did not receive the promised surfeit of money. Last year, he found out that TBN had purchased a Newport Beach mansion overlooking the Pacific. He wrote to the network, asking for his money back. "I want to recoup my hard-earned disability money I sent to these despicable people," said Horne. He said he has received no reply.

"Philip McPeake is another donor for whom God's economy of giving did not deliver. Out of work and out of luck in November 1998, McPeake heard the Rev. R. W. Schambach make an impassioned plea for donations on TBN's Kansas City television station, KTAJ. Schambach promised that if viewers sent \$200 as a down payment on a \$2,000 pledge, God would give

"Carl Geisendorfer, who runs a low-power Christian television station in Quincy, Ill., offered TBN programming for 19 years -- until, he said, he grew disgusted by the televangelists' financial appeals. He said he pulled TBN off the air in 2002 after watching a preacher tell viewers that they should pledge \$2,000 -- even if they didn't have it -- in order to receive a financial miracle from God. "I should have canceled TBN several years earlier, but I thought Paul Crouch would finally see the light on how foolish and prideful that false gospel is," said Geisendorfer, president of Believer's Broadcasting

"Thomas D. Horne, of Williford, Ark., a disabled Vietnam-era veteran, said that in 1994 he was swept away by the rhetoric of TBN pastors and donated about \$6,000 in disability benefits.

them the rest within 90 days -- with a bonus to follow.

"McPeake sent in his money and waited for his luck to change. When it didn't, he complained to the Missouri state attorney general's office and the Federal Communications Commission. TBN refunded his donation.

Corp., a small media group. "I'm sorry I waited as long as I did"

"[TBC: God's Word says: "And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not" (2 Peter 2:3)."

From [TBC Today](#) 10/11/04

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Tony Campolo and the *Assemblies of God*

"A Christian group is asking an Assemblies of God Bible college in Pennsylvania to drop a frequent guest chapel speaker because of his heretical beliefs. But the school's president is defending his decision to invite

to preach in chapel...at Valley Forge Christian College, a small four-year college located northwest of Philadelphia. Campolo, a well-known media commentator on religious, social and political matters, often preaches with his

"[TBC: If what Campolo teaches is true (that people do not choose to favor homosexual attraction, but are born "wired" that way) then how can he preach that God is a loving Father? What kind of loving God would clearly condemn homosexual

a man who holds to universalist theology and an unbiblical view of homosexuality.

"Dr. Don Meyer says he is not backing down from his decision to once again welcome Dr. Tony Campolo

wife in homosexual-affirming churches, where he has stated that the homosexual "did not choose homosexuality," but is rather "a victim either of biological accident or someone else's folly" (Jim Brown, AgapePress <http://agapepress.org>).

behavior, while at the same time predestining certain beings to be born as homosexuals?]."

From [TBC Today](#) 10/7/04

[I don't necessarily endorse Agape Press. Jim B.]

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"The World Christian Movement"

"Evangelism vs. Evangelization"

A [Media Spotlight](#) Report

This is a review of an article that became the basis for a book by Albert James Dager.

Why would some of the most respected Christian leaders endorse a movement that redefines "evangelism" and creates a new term, "evangelization"?

Al Dager, who publishes a free newsletter called, "Media Spotlight", attempts to answer the above question. Al has done extensive research to show which leaders and which organizations are behind this global effort to "win the world for Christ". You might ask, "What's wrong with that? Isn't that the Great Commission?"

This report, "The World Christian Movement", documents that this movement is twisting scripture, perverting the Great Commission with a "cultural mandate" of [political and social action](#) to [christianize the world](#), and perhaps ultimately preaching a false gospel.

Al Dager writes, "We have all been aware of the ecumenical drive toward a [one-world religion](#), or at least a global Christianity embracing all expressions of what may pass for faith in Jesus Christ. With this writing, however, I believe we have touched upon the specifics of that ecumenical drive which will fit into the [New World Order](#). The individuals and organizations involved in it are well respected in the churches. And the connections go to the [Vatican](#) and even to the [United Nations](#). And while espousing faith in Jesus Christ, the ultimate end of the Movement is to question whether that faith is really necessary after all in determining one's salvation."

In this article, which is actually the first in a series that Al plans to write, find out about the U.S. Center for World Missions (USCWM) in Pasadena, California founded by Ralph D. Winter and the Center's training course called, "Perspectives on the World Christian Movement.", and their official magazine, "Mission Frontiers Bulletin". Read about the influence of Dr. Henrietta Mears, and her "Fellowship of the Burning Heart", on many of the most prominent celebrities in today's [Evangelical subculture](#) and how this influence laid a foundation for the World Christian Movement. The article discusses that the roots of much of the problem was found in the Lausanne Conference on World Evangelization in 1974.

Some of the topics that the article deals with relating to this movement are: Simple Life-style, [Dominionism](#), Strategic Level [Spiritual Warfare](#), The Gathering of the Nations, Identificational Repentance, Winning People Groups, The Abrahamic Covenant, Contextualization of the Gospel.

Some key names who are leaders in the movement or supportive of the movement and its new doctrines, according to the Media Spotlight article: Ralph D. Winter, C. Peter Wagner, [Billy Graham](#), John R.W. Stott, Rich Carey, Donald McGavran.

Organizations involved in this movement as reported by the article: Fuller Theological Seminary, Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Campus Crusade for Christ, Catholic Renewal Movement, Celebrate Jesus 2000, Concerts of Prayer, Evangelicals for Social Action, Gathering of the Nations, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, Jesus Film Project, King's Kids, Lausanne Global Prayer Strategy, March for Jesus, Muslim Prayer Focus, Pax Christi, [Promise Keepers](#), Renewal International, [Renovare](#), Sentinel Group, Spiritual Warfare Network, [Southern Baptist](#) Convention Foreign Mission Board, Urban Alternative, Women's Aglow, World Methodist Council, World Vision, Wycliffe Bible Translators, Youth With A Mission ([YWAM](#)), [Young Life](#), Youth for Christ.

Al Dager emphasizes in the article that he believes, "...that many of those involved do not understand the full implication of the work to which they have given their allegiance. Therefore, I must say that not everyone involved in world evangelization- even among the leadership- is a deceiver. Many, if not most, especially at the grass roots level of the Movement, are brethren in Christ who are working in the field of missions to lead individual souls to saving faith in Jesus Christ. We cannot but recognize the selfless efforts on the part of those who minister both the Gospel and

comfort to the lost out of love for all men."

You can [order Al Dager's book](#) at his website. The book is titled: The World Christian Movement - A Great Delusion Leading to the Religio-Political State of the Anti-Christ. I consider Al's writings on this topic to be of great importance in warning those who profess to be followers of the Lord Jesus about clever deceptions in these last days that are preparing the world for a [counterfeit Christ](#).

Jim Baumgaertel, May 20th, 1999 (modified 12/15/2002)

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"God" ...a false god

The whole world talks about "God". Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Mormons, Masons, Wiccans, Presidents, terrorists, Queens, homosexuals, feminists, entertainment celebrities, etc.

Increasingly, professing Evangelical Christians speak on and on about surrendering to God, serving God, living for God, loving God... without ever mentioning our Lord Jesus Christ!

A Christian who presumes to speak about God without proclaiming Jesus is actually promoting the world religion of the counterfeit Christ.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16

In Revelation 5 we see the One who sits on the throne. We see the Lamb who was worthy to take the scroll. And we see the "Seven Spirits of God" who is the Holy Spirit.

The Lord our God is one God. He has chosen to reveal Himself to us in Jesus Christ. God the Father sent God the Son to reconcile us to Himself.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." John 1:12-14

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
Acts 4:12

"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him."
1 Thessalonians 5:9-10

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

[Who Jesus is](#)

[Spirit 105.3](#)

[The Good News](#)

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<http://procinwarn.com>

What is the "New Thought Movement"?

[Which
Evangelical
Leaders have
been most
responsible for
infecting
Evangelicalism
with "New
Thought"?](#)

It has been EXTREMELY influential in society, in general, and among professing Christians, in particular, for 150 years.

It is also extremely unbiblical. But understanding the nature of "New Thought" will help a follower of Jesus recognize the disguised forms of "New Thought" that have come into the Evangelical Subculture.

Consider the following site which advocates New Thought:

[New Thought Movement Home Page](#)

[Excerpts & Quotes from a New Thought site](#)

The Greatest of Men

In society and throughout history there have been many brave and noble men who have been willing to sacrifice all for what they believed in. I have great respect for many of these men, including (to name a few), Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, jr, Mohandas K. Gandhi, Che Guevara, Benito Juarez, Crazy Horse, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Patrick Henry. Innumerable women have sacrificed all for their families and for their people. I have been interested recently to learn about Harriet Tubman.

Many of these people have arguably made the world “a better place” from a human point of view. It is easy to be immersed in learning about their heroism and the incredible opposition they faced and their noble goals and achievements and to end up revering them almost as gods.

And yet, without denying the good some of them have done, what does the God of the Bible say to us to put these things into perspective?

The Greatest of

*Men have
Dreams, and
yet...*

"[Jesus] went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, **thy will be done**". Matthew 26:42

"For I [Paul] determined not to know any thing among you, save **Jesus Christ, and him crucified.**" 1 Corinthians 2:2

"Jesus saith unto him, **I am the way, the truth, and the life:** no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John 14:6

"I have a VISION!"
"Achieve your
DREAMS" ???

Why are
Homosexuality,
Fornication, Harlotry,
and Adultery Sin?

Tower of Babel

Following Gurus

Who Are Our
Heroes? - Hebrews
chapter 11

Every Tribe

[The Manifold
Wisdom of God](#)

[Important Principles
to Understand](#)

[Return to Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

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Chris Went Into the Wild and Starved to Death

[The Good News](#)

(pdf file: 54 kbs)

[Agnostics for Jesus!](#)

[Out of the Depths](#)

The Mystery of
Suffering
(pdf file: 300 kb)

[The Wild](#)

Chris McCandless, 24, went "[Into the Wild](#)" [worshipping created things](#) rather than the [Creator](#)... and starved to death.

"Ron Franz", in his eighties, [professing Christ](#), rejected Christ because he, "... couldn't believe in a God who would let something..." like that happen to Chris.

Why is that such a lame excuse if one understands the [message of the Bible](#)?

Chris was a very impressive young man in so many ways, according to the reports in [Jon Krakauer's book](#).

Prior to Chris' death he wrote, "I have had a happy life and thank the Lord. Goodbye and may God bless all!"

My hope is that perhaps those words are evidence that Chris reconciled with his Creator on [the Lord's terms](#).



An Appeal to Mormons

If you are a member of, or investigating the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints" I ask that you consider my appeal.

I investigated the LDS religious system for over a year and came very close to being baptized into that system in 1976. The emphasis on marriage and family impressed me. The friendly welcome I received at the ward meetings on Sunday and Wednesday in four different cities in three different states and in the Family Home Evening for single people I attended was very much appreciated. I was in awe of the temple in Washington, D.C. which I toured before it was dedicated. I listened in person to famed columnist, Jack Anderson, present what he said was evidence for a great civilization of fair skinned Jewish people in the Americas before Christ. I was inspired by the visitor center in San Diego. On my way north to Idaho Falls, I spent the day in Temple Square in Salt Lake City.

The Jesus of the Bible was reaching out to me in the midst of all of this. The first time I had heard 1 Corinthians 13 was when a Mormon friend read it to

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:3

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Galatians 5:1

We each have a brainwashed, cult-like mentality if we are not willing to re-evaluate everything we believe. **I appeal to you to consider the following points** and read about **Jesus in the Bible** and be willing to **come to Him on His terms**, not the terms given to us by a religious system, be it LDS, Roman Catholic, Masonic, Protestant, or Evangelical.

What does the Bible say? What does the Lord Jesus Christ say in the Bible?

[The Lie of the Serpent in the](#)

me in Vallejo, California. I was dumbfounded that anything that powerful and profound was in the Bible. Several people who had been born again according to John chapter 3 had reached out to me. One of them invited me to his Bachelor Officer's Quarters (BOQ) room and opened the Bible with me to challenge the LDS teaching of eternal marriage by reading and discussing with me Matthew 22:23-33. Another follower of Jesus Christ allowed me to be his room mate and he took me to a Christian Fellowship in Idaho Falls where I heard the Gospel of Grace in a way that pierced my heart. The one who preached made a clear contrast between the LDS gospel of works in eternal progression as compared with the free gift of salvation and sanctification and glorification that comes through trusting in the Jesus of the Bible and all he's done for us. Because of all I've come to understand I want to make the following appeal to you.

Jesus Christ died on the cross for you and me. He said, "It is finished!" The penalty for our sins is paid in full. Jesus' shed blood washed my sins away. He rose again to prove that he was who he said he was, the Great "I AM". And to all who received Him, to those who believed in his name, he gave them the right to become children of God. All who have been born again have been set free by Jesus Christ.

[Top of Article](#)

[Garden of Eden](#)

[Joseph Smith](#)

Baptism for the Dead

The Book of Mormon

[Moses Authoritarianism](#)

Legalism

[Restoration Movements](#)

Family IS forever... in a Biblical sense.

[Who Jesus is](#)

[The Good News](#)

["What Must I Do to be Saved?"](#)

[Summer of 76](#)

Link to: [Through the Maze - Beyond Mormonism](#)

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The Hegelian Dialectic Scientology vs. Psychiatry

*Satan works both sides of every
worldly conflict.*

7/1/05

Both Scientology and Psychiatry promise the Fruit of the Spirit without the Spirit of Christ. One calls itself "The Church of" and uses mind power techniques for attempted spiritual healing. The other uses drugs and mind power techniques for attempted spiritual healing.

All human problems are rooted either in the physical or the spiritual. Physical problems can affect the spiritual and spiritual problems can affect the physical. Physical problems need physical solutions. Spiritual problems need spiritual solutions.

For spiritual problems, Jesus is our only hope. The Fruit of the Spirit can only come from the work of the Spirit in the lives of those who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.

[Manipulated or Set Apart?](#)

[G.W.F Hegel](#)

[The Good News](#) - [Abide in the Vine](#) - ["To Be My Disciple"](#) - [Walking in the Spirit](#)

[Questions for Christians about Psychology](#) -
[Humanistic & Transpersonal Psychology 1 of 2](#) -
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Cracking the Da Vinci Code By Arne Herstad

The Da Vinci Code, which has lately created such a stir, collides with verifiable facts of ancient history. It alleges, through a character introduced in chapter 55, that certain Gnostic writings kept out of the New Testament would swing truth on another tack, one that leaves an ancient royal bloodline conveniently ensconced in Europe. This engaging theme works, but only when we suspend judgement and read it as a farce.

Why? Because this view of the New Testament loses traction when we realize that during the first years of the Church, the Apostles of Christ never preached from it. They couldn't, because the New Testament writings hadn't been compiled yet. Christianity, with its preaching of the resurrection of Christ, was taught exclusively from the Old Testament during the first decades A.D. by

alighted in Corinth, Berea, or Ephesus, he simply called for the scrolls of Isaiah, Daniel, or the Psalms, and preached from them the resurrection of Christ. Those who heard were wise enough to know from the book of Daniel that the window of time for the sufferings of Christ had come and gone, hence the immediacy of their response to the Gospel.

Those who later compiled the apostles' writings into our New Testament knew enough to reject Gnostic offerings that didn't agree with the prophetic teaching of the Septuagint. They knew, just as we do today, that the counterfeit postulates the reality of the original.

"So what?", you say.
"Who cares? Isn't the Da Vinci Code just fiction?"



[The
Chronicles of
Arnia](#)

eyewitnesses who later put their accounts to writing (see Luke chapter one for amplification).

The antiquity of the Old Testament is verified in that it was translated into Greek in Alexandria, Egypt, circa 250 B.C. That early date puts its prophecies well out of reach of potential Christian tampering (on which author Brown builds his premise), or any possibility of Jewish tampering after the dissemination of the text. This version of the Hebrew Bible, called in our time the "Septuagint", was ensconced in every synagogue of the Jewish diaspora by the time Christ walked the earth. So when Paul

Yes, but so is Pilgrim's Progress and some of the writings of C.S. Lewis. If truth can be presented in a parable, then so can a lie. The Da Vinci Code's foundational premise is weighed in the balance of history and found wanting. It's a well written, heart-pounding thriller that belongs on the same shelf as the Gnostic writings from which it draws its cosmology. Its value, as with those writings, lies mostly in what it reveals about its author's heart.

-Arne Herstad

Revised 2-27-06

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[The Chronicles of Arnia](#)

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About *The Matrix Reloaded*

May 24, 2003

There will be no "partying" in Hell.

The Matrix is a Masonic Myth and that rhymes with Smith.

Freemasons call their god, "The Great Architect of the Universe": GAOTU.

The Wachowski brothers, Larry and Andy, wrote and directed The Matrix Reloaded.

In "Reloaded" Neo, the One, the Savior of humanity, meets face to face with The Architect who calls the Matrix, "sublime".

Freemasonry teaches the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.

The Matrix Movies are filled with symbols and references from a great variety of religions and mystical pagan traditions.

Sometimes, in real life, a young pagan may say, "I WANT to go to Hell. All my friends will be there! We're going to party."

Early in "The Matrix Reloaded" is a pornographic pair of superimposed scenes. One depicts an episode of immorality (becoming one) between "Neo" and "Trinity", which flips back and forth between the other scene, which is a pagan orgy of erotic dancing... partying deep down in Hell (a very deceptive, seductive, pagan concept of Hell).

The "Zion" of the Matrix movies is Hell.

Disobedience is portrayed as a necessity for true fulfillment... just like Eve

learned from the Serpent in the Garden of Eden. Just like Mormons (Latter Day Saints) are taught, in that, their version of Adam and Eve disobeyed one commandment: "Don't eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge"; in order to obey the "greater" commandment: "Be fruitful and multiply". Lucifer assisted in their enlightenment.

In Reloaded, it turns out that they are in danger of exchanging one system of control for another. Their only hope for being truly disconnected from the system is to become their own god. They must acknowledge that fate has not fixed their future. That the problem for the matrix program is "choice". They must break their promises or disobey orders. They must be their own god and decide for themselves what is right or wrong in order to save themselves and others. There is ultimately no one else they can trust, but Self.

The system produced the Matrix Movies.

The purpose of the Matrix Movies is to prepare young people to **worship the Counterfeit Messiah** of the World System. Following the crowd which follows the false Messiah leads to the Lake of Fire. It is eternal and there will be no "partying" in Hell.

The only true way to become unplugged from the political, economic, and religious systems of this world and to escape the eternal judgment we each deserve, is to be reconciled with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We must come to Him on his terms. And our purpose and priorities forevermore are to be his purpose and priorities.

[Who Jesus is](#) [The Good News](#) [Thy Word is Truth](#)

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[Freemasons and Other Occult Brotherhoods](#)

[The September 11th Turning Point](#)

[Idolatry - Scriptures](#)

[The Moses Cults](#)

[George Otis Jr](#)

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CREDO: A Glimpse of the World Religion

The U.S. Navy Chaplain's "CREDO" program is a sobering glimpse of what the [World Religion](#) of the Counterfeit Christ may look like. CREDO is an example of what global "Christianity" is heading towards... a universal counterfeit. It's a perfect example of what I call, "New World Order Niceness"... a goodness apart from the God of the Bible; "spirituality" apart from the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word "credo" is Latin for "I believe". It also stands for "Chaplain's Religious Enrichment Development Operation". The Navy's CREDO program is a system of weekend retreats, training courses, and literature that seeks to promote "spirituality" and "[community](#)".

CREDO Pacific Northwest

The following is information from the website of the CREDO Pacific Northwest as of October 1999:

"Mission: To provide a program of retreats to enable military members and their families to develop personal and spiritual resources."

"History: CREDO began in 1971 as "Chaplains Response to the Emerging Drug Order" as an experiment led by chaplains and lay persons to confront the use of drugs by Sailors and Marines. Over time, CREDO evolved into a new form of retreat ministry that is applicable to a broad spectrum of people seeking personal and spiritual development rather than just to those with drug related

problems. By 1977 the name became the Chaplains Religious Enrichment Development Operation.”

“CREDO's credo: The philosophy of our program is distinctly spiritual. This spiritual approach builds trust and facilitates an experience of unconditional acceptance, heightens a sense of personal responsibility, energizes a desire to contribute to the community. At it's core, CREDO neither merely imparts information, nor aims at diagnosis and cure. Individuals are encouraged to share only what they are comfortable sharing, define their own goals, and move at their own pace. CREDO invites reflection, but does not attempt to "fix" people or force them to work on perceived issues. Instead, we attempt to look beyond behaviors to affirm each person as a unique creation of God with value and significance.“

An earlier version of the same website (March 1999) stated that, “CREDO affirms: Sacredness and value of each individual, Value of relationships, Communities of faith, Power of positive thinking, Hospitality, God’s presence in human interaction.”

CREDO Pacific Northwest sponsors various retreats for “Personal Growth”, “Marriage Enrichment”, “[Spiritual Growth](#)”, and “Marriage Growth”.

“The CREDO Spiritual Growth Retreat emphasizes faith, hope, and love. It assists participants explore spiritual resources for daily living based on the belief that we are all spiritual beings experiencing the common human condition. Throughout the weekend you will attend workshops and exercises centered on the theme "Life As a Sacred Journey" that may assist you in pursuing a more mature relationship with God, and experience a more meaningful religious faith.”

CREDO Team Members are,

“...volunteers who assist the CREDO chaplains in conducting Personal and Marriage Growth Retreats. All CREDO Team members have attended a Personal Growth Retreat as a participant, attended a CREDO Team Training weekend, are actively involved in spiritual community, and have been screened by the Director of CREDO Pacific Northwest.”

“A team member is someone who is a concerned member of their community who is willing to devote time, energy, and talents to the

process of others discovering their own inner resources, life's spiritual (not just religious) dimension, sense of community, and healthy [self-esteem](#). A team member is a spiritually oriented person on a faith journey of their own.”

“A team member is not a therapist, counseling or psychology expert, or problem solver.”

It’s clear that the intent is a “spirituality” that doesn’t require a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus, but is, instead, based upon the self-actualization concepts of [Humanistic Psychology](#): Self-esteem, acceptance, value, significance, and group “sharing”.

A Naval Officer’s Testimony

The following quote is from a Naval Officer who attended a Navy Chaplain presentation that included a discussion of the CREDO program:

“We had the head chaplain come and talk to us about stuff. I thought she was going to give us a plug about Christian services offered. All she did is talk about how kids joining the Navy have psychological problems (40-50% of the sailors at Service School Command in Groton) and how she is treating them psychologically and with counseling. (I believe this is indicative of the problems kids are having growing up these days in broken homes, two income families and no morals or standards being taught to them and, how we as a society, are shifting the blame off of us being messed up to "it's someone else's fault"). Then she went on to explain a retreat that she hosts for people to get back to their inner selves and if anyone brings a Bible, she confiscates it. I had to ask her why she doesn't teach Jesus and tell these people that there is a better way instead of Wicca, Islam, Hinduism etc. etc etc. since she has a cross on the lapel of her uniform. Her answer was "she doesn't want to beat it into people and by them bringing a bible may put undue influence on others. She specifically didn't want to turn it into a Christian outreach.” I also believe

that the Navy is preventing her from being able to do what she may really want to do since Navy Chaplains today have to be everything to everybody including everybody else's religion.”

CREDO Institute

The CREDO Institute is in Williamsburg, Virginia. They state on their website, “We are a loose family of people of all ages and backgrounds who desire a closer bond with others in the human family. We want to carry on the work of the Spirit begun by a band of sailors, marines, and their chaplains on the San Diego waterfront a generation ago. The Navy Credo now serves the fleet around the world; its family members may be found just about anywhere. We at Credo Institute want to support their work and build a bridge to all corners of America, so that they also may have an understanding of the love of God. Homemakers and homeless, prisoners and judges, bishops and workers, students, sailors, searchers and skeptics; people of many faiths – all are part of the Credo family.”

The Credo Institute website offers a book about Credo. “Founder” Donald B. Harris recounts in the book, That’s How the Light Gets In: A Credo of Friendship, his background and “spiritual autobiography”:

Complimenting “Other Approaches to Spiritual Health”

On the CREDO Institute website is an article, “How Credo Compliments Other Approaches to Spiritual Health”. In this article there is a description of a previous Credo Weekend used by the Institute of Clinical Theology (ICT) as part of its curriculum. At the time the ICT was part of Regent University, in Virginia Beach but is now affiliated with Georgia State University. “The gathering of twenty therapists, ministers, and counselors came together in Norfolk, Virginia seeking a new freedom in the way they lived out their faith.” The article talks of two conversions of religious conservatives to the Credo outlook.

The article describes how Credo is similar to, different from, and supports other approaches such as self-help programs, religious retreats, and group psychotherapy.

The relationship of Credo to Twelve Step programs is especially

emphasized.

The possible concern that “responsible Christians, Muslims, and Jews” might have with a strictly secular self-help approach is discussed. Credo is said to have an “affinity with the spiritual basis of religious retreats, yet differs because of its inclusiveness.”

“Just as Credo is not a substitute for support groups or psychotherapy, it emphatically is not a parachurch competing with faith-groups. The Credo approach is one of service to others – not one of competition. If Credo is able to assist someone in find a loving community of support which brings them life and purpose, wherever that may be, then our mission is fulfilled.”

The article goes on to contrast traditional, institutional religious “paradigms” with the way in which Credo, “helps people see that love is the essence of life without defining how this may be expressed by any organization.”

CREDO sets up a set of [opposites](#) when talking about relationships versus institutionalism. And yet “communities” built on relationships, even as an alternative to religious institutions are still worldly counterfeits if the Lord Jesus Christ is not the foundation.

Government Initiated, Pagan Spirituality

What is especially dangerous is that the U.S. Navy Chaplains endorsement of CREDO represents a government attempt at a [Universal Religious Vision](#).

CREDO Institute speaks of, “the work of the Spirit”. But which “Spirit” is at work apart from the Lord Jesus? CREDO speaks of “community” and the “CREDO family”, but without the Lord Jesus this is a counterfeit of the Body of Christ... a Tower of

Babel vision of Unity in Diversity. They want to, "...build a bridge to all corners of America, so that they also may have an understanding of the love of God".

However, **any system of morals and ethics and values that either ignores or rejects Jesus Christ is just another pagan religion. Even a system of Christian morals, without Jesus, is just another pagan religion.**

As the Naval Officer (quoted above) also told me, we ought to be praying for these people involved in CREDO. Those who are followers of the Lord Jesus need to realize they are yoked with a great deception. And those who don't belong to the Lord Jesus; they need to know they've believed a lie.

I would encourage others to research and expose CREDO and similar "world religion" programs. If you have been to a CREDO retreat or have literature or information, I would be very grateful to hear from you. [Please email me.](#)

The following are links to the two CREDO websites I've quoted from.

[CREDO Pacific Northwest](#)

[Credo Institute](#)

[Williamsburg Charter Foundation](#)

[A State Religion?](#)

[Confronting "Motivational" Training Programs](#)

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THE POPULAR MYTHOLOGY OF

"RIGHT BRAIN - LEFT BRAIN"

From New Age books to "Christian Marriage" seminars, Right Brain - Left Brain is a 1980's fad that continues into the 1990's. In 1988, two University of Washington neurological scientists were on a KING-1090 radio talk show. They spent a significant amount of time debunking the pop-psychology myths about the human brain that have become so popular in the New Age movement and even among some Evangelical Christian speakers and authors.

On September 19th, 1989, another neurological scientist from the University of Washington was interviewed by phone. She explained that the studies that have been done on brain function (that are often referenced by the human potential popularizers) were performed on damaged brains. She said that it is unscientific to draw general conclusions about the functioning of normal brains based on these studies of damaged brains. One of the popular myths that the scientist spoke to was the often repeated statement that we "only use ten percent of our brain." She said, in actuality, our entire brain takes part in every day functioning.

Furthermore, the idea that the left hemisphere of the brain is rational, analytical, and logical while the right side is creative and intuitive has no basis in scientific fact. Brain functioning is not a matter of right brain - left brain, but of specific localized portions of the brain having specific functions. The neurological scientist went on to say that much that is said about human behavior in the name of "right brain - left brain" may be fine [but unbiblical] if it is spoken of in a metaphorical sense, but that to ascribe the popularized views literally to the physical functioning of the brain is simply not supported by scientific studies.

It should be made clear to Christians that the recent "right brain - left brain" doctrines being taught by some authors are not supported by God's word, the Bible. And it should also be clear that these concepts have no basis in science. If "Right brain - Left brain" did not come from the Bible or science,

then where did it come from? This current fad that has swept our society is simply a disguised form of that ancient Eastern Mysticism and Occult concept: the Yin and Yang. RB-LB turns the human brain into a Yin-Yang symbol. Male and Female; Positive and Negative; Opposites in conflict and synthesis.



"For the
wisdom of
this world is
foolishness
in God's
sight." 1
Corinthians 3:19

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

[Megatrends](#)

[CREDO: A Glimpse of the World Religion](#)

[Education for the New World Order](#)

[The "New Age" Religion: In General](#)

[Occult Terms](#)

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[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[Questions for Christians about Psychology](#)

[Warning: Information Awareness Office](#)

[The False Gospel of Self Esteem](#)

["Building Your Mate's Self-Esteem"](#)

[M. Scott Peck](#)

[Counterfeit Christianity, The World Religion, and The New World Order](#)

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HUMANISTIC AND TRANSPERSONAL PSYCHOLOGY

(Part One)

Many of the unbiblical trends throughout society are rooted in the development of Humanistic and Transpersonal Psychology: The "Third" and "Fourth Forces". This includes trends in the evangelical church and the government school system. In the psychology establishment, the "First Force" was considered to be Psychoanalytical Psychology. The "Second Force" was Behavioral Psychology.

THE THIRD FORCE

Humanistic Psychology has played a major role in obsessing this generation with "Self". It was developed by such men as Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. Exemplified by Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs," the goal of Humanistic Psychology is "Self Actualization" and the liberation of individuals from the bonds of society and their individual psychological condition. (Humanistic Psychology should not be confused with "Humanism", although their anti-biblical results are similar.)

Carl Rogers' theory of "Self Actualization" was centered on the importance of the "Self-concept". According to Rogers the goal in life must be to achieve the "Ideal Self". Maslow said that individuals develop according to a hierarchy of needs: First the physiological needs must be satisfied (nourishment, safety, and comfort), then the psychological needs (affection and esteem), and then the need for Self-Actualization. A Self-Actualized person, according to Maslow, will exhibit spontaneity, independence, social involvement, self-acceptance, sense of humor, and a lack of hostility. He will have had what Maslow called "peak experiences", including "mystical" experiences that he calls "transient moments of Self-Actualization".

Rich Watring, a human resources development expert wrote in his book, New Age Management:

"The central concepts [of Humanistic Psychology] are personal growth and human potential. They imply that people can change by "working" on themselves. Humanistic Psychology has developed a number of different methods for self intervention which can be grouped under four headings: 1. Body Methods: Reichian therapy, Bioenergetics, re-birthing, Rolfing, Feldenkrais method, Alexander technique, sensory awareness, holistic health, etc. 2. Feeling methods: encounter, psychodrama, Gestalt awareness, primal integration, Rogerian counseling, co-counseling, etc. 3. Thinking methods: transactional analysis, personal construct approach, family therapy, neuro-linguistic programming, rational-emotive therapy, etc. 4. Spiritual methods: transpersonal counseling, psychosynthesis, enlightenment intensive workshops, dynamic meditation, sand play, dream-work, etc."

As often happens, the "Wisdom of man" can sound good on the surface, but upon closer examination it is in direct conflict with the "Wisdom of God". One cannot reasonably derive "Self-Actualization" from reading the Bible. In fact, the Lord Jesus Christ said,

"If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matthew 16:24)

"For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." (Matthew 16:25)

"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain." (John 12:24)

Maslow's idea of human development through the Hierarchy of Needs is the exact opposite of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Jesus acknowledges that it is the pagans who chase after their "felt needs": "what to eat" and "what to wear". But Jesus says,

"Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added to you." (Matthew 6:33) .

In Part Two, Transpersonal Psychology will be explored along with the connection of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers to New Age Paganism and

the Occult.

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HUMANISTIC AND TRANSPERSONAL PSYCHOLOGY

(Part Two)

Transpersonal Psychology attempts to be the "science" of spirituality. However, it is by no means "science" and its spirituality is pagan. In the last article we noted that in the psychology establishment, the "First Force" was considered to be Psychoanalytical Psychology. The "Second Force" was Behavioral Psychology.

Many of the unbiblical trends throughout society are rooted in the development of Humanistic and Transpersonal Psychology: The "Third" and "Fourth Forces". This includes trends in the evangelical church and the government school system. Recall that Humanistic Psychology is characterized by the doctrines of "Self-Actualization", "Felt Needs", and the "Hierarchy of Needs" each of which is refuted by Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount" in Matthew 6 as well as the rest of God's Word. It was founded by such men as Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers who were also instrumental in developing the "Fourth Force".

THE FOURTH FORCE

While Humanistic Psychology emphasized the potential within the Self, Transpersonal Psychology developed to focus on transcendence of Self. This "transcendence" refers to a development of consciousness towards a unity with what Carl Jung called the "collective unconscious".

"Transpersonal Psychology seeks to explain the meaning of everything... [and] is a remarkable synthesis: a monistic worldview merged with third-force psychology, and an evolutionary theory enfolded in a religious hope that humans, by their own choice, can save the world." (Frances S. Adeney in New Age Rage)

The Aquarian Conspiracy, is a book written by [Marilyn Ferguson](#) in 1980.

Called the "Handbook of the New Age" by "USA Today", it describes an "underground network" that is "working to create a different kind of society based on a vastly enlarged concept of human potential." In preparing to write this book, Ferguson conducted a survey of many of the most influential leaders of the Human Potential - New Age Movement. One of the questions on this survey asked what individual had the greatest influence on the respondent's ideas. The people that were most often named were Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, C. G. Jung, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, and Aldous Huxley.

In The Aquarian Conspiracy, Carl Rogers is quoted in reference to his concepts of the "emerging man", "a new kind of autonomous human being", and an approaching "great evolutionary leap". By several accounts Carl Rogers, like Carl Jung, explored and absorbed the Occult. Carl Rogers, for example, communicated (or so he thought) with his dead wife using a Ouija board.

Abraham Maslow is quoted by Marilyn Ferguson as referring to our "hunger and meaning for transcendence" and that we should "thrill to the godlike possibilities we see in ourselves". Maslow was closely associated with Esalen Institute which, in the early 1960's, was instrumental in promoting the "human potential - New Age" revolution. Esalen published The Farther Reaches of Human Nature as a posthumous collection of Maslow's works. In this book Maslow said, "The value life (spiritual, religious, philosophical, axiological, etc.) is an aspect of human biology and is on the same continuum as 'lower' animal life (rather than being in separated, dichotomized, or mutually exclusive realms)." In the same book Maslow speaks of his psychology of ultimate concerns and transcendence: "...mystical experience - Mystic fusion, either with another person or with the whole cosmos or with anything in between. I mean here the mystical experience as classically described by the religious mystics in the various religious literatures."

Richard Watring, in New Age Management, quotes from an article called, "Transpersonal Psychology: A Working Outline of the Field" by Marcie Boucouvalas. In this article the writer speaks of the goals of fostering "individual self-knowledge and realization of the Transpersonal". She refers to the, "...avenues to Transpersonal awakening: mystical experiences, meditation, yoga, sensory and sleep deprivation, therapeutic assistance and guidance, psychedelic ingestion, hypnosis, biofeedback, mental imagery and relaxation training, physical disciplines and centering exercises."

Transpersonal Psychology effectively embraces the eastern mystical

concept of pantheism by declaring consciousness to be the "ultimate reality" and unity with transcendent conscious the ultimate goal. The Bible teaches that God is Creator and is distinct from his creation. We are to worship the Creator rather than created things (Romans 1:25). Our only means of approaching God is through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, not through human techniques. In Transpersonal Psychology the call to "transcendence" and "self-realization" is the call of the Serpent in the Garden of Eden. (Genesis 3)

The means of "transpersonal transcendence" must be seen for what they are: the ancient techniques of eastern mysticism and the occult strictly forbidden by God's Word (Deuteronomy 18:9-12). May the Lord give us discernment to understand the historical roots of modern influences in our society and in the Church. May we recognize the fads and trends that have developed from Humanistic and Transpersonal Psychology. May we recognize the hopelessness of the "wisdom of man" and realize that the Lord, through his Word and the Holy Spirit, "has given us everything we need for life and godliness". (2 Peter 1:3)

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A State Religion?

"Spirit-Mind-Body"

With government, corporations, and public education promoting human potential philosophies, are we approaching a de facto state religion?

Is this an alarmist question? Or is this a reasonable concern to consider?

Federal and state governments are promoting the Human Potential Religion. Examples of organizations that have contracted with government to preach some or all of the tenets (see below) are Pacific Institute of Seattle, Washington; Edge Learning Institute of Tacoma, Washington; and Resources for Organizations of Eden Prairie, Minnesota. An example of a government installation promoting human potential training is Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Bremerton, Washington under the course titles: Increasing Human Effectiveness, Train the Trainer, Stress Management, and the Psychology of Personal Adjustment.

Private Corporations are spending millions of dollars on Human Potential Training, sometimes forcing their employees to participate. An example of a business who used such training programs is Walker Chevrolet of Tacoma, Washington. Steve Hiatt alleges that Walker Chevrolet fired him when he refused training to be a facilitator for Pacific Institute's "New Age Thinking" program. Mr. Hiatt appealed to the EEO Commission but was ignored.

The education establishment is mobilizing to "restructure" public school curriculum by shifting from merely teaching content area information to teaching children "new ways to think." As an example, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development in Alexandria, Virginia is promoting a program called "Tactics for Thinking" which contains many of the human potential elements under the title "Learning to Learn Skills". The author of the program likens it to the motivational training of Lou Tice's Pacific Institute, whose courses have been entitled "New Age Thinking". A Pacific Institute instructor was quoted as saying that these principles were the same as those used by Hitler and Jim Jones except Pacific Institute uses them for good. "Tactics for Thinking" has been in use in Walla Walla, Washington public schools.

Tenets of the Human Potential Religion

- Deity: Self

Humans have infinite, unlimited potential.

Self is worshipped. The key to success and the answers to all of life's problems lie within the self. Building self-image is a primary goal through daily, ritualistic self-praise, affirmations, and self-talk.

- The Nature of the Universe

There is no absolute truth.

Each person creates his own reality.

Thoughts create our reality and can affect external objects.

- Ritual

Eastern meditation, visualization, guided imagery, looking within, altered states of consciousness, hypnotic states of higher suggestibility, various other psychotechnologies.

Daily affirmations, self-talk, and continual positive thinking.

- Epistemology:

"Truth is within" <<<< [From Unmasking the New Age by Doug Groothuis.]

- Code of Ethics and Behavior

Do not think negative. Reject traditional beliefs that limit you. Only think positive. Visualize your goals with intense imagery in order to make them happen.

You must take control of your life. You must take responsibility because there is no one else.

Believe in yourself.

- **The Purpose of Life**

Not a destination, but a journey.

Self-actualization.

Achieving infinite potential by reprogramming the subconscious through affirmation and self-talk.

- **The Nature of Man**

Infinite potential.

Guided by the impersonal, amoral subconscious which ultimately controls behavior and therefore must be reprogrammed for success.

According to "Caesar": "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Caesar's courts have held that government may not advance religion.

"Religion" - Belief in a divine or superhuman power or powers; Any specific system of belief, worship, conduct, often involving a code of ethics and a philosophy (theory of the principles underlying conduct, thought, knowledge, and the nature of the universe: including ethics, epistemology, and metaphysics).

Government should not promote religion and government should not meddle in people's minds.

The above is the text (slightly modified) of a pamphlet we published in 1987-88.

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[The Human Potential Movement](#)

[I Support the U.S. Constitution](#)

Confronting "Motivational" Training Programs

Some examples of unbiblical philosophies & techniques: _

Transcendental Management - Share and Network - Global Transformation - High Touch Need - Look "Within" - Deep Breathing and Visualization - "Explain How the Subconscious Mind Works!" - "Your Subconscious Mind is Programmed in Two Ways"

Facing up to the fact that we're deceived: _

Humanistic & Transpersonal Psychology 1 of 2 - The False Gospel of Self Esteem - Questions for Christians about Psychology

Abide in the Vine - Walking in the Spirit

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The Human Potential Movement

What every Christian should know.

The "Human Potential" movement is a branch of the "New Age" movement that is especially packaged to be acceptable to corporations, government, small businesses, and the educational establishment in the form of "motivational seminars" or "Learning to Learn skills".

Its principles are based on eastern mysticism and the occult, but the terminology has been changed to sound scientific and psychological.

Claiming that humans have unlimited or infinite potential, the goal then becomes to achieve this infinite potential.

- This is accomplished by rejecting traditional beliefs that limit us and avoiding any negative thoughts.
- The subconscious must be reprogrammed by daily affirmations, positive thinking, and constant self-talk (e.g., "I am great, I am wonderful, I will achieve!").
- The ability to be reprogrammed can be enhanced by consciousness altering techniques that create a state of higher suggestibility, such as meditation, visualization, guided imagery, and other inward looking activities. These are also promoted for stress reduction.
- "Self" is said to be the source of all success and each person can "take responsibility" to "create his own reality".

The "New Age" principles

The above summary of "human potential" principles plus many other elements in these training programs are founded on the premises and goals of the "New Age" movement.

- All is One: The external world and consciousness/thoughts are one and the same (monism) which accounts for the occult powers of the mind (e.g., psychokinesis and levitation).

- Man is a Divine Being: We are all part of God, so we are God (pantheism).
 - Life is for evolutionary purposes: There is no destination in life. Meaning is found in the journey through the process of reincarnation and the guiding impersonal force of karma.
 - Self-actualization: Awareness of the "True Self" within leads to mastery of your own reality.
 - There are many paths to God: Since each person creates their own reality and there is no absolute truth, each person's religious views are equally valid.
 - God is the sum total of all that there is: God is impersonal, a force, energy.
 - The earth is at the dawn of a "New Age" of peace, harmony, and enlightenment that will be achieved through a global transformation; a quantum leap of human evolution. The global transformation will occur after a "critical mass" of individuals have achieved personal transformation through mystical means including meditation, guided visualization, and other looking within techniques.
-

The Biblical View

- There is only one God and he is personal.
 - There is one reality and it is created by God.
 - Jesus is the only way, truth, life, and means of relationship with God.
 - Satan fell when he exalted "Self" to be above God through positive thinking, self-talk, affirmations: "I will... I will... I will..." (Isaiah 14:12-14)
 - Satan seduced Eve into rebellion by contradicting God's negative thinking, "...you will surely die" if you eat the fruit.
 - Satan was the positive one, "you will not surely die."
 - Instead he told Eve, "you will be like God, knowing good and evil."
 - As a Christian, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me", as opposed to, "I can do all things through the Occult powers of my own mind."
 - We are to "die to self" and "it is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me."
 - Biblical meditation has nothing to do with leaving our rational mind and entering an altered state of consciousness. Biblical meditation is the conscious pondering of God and His truth.
-

Warning: Satan comes as an "Angel of Light".

"In latter times some will abandon the faith, following after seducing spirits and the doctrines of devils." (1Timothy 4:1)

The above is the text (slightly modified) of a pamphlet we published in 1987-88.

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Some examples of unbiblical philosophies & techniques: _

[Transcendental Management](#) - [Share and Network](#) - [Global Transformation](#) - [High Touch Need](#) - [Look "Within"](#) - [Deep Breathing and Visualization](#) - ["Explain How the Subconscious Mind Works!"](#) - ["Your Subconscious Mind is Programmed in Two Ways"](#)

Facing up to the fact that we're deceived: _

[Humanistic & Transpersonal Psychology 1 of 2](#) - [The False Gospel of Self Esteem](#) - [Questions for Christians about Psychology](#)

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Multi-Level Marketing

Amway/Quixtar? Reliv? Equinox/Trek Alliance? Mary Kay?
Herbalife? etc. etc.

Network Marketing?

"Faithfully follow the **three-foot rule**" ??

"Anyone within a three-foot distance, we talk to about Reliv," Arturo explains. Arturo is a Reliv "[Ambassador](#)".

Are you all excited about a new business opportunity? Do you also profess to be a follower of Jesus? Please consider my concerns. I'm concerned when people speak in messianic terms about a business, a movement, an organization, or a leader.

It's not the "[business model](#)" or the products being sold I'm concerned about when it comes to MLM. It is the [idolatry](#) and the [cult mentality](#) that is often promoted by these business organizations:

Counterfeit evangelism... not evangelizing for Jesus but for "the business".

Counterfeit conversions... to "the business" and its "community" not to Jesus and the Body of Christ.

Counterfeit zeal... for "building the business", for building the "downline", not for the things of God, not for the calling of the New Testament for the Church, not for making disciples of

Jesus... but for making disciples of the "upline".

The following provide examples of the [False christs and false gospels](#) promoted by the many "must-buy-for-the-success-of-your business" [books](#) that the upline promote and which, in turn, promote the [universal vision](#) being given to a rebellious mankind:

[Think and Grow Rich](#) by Napoleon Hill,

[Psycho-Cybernetics](#) by Maxwell Maltz,

[Don't Let Anybody Steal Your Dream](#) - Dexter Yager with Douglas Wead,

[The Possible Dream: A Candid Look at Amway](#) - Charles Paul Conn,

[Compassionate Capitalism](#) - Rich DeVos, Co-founder of Amway,

[See You At the Top](#) - Zig Ziglar.

Please! Watch out when anything draws your allegiance and your zeal away to itself. Only Jesus deserves our devotion. If we have true zeal for our Lord and being the Bride of Christ, who has anything left for another Messiah?

We are called to be [Ambassadors for Christ!](#)

[The God of the Bible versus the god of multi-level marketing](#)

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[What if you found yourself in a cult?](#)

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Demonic Channeler

This letter to the Bremerton Sun (7/19/98) was in response to a "Forum" topic about, "Yelm resident, J. Z. Knight, who claims to 'channel' an ancient warrior named Ramtha". The Sun said that J.Z. Knight is seeking acceptance in religious and academic circles.

Self-Esteem, Sorcery, and Visions of Global Unity are what J.Z. Knight teaches. And yet it is not so different from what is being taught by psychologists, feminists, shamans, the Dalai Lama, and even many Evangelical Church organizations. Her demonic channeling is just a more bizarre presentation than most.

The whole world is being prepared for the counterfeit Christ, by "Ramtha" and others, as warned by Paul of Tarsus in a letter to the Thessalonians, "The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved."

[Occult Terms](#)

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[Harry Potter & The Chronicles of Narnia](#)

[The False Gospel of Self Esteem](#)

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A book review on

MEGATRENDS

By JOHN NAISBITT

"Ten New Directions Transforming Our Lives"

"A Road Map to the 21st Century"

This book review was written in May 1990.

Megatrends was Published in 1980, 1982 by Warner Books.

Megatrends, an extremely popular and widely quoted book, has been considered by many people to be a mainstream book with great significance to the business community. John Naisbitt is known as a "futurist", and many have considered him to be an objective observer of trends in society.

Actually, far from being objective journalism:

- Megatrends presents the social tenets of the New Age movement.
- John Naisbitt uses a form of propaganda called "bandwagon" propaganda. He is saying, in effect, "Come on everybody, this is the way we're all going, so everybody get on board!"
- In the jargon of the Human Potential movement, which John Naisbitt applauds, he

is, in a sense, trying to reprogram our national subconscious to give us a vision for the New Age.

Between Two Eras

- The main premise of Megatrends is that we are between two eras, i.e., we are in a transition from an old era, an industrial society, to a new era, an information society.

The Global Village

- "We must now adjust to living in a world of interdependent communities".
- Naisbitt says that the "Global Village" has been created by computers and satellite communications technology.
- "Satellites have turned the earth inward, upon itself."
- Naisbitt repeats the popular New Age rallying cry, "Think Globally, act locally."

High-Tech/High-Touch

- Highly personal value system

"Our response to the high tech all around us was the evolution of a highly personal value system to compensate for the impersonal nature of technology. The result was the new self-help or personal growth movement, which eventually became the human potential movement."

- Human Potential

"Technology and our human potential are the two great challenges and adventures facing humankind today."

- Spiritual Demands

"We must learn to balance the material wonders of technology with the spiritual demands of our human nature."

- Human Potential Movement

"We created the group-therapy movement, which led to the personal growth movement, which in turn led to the human potential movement (est, TM, Rolfing, Yoga, Zen, and so forth- all very high touch)."

Networking and Ancient Tribes

- The Aquarian Conspiracy

"Networking, notes Marilyn Ferguson, who has written extensively about the subject in The Aquarian Conspiracy, is done by 'conferences, phone calls, air travel, books, phantom organizations, papers, pamphleteering, photocopying, lectures, workshops, parties, grapevines, mutual friends, summit meetings, coalitions, tapes, newsletters.'"

- Ancient Tribes replacing Family and Church

"The strength of traditional networks such as family, church, and neighborhoods is dissipating in American society. The gap is being filled with new networks functioning, as Marilyn Ferguson puts it, as the spontaneous modern-day equivalent of the ancient tribe. Networks fulfill the high-touch need for belonging."

Global Peace: Human Potential, Networking, Interdependence

- The New Era

"We are living in the time of the parenthesis, the time between eras."

"Do we have the innovative ability to venture forward into the future?"

"Even while we think globally, the place to make a difference politically is at the local rather than the national level. Whether the issue is energy, politics,

community, self-help, entrepreneurship, the consumer movement, or wholistic health, the new creed is one of self-reliance and local initiative."

"This newly evolving world will require its own structures. We are substituting the network model of organization and communication."

- Computers will keep track of us

"We created the hierarchical, pyramidal, managerial system because we needed it to keep track of people and things people did; with the computer to keep track, we can restructure our institutions horizontally."

"Today we live in a world of overlapping networks, not just a constellation of networks but a galaxy of networking constellations."

- Participate in our own Evolution

"That is why the human potential movement that advocates both discipline and responsibility is such a critical part of the high-tech/high-touch equation. By discovering our potential as human beings we participate in the evolution of the human race. We develop the inner knowledge, the wisdom, perhaps, required to guide our exploration of technology."

"With the high-touch wisdom gained studying our potential as human beings, we may learn the ways to master the greatest high-tech challenge that has ever faced mankind - the threat of total annihilation by nuclear warfare."

"High-tech/high-touch. The principle symbolizes the need for balance between our physical and spiritual realities."

"The new leader is a facilitator, not an order giver."

- Our Great Hope: Global Interdependence

"Instead of resisting increased economic interdependence, we should be embracing it wholeheartedly. In my view, it is our great hope for peace."

John Naisbitt and the "Aquarian Conspiracy"

- The Aquarian Conspiracy was written by Marilyn Ferguson in 1980.
- Called the "Handbook of the New Age" by "USA Today", it describes an "underground network" that is "working to create a different kind of society based on a vastly enlarged concept of human potential."
- John Naisbitt wrote the foreword to the 1987 edition.

"My book, Megatrends, was the soft-core document on change; The Aquarian Conspiracy was the 'hard-core stuff'".

"During times of great change, people seek some kind of structure. Such a search for parameters accounts in part for the current religious revival. Hundreds of new churches have been established during the last two decades, helped in part by electronic media; many of these churches have highly structured fundamentalist beliefs. A similar proliferation of new religious groups occurred 150 years ago, when we were in the midst of another basic shift, from an agricultural to an industrial economic base."

"There is, however, a rapidly growing population to whom such external structures are not appealing; these are the "inner-directed," people inclined to reach down inside to their own spiritual resources. So we are experiencing a simultaneous revival in personal spirituality. The individualism of the new spirituality is fed by the individualistic nature of an information society, and also by the trend I have called the 'high-touch response' to all of the high-tech in today's society. It is to this spirit that The Aquarian Conspiracy speaks." (click on the title)

The New Age Catalogue

- The New Age Catalogue, was published in 1988 by the editors of "Body, Mind, and Spirit" magazine.
- The catalogue includes books on channeling, Edgar Cayce, crystals, tarot cards, meditation, yoga, etc.
- Megatrends, along with The Aquarian Conspiracy, is featured in the section called, "The Planet".

Megatrends 2000: Ten New Directions for the 1990's

- Another more recent book by John Naisbitt, written with Patricia Aburdene. Published in 1990.

Between Two Ages

- John Naisbitt's views in Megatrends are actually just a popularization of ideas already expressed twelve years earlier.
- In 1970, Zbigniew Brzezinski wrote [Between Two Ages: America's Role in the Technetronic Era](#) (click on the title).

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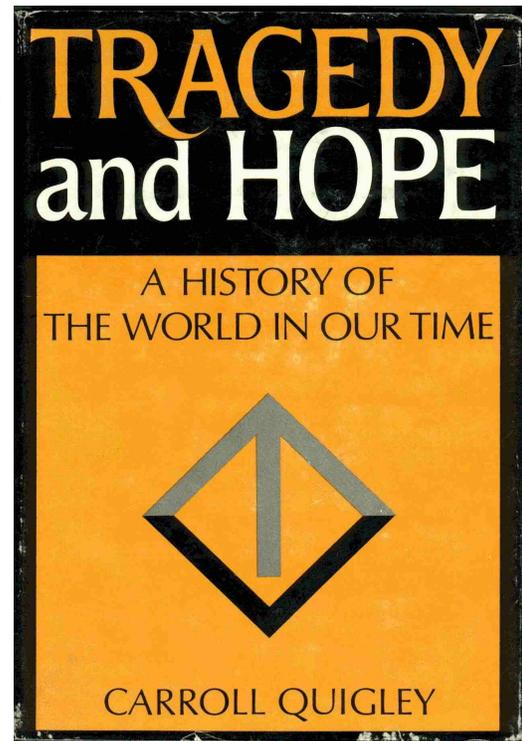
NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS

This letter to the Editor of the Sun was published August 23rd, 1998, in response to the "Forum" topic on Federal Identification Numbers... "From the Cradle to the Grave". An accompanying cartoon shows a mother and a baby and their doctor with bar codes on their foreheads. The Forum question reads: "The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 requires that Americans be assigned a federal identification number at birth to track all their medical records. Is a single database under federal control a good idea?"

The week before the Forum was a preview of the topic: "Supporters say the benefits are enormous - for instance, tracking carriers of AIDS or HIV to stop its spread. But critics say benefits of the plan do not outweigh the price paid in lost privacy, and most Americans already worry about the security of their medical records. Should all Americans be given a federal ID number to track their medical care?"

[Carroll Quigley](#) was President Clinton's professor at Georgetown University. Clinton said, in his first nomination acceptance speech, that Mr. Quigley clarified his "vision".

Quigley says in his 1966 book, Tragedy and Hope, on page 866, "planning" by experts will largely take the place of the industrial tycoon and the democratic voter: "Hopefully, the elements of choice and freedom may survive for the ordinary individual... But, in general, his freedom and choice will be controlled within very narrow alternatives by the fact that he will be numbered from birth and followed, as a number, through his educational training, his required military or other public service, his tax contributions, his health and medical requirements, and his final retirement and death benefits."



Whether the Democrats or the Republicans are in power, national IDs and numbers are about controlling the people. I'm convinced that these trends are leading to the fulfillment of Revelation 13:17, "...that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name."

Our hope, however, is not in political action or armed revolt, but in becoming reconciled to God through Jesus Christ.

[The Good News](#)

[The True Nature of the World System](#)

[THE NEW WORLD ORDER - Part I](#)

[Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism](#)

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Initiation to the 33rd Degree

Jim Shaw's Initiation to the 33rd Degree of Freemasonry (prior to 1988) took place at the Washington D.C. Temple at which the participants drank out of human skulls, and included: Two former U. S. Presidents, a Scandinavian King, an internationally famous Evangelist, two other internationally famous Clergymen, and a very high federal official gave him his certificate.

Consider the participants:

1. Two former U.S. Presidents
2. Scandinavian King
3. An internationally famous Evangelist
4. Two other internationally famous Clergymen
5. A very high federal official

Who do you think these people were?

[The True Nature of the World System](#)

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A Secret Society

Opus Dei

5/29/06

Time Magazine (4/24/06) documented a lot about this Roman Catholic secret society. Evangelicals who are being seduced into endorsing Roman Catholicism need to face facts. The Pope endorses Opus Dei. Its principles derive from what is Roman Catholicism. Just one example is the "self-mortification" that some Opus Dei members perform that is rooted in Catholicism's false gospel of works and the concept of "penance". The Time Magazine article quotes a biography of the founder, Josemaria Escriva, from a witness of this priest's penance:

"I began to hear the forceful blows of his discipline... there were more than a thousand terrible blows, precisely timed. The floor was covered in blood."

Some of the current members use the following devices for their self-mortification, according to Time:

"Cilice - A spiked chain that some members strap around their upper thigh for two hours a day as an act of penance."

"Discipline - A small, cordlike whip that some members use once a week to flagellate themselves during the recitation of a prayer."

Such self-absorbed techniques are not taught in the Bible!

"Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."
Philippians 3:2-3

"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."
John 19:30

"So Christ was once

offered to bear the
sins of many; and
unto them that look
for him shall he
appear the second
time without sin
unto salvation."
Hebrews 9:28

For a Biblical teaching on
suffering please consider, "[Out of
the Depths](#)" by Steve Phillips.

[Endorsing Roman Catholicism](#)

[Freemasons and Other Occult
Brotherhoods](#)

[Evangelicals Prostituting
Themselves with Roman
Catholicism](#)

[The Roman Catholic Empire](#)

[Return to Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

<http://procinwarn.com>

EDUCATION FOR THE *NEW WORLD ORDER*

This is an outline of one of the presentations I was giving in about 1988-90. If you have any questions or comments about the topics I've laid out here, please [email me](#).

I. Background - How I came to understand the system.

- A. PSNS "Train the Trainer" Course
- B. "Increasing Human Effectiveness" Course
- C. Citizens Against A State Religion
- D. Association for Biblical Christianity
- E. Be a "Berean"

II. Biblical Warning: World-wide Deception

- A. Satan's Self-Talk and Affirmations

Isaiah 14:12-14

- B. The Serpent, Eve, and "Human Potential"

Genesis 3

- C. Global Rebellion: The Time of Noah

Genesis 6:5

D. Global Rebellion: The Tower of Babel

Genesis 11:4 "Zamam" and Human Imagination

E. Lovers of Self

2 Timothy 3:1,2

F. That Serpent Satan Who Deceives the Whole World

Revelation 12:9

G. One World Government, Economic System, and Religion

Revelation 13:7, 17, 8

III. Popularizing the Universal Vision: Self-Esteem, Sorcery, and Global Unity

A. Psycho-Cybernetics

B. Think and Grow Rich

Deuteronomy 18:9-12

C. [Megatrends](#)

IV. Deception Via the Professional Establishment

A. Dualism, Scientific Materialism, and Monism

B. "The Third Force" - Humanistic Psychology

C. "The Fourth Force" - Transpersonal Psychology

V. Towards a "Planetary Consciousness" From the Top Down

A. [The World Perspectives Series](#)

B. [Between Two Ages](#)

C. [The Aquarian Conspiracy](#)

1. [Marilyn Ferguson](#) 1980, 1987

2. "Underground network working to create a different kind of society based on a vastly enlarged concept of human potential"

3. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Aldous Huxley, Carl Jung, Abraham Maslow

4. Chapter 9 - "Flying and Seeing: New Ways to Learn"

a. Latent Powers and Transcendence

b. "The Psychology of Becoming has to be smuggled into the schools."

c. Fallacy of the Back-to-Basics Movement

d. The Limiting Personal Beliefs of our Students

e. Personal Transformation

f. "Teaching as a Subversive Activity"

g. Learning for a New World: Self-Actualization

h. Learning: The Emergent Paradigm

(1) Transpersonal Education

(2) Assumptions of the Old Paradigm of Education vs. the New Paradigm of Learning

- i. Learning is Transforming
- j. Whole Brain Knowing
- k. The Need to Transcend Culture
- l. The Transformation of Teachers
- m. Beverly Galyean: Confluent Education
- n. The New Curriculum
- o. Beyond Schools

"The almost sexual interplay of ideas, yin and yang, old and new, East and West, results in a kind of collective synthesis: a creative community, hospitable to risk and imagination."

- p. Children of the New Paradigm

5. John Naisbitt - 1987 Forward

6. New Age Catalogue

D. Corporate Foundations and the Government School System

E. Infiltrating the New Age into Society

F. The California Self-Esteem Task Force

G. The National Commission on Human Resources

H. Current Events: "Peace, Peace!"

Jeremiah 6:14, 8:11, 1 Thessalonians 5:2,3

VI. Two World Views

A. Humans Basically Good

B. Humans are Evil by Nature

C. God established:

1. The Family

2. Civil Government

3. The Church

VII. Trends in the Government Schools: Self-Esteem, Sorcery, and Global Unity

A. Restructuring and Liberating: Humans and Institutions

B. Global Citizens

C. Global Ecology: Worshipping Created Things

D. The Whole Child: Body, Mind, and Emotions/Spirit

Zamam

E. How to Think / Accelerated Learning

Zamam

F. Government Schools as Tribal Centers

G. Universal Values

H. Programs

1. Tactics for Thinking

2. Development of Understanding of Self and Others (DUSO)

3. Schools for the 21st Century
4. Positive Action
5. CKSD Human Potential Health Curriculum
6. Strategy 2020

[Central Kitsap, Asst. Superintendent, WEA leader: Terry Bergeson - Now Washington State Superintendent, 1998]

John Naisbitt / Marilyn Ferguson / Zbigniew Brzezinski
Bandwagon Restructuring

7. Natural Helpers, DARE, Washington Teen Institute
8. "I Am Somebody" PTA Program

VIII. Recommendations: [The Biblical View of Education](#)

REFERENCES

PAGAN BOOKS

"SELF" magazine; Psycho-Cybernetics, Maxwell Maltz; "New Age Activists: What Is" newspaper; Think and Grow Rich, Napoleon Hill; Success Through PMA, Napoleon Hill and W. Clement Stone; Wishcraft, Barbara Sher with Annie Gottlieb; [Megatrends](#), John Naisbitt; The Aquarian Conspiracy, Marilyn Ferguson, The Aquarian Conspiracy, (latest edition); The New Age Catalogue; What to Say When You Talk to Yourself, Shad Helmstetter from Self-Talk Institute; Predictive Parenting, Shad Helmstetter;

"The World Perspective Series": The Open Conspiracy, H.G. Wells; The Art of Loving, Erich Fromm; World Indivisible, Konrad Adenauer; The Dynamics of Faith, Paul Tillich; (and many other);

[Between Two Ages](#), Zbigniew Brzezinski; GAIA, J.E. Lovelock; Megatrends 2000, John Naisbitt.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Occult Invasion (formerly America: The Sorcerer's New Apprentice), Dave Hunt; Psychoheresy, Dr. Bobgan; The Biblical View of Self-Esteem, Self-Love, Self-Image, Jay Adams; The Seduction of Christianity, Dave Hunt; Beyond Seduction, Dave Hunt; Whatever Happened to Heaven?, Dave Hunt; That Hideous Strength, C.S. Lewis (Disclaimer: many other books and views of C.S. Lewis I would not recommend... that's another story for another time.); The Archon Conspiracy, Dave Hunt.

[The Biblical View of Education](#)

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

[The False Gospel of Self Esteem](#)

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Lesser of Two Evils?

Some professing Christians may justify their yoking with Bush or Kerry as the choosing between the "Lesser of Two Evils". But, did our Lord Jesus pick sides between the licentiousness of the woman caught in adultery and the legalism of the Pharisees? Did Jesus choose sides between the tax collector collaborators and the political radical zealots? Did Jesus politically campaign for or against Caesar? Did Paul politically campaign for or against Caesar? Did Paul take sides between the temple prostitutes and the Religious Legalists? Did Paul promote Plato's Republic or Caesar's Tyranny?

[Both Presidential Candidates are Members of the Same Occult Brotherhood](#)

[Bush & Gore Deception](#)

[Faith-Based Counterfeit](#)

But if a powerful ruler thinks like Machiavelli, what is the most powerful means by which to control the outcome of any conflict in society? Control both sides! If Machiavelli is smart enough to think of such deceptions then certainly Satan and his demons are even smarter. And certainly they have inspired worldly leaders in this regard for centuries. Consider how Joshua was also caught up in such worldly, fleshly thinking...

[Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism](#)

[The True Nature of the World System](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[THE NEW WORLD ORDER - Part I](#)

[Machiavelli and How Rulers Think](#)

[Important Principles to Understand](#)

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Are There Any Believers in the Catholic Church?

If there are, it's because they've trusted in the real Jesus in terms of the Biblical Gospel.

A Roman Catholic person cannot be saved unless they reject the gospel of Roman Catholicism and trust in the real Jesus in terms of the real Gospel...

in which case they're not Roman Catholic anymore!

To my Catholic Neighbors

[What must I do to be saved?](#)

[The Roman Catholic Empire](#)

[Counterfeit Christianity](#)

[A Cinematic Crucifix? Mel Gibson's Catholic Movie](#)

[Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

[A Cinematic Crucifix?](#)

[Mel Gibson's Catholic Movie](#)

[False Gospel](#) - [The Harlot is Seducing the Bride](#) - [Mystery Babylon](#) - [Icon Productions](#) - [Mystic Occult Nun](#) - [Quotes about Mel Gibson's Movie](#)

[Mel Gibson's Secret Meeting With Fatima Visionary](#)

[Selling Mel Gibson's Video](#)

"Evangelical churches are currently the target of a massive campaign to sell them the video of Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*. This "very Marian film" (according to Mel) is based upon the Catholic ritual of the Stations of the Cross as seen from the "perpetual Virgin Mary's" point of view.

"It is being marketed to churches exclusively by Zondervan Publishers and Fox Home Entertainment, which are owned by media mogul Rupert Murdoch (who also owns 20th Century Fox Studios, Fox News, and Fox TV Network). For his huge contributions to the Catholic Church and the Holy See, Murdoch received a Papal Knighthood.

"Shouldn't we take heed to the warning of Scripture that false teachers would arise and "bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them . . . [and they will] make merchandise of you" (2 Pt 2:1,3)?"

T.A. McMahon
Executive Director
The Berean Call
TBC Today (email)
6/24/04

Showtime for the Sheep? The Church and the Passion
of the Christ

3/21/04

I continue to be astounded as to the degree that professing Evangelical Christians are being deceived by the media onslaught associated with this movie.

Roman Catholicism teaches a false gospel of works that leads to eternal hell!

Followers of Jesus should be warning against this deception, not yoking with it and endorsing it.

Evangelical celebrities and clergymen of mega-churches were invited to elitist pre-showings of the movie to make them feel important. Some of them even think that they "advised" Mel Gibson about how he should recut the movie. But it was about manipulation, power, prestige, and marketing (including the merchandise... trinkets... nail necklaces).

Now, many many Evangelicals think that it is the radical Christian thing to do to promote and endorse this Catholic movie. What a great deception!

These types of delusions will only get worse as we approach the end!

Lord Jesus help us!

"...for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us;
neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee."

2 Chronicles 20:12

"...When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall
lift up a standard against him."

Isaiah 59:19

[Quotes about Mel Gibson's Movie](#)

Mel Gibson's Catholic Movie
A Cinematic Crucifix?

The Harlot is seducing the Bride

- Why are professing Evangelical Christians so easily caught up in, and manipulated by, every worldly, media driven, celebrity driven hype-fad-bandwagon?
- My wife says that she does not want to have "Hollywood's" grotesque imagery in her mind the rest of her life as she desires to read God's word about our Lord Jesus Christ.
- God has chosen the foolishness of preaching to save people, not intense emotional dramatic presentations by people who don't even profess

to trust in the Jesus of the Bible in terms of the true Biblical Gospel.

- The Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox systems have always produced icons and images of "God", ascribing mystical powers to their images, and treating the images with worshipful adoration.

The Harlot is seducing the Bride

MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT

A Cinematic Crucifix?

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MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT

And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman **drunken with the blood of the saints**, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

Revelation 17:1-6

And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are **seven mountains**, on which the woman sitteth.

Revelation 17:9

And the woman which thou sawest is **that great city**, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

Revelation 17:18

Mel Gibson's Catholic Movie

"THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST"

Icon Productions

A Cinematic Crucifix?

If you see this film, evaluate whether the Gospel is preached in a clear, understandable way. And if not, then pray for wisdom as to why the film was produced at all.

What is an "icon"? What is a "crucifix"? What is the "sacrament of penance"?

Roman Catholicism preaches a different Jesus.

The Harlot is seducing the Bride

"What motivated Mel Gibson to make "The Passion of The Christ"?"

A Book by Anne Catherine
Emmerich - "(1774-1824),
a German Augustinian nun-
mystic, stigmatist,
visionary, prophet, and
victim soul who wrote The
Delorous Passion of Our
Lord Jesus Christ." - From
"The Catholic Company"
[website](#)

"What motivated Mel Gibson to make "The Passion of The Christ"?"

One of the reasons was
this book that he
accidentally stumbled
upon; it planted a seed in
his mind and finally played
a large role in motivating
him to make the film. While
"The Passion of The
Christ" is based on the
Gospels of the Bible, this
book played an
instrumental role in Mel
Gibson's motivation to
make his new and
stunning masterpiece."

From The Premier
International Fan [Website](#)

I pray that our Lord

**Jesus would work in
individuals' hearts, in the
midst of and in spite of
the movie and the intent
of the system that
produced it.**

**For a glimpse of who is
yoking together to
promote this movie:**

Quotes about Mel Gibson's
Movie

Are There Any Believers in the Catholic Church?

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Four Ways Christians Are Deceived

Mystery, Babylon the Great

Tolerance

Crusades for "Morality"

Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel

The Foolishness of Preaching

The Roman Catholic Empire

1/31/04

[False Gospel - The Harlot is Seducing the Bride - Mystery Babylon - Icon Productions - Mystic Occult Nun - Quotes about Mel Gibson's Movie](#)

[The Roman Catholic Empire](#)

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Christmas is its own Religion

The power that Christmas holds over people is becoming increasingly evident. Christmas truly is a religion in and of itself. The emotional attachment that people feel about it is profound. When one raises questions about this the reaction from the adherents of this religion is also very emotional.

I have never been one to crusade against Christians taking part in this cultural tradition. I have always recommended that we make the most of every opportunity to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified. But, I have recommended that followers of Jesus recognize Christmas for what it is and not be seduced into the religion of Christmas, trusting the Lord for us to somehow be in the world but not of the world.

The religion of Christmas has various factions who zealously battle one another for their view of their religion. But they don't realize that they are still adherents of the same religion! You have those who promote Santa Claus and/or those who promote materialistic consumerism/corporate marketing and/or those who promote "community" and the "human spirit" and altruism and giving and service and/or the religious icon and relic and mystical aspects of the religion. Even those who promote non-sectarian, multi-cultural holidays or celebration of winter are all still part of this religion of Christmas, because this religion predates Christianity anyway!

This is a religion that is effective in uniting Roman Catholics with Mormons and Freemasons, with corporate-climbing fortune seekers, with drunken hedonists with Unitarian-Universalists and Presbyterians and Methodists and Yule Log Celts and Wiccans and Seeker-Friendly Mega-Churches and agnostic do-gooders, etc. etc. The religion of Christmas is also promoted by those who see it as a front in the culture wars. Both the polarized culture wars within American society and the broader, far more deadly, global culture wars. The battles of this world system are not our battles, brothers and sisters.

Lord Jesus, help us to be YOUR ambassadors in the midst of this corrupt world system. Help us to preach the real Gospel in the midst of all of these

counterfeits.

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The Hegelian Dialectic

Christ-Mass vs. Holy-Day and the "True Meaning of Christmas"

Satan works both sides of every worldly conflict.

Here is yet another worldly conflict being hyped by the media and professing Christians are being drawn in and manipulated by it.

For decades the polarized, contrived conflict was about "commercialization" vs. the "true meaning of Christmas".

Lately, it has been about saying, "Merry Christmas" vs. "Happy Holidays" or "Seasons Greetings".

I used to respond to these controversies by saying, "The true meaning of Christmas is Easter!" But eventually I realized I was invoking one pagan tradition to explain another!

When we zealously take sides in these Christmas debates we are misrepresenting the Lord and His Gospel.

Commercialism? The world system is all about the love of money. Shall we demand our rights to have shopping mall employees wish us a "Merry Christmas" or to have Christmas trees in government schools and government buildings?

First of all, we are not called to "demand our rights". Secondly, Christmas at best is a cultural holiday of general society. And at worst it is a Catholic holy day filled with traditions rooted in ancient paganism.

The New Testament does not tell us to set aside a day or a season to celebrate the birth of Christ. There is no holiday at all established by the

New Testament. Our whole life is to be about the Word made flesh, Emmanuel - God with us, Jesus who died and rose again.

"Keep Christ in Christmas"? The real Jesus has never BEEN a part of Christmas.

"Jesus is the reason for the season"? Not really...

But, we still make the most of every opportunity to proclaim Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

It use to really bother me when people would say, "Xmas". Now I actually think "Xmas" is better. It does not use the Lord's title in vain. May the Lord help us to sort these things out.

To what degree a family does or does not take part in the cultural traditions of Christmas is a disputable matter, in my view.

There is a decorated tree in my living room. But my family knows where I stand and I remind them from time to time.

I recommend that Christians not "fight" for Christmas against the pagans. I also recommend that Christians not campaign against Christmas among the pagans. I do want my fellow believers not to be caught up in the idolatry either way. But, Lord Jesus, I pray that you would help us to use every opportunity to testify of your goodness, power, love and offer of the free gift of salvation through faith in you.

[The Word Made Flesh](#)

[The Spirit of "Christ-Mass" is the Spirit of Anti-Christ](#)

The Word Made Flesh

In December when the world celebrates Christ-Mass and Holy Days (Holidays), the winter solstice and the love of money, we can make the most of the cultural traditions to proclaim that the Word was made Flesh.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And **the Word was made flesh**, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

John 1:1-14

[Idolatry - Scriptures](#)

[The Spirit of "Christ-Mass" is the Spirit of Anti-Christ](#)

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The Spirit of "Christ-Mass" is the Spirit of Anti-Christ.

Just consider the "gospel" promoted by the movie industry from "It's a Wonderful Life" (1946) to "The Polar Express" (2004).

From the Polar Express website:

"...the wonder of life never fades for those who believe."

"It doesn't matter where the train is going. What matters is deciding to get on."

Holidays:
[The Word Made Flesh](#)

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George Otis, Jr

Mystical Warfare in Kitsap County

This article was written about one week prior to the referenced conference.

Transformation & Unity

"Transformation" and "unity" will be the topics of a gathering of religious leaders April 6th, 2001 in Poulsbo, Washington. The speaker at the conference will be Moral Government theology author and "Spiritual Mapping" advocate, George Otis Jr. of The Sentinel Group, in Lynnwood, Washington. The local newspaper, The Sun, bills this meeting as, "one of the largest interdenominational gatherings in Kitsap county" and calls Otis, "an internationally known missionary and researcher [who] will share with local Christians how to transform their communities through faith and prayer".

"Author and speaker George Otis Jr. will speak to more than 100 local religious leaders and then to more than 1,000 people at Christ Memorial Church [building]" according to a March 31 article in the Bremerton Sun by Marietta Nelson. The meeting is actually being hosted by First Lutheran Church of Poulsbo who had previously hired Bill Robinson as a consultant in evangelism. According to the Sun article it was Robinson who invited Otis to speak after hearing him at Overlake Christian Church. "Between 40 and 50 churches from across the spectrum of Christianity are sponsoring the event. Robinson said he hopes Otis' stories will help unify the 'body of Christ' in Kitsap County."

Moral Government

George Otis Jr. wrote The God They Never Knew in 1982. Winkey Pratney,

another Moral Government teacher, lists Otis' book under "Moral Government" on his website page called, "Twenty to Change the World: Master Book List Of Apologetics Readings". Both Otis and Pratney have long had a ministry relationship with Youth With A Mission (YWAM). The God They Never Knew is dedicated by Otis to Pratney, Harry Conn, and Gordon Olson. Conn and Olson both wrote Moral Government theology books that influenced many in youth oriented parachurch organizations.

According to the "Apologetics Index" (which I don't necessarily endorse on everything) and several authors such as E. Calvin Beisner and Alan Gomes, Moral Government theology teaches that, "God does not fulfill some of His own prophecies. God changes His mind and is not immutable. God does not have sovereign control over earthly events. God does not know His future actions. God does not know ahead of time the free decisions of humans. God's foreknowledge is limited in the area of man's free decisions. Many of the things God predicted never came true." (Ironically, E. Calvin Beisner is a member of the Theological Review Committee of The Coalition on Revival (COR)). For more information on Moral Government theology, in general, and George Otis Jr., in particular click on the following links:

<http://www.apologeticsindex.org/m05.html>

<http://people.biola.edu/faculty/alang/Resource/YWAM.pdf>

Download the above pdf booklet for more info. (12/19/04)

To examine the website of Otis' Sentinel Group follow this link:

<http://www.sentinelgroup.org/>

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Spiritual Mapping & Spiritual Warfare

The Sentinel Group website emphasizes "Community Transformation" and "Spiritual Mapping". The website speaks of two videos produced by the organization, "Transformations" and "Transformations II: The Glory Spreads". In promoting an upcoming conference in Seattle the site says,

"You will hear firsthand from believers portrayed in Transformations and the soon to be released, Transformations II - The Glory Spreads. This gathering is carefully structured

to allow time for personal reflection - time to listen, to respond, to worship, and to wait upon the Lord. Join us! And bring others who want their communities transformed! Together, we'll take a major step toward transformation of our own cities and regions."

Also on the website is the following book offer:

"Breaking Strongholds in Your City

Edited by C. Peter Wagner

"How to Use Spiritual Mapping to Make Your Prayers More Strategic, Effective and Targeted - C. Peter Wagner edits the unique collection of teachings and case studies presented by various contributors [sic] showing how to unite spiritual mapping with strategic, targeted prayer"

Al Dager of Media Spotlight documents that George Otis Jr's "Spiritual Mapping" is among the unbiblical mystical techniques of "spiritual warfare" being promoted by the global, pervasive, loosely associated ["World Christian Movement"](#). The Media Spotlight series is being compiled into a book that can be ordered from: Media Spotlight, P.O. Box 290, Redmond, WA 98073-0290. Also, you may order Al Dager's book from his website: [Media Spotlight](#)

Al Dager writes:

"Spiritual mapping is a term coined in 1991 by George Otis, Jr. Art Moore, writing in *Christianity Today*, says:

Spiritual mapping, says Otis, president of the research agency the Sentinel Group, is nothing more ethereal than creating a spiritual profile of a community based on careful research. It is a tool, he says, for intelligent prayer aimed at opening spiritually blind eyes to the gospel.

Otis poured seven years of global research into his new book, *The Twilight Labyrinth: Why Does Spiritual Darkness Linger Where It Does?* (Chosen Books). He has identified 15 "transformed communities," of which 14

incorporated spiritual mapping. Two factors present in all 15, Otis says, are "persevering leadership" and "united prayer." Commitment is the key, he says. "God didn't move in Hemet until Bob [Bennett] bought a burial plot in the city."

Otis has developed a 28-stage scale to measure the progress of a community from the "spiritual beachhead" phase to "spiritual breakthrough" to "spiritual transformation." Spiritual mapping does not begin until stage nine, Otis points out. "When you reach that point you have a core of intercessors in a community really petitioning God for a visitation," he says....

"To explain the burial plot thing, a "World Christian" (someone involved in the WCM) must have a "commitment" in an area, such as a burial plot, home, job, etc., in order for God to work there.

Though it still raises many eye brows among evangelicals, spiritual mapping is gaining broader acceptance, as evidenced by the AD 2000 United Prayer Track's Spiritual Mapping Division, which Otis heads. United Prayer Track coordinator C. Peter Wagner teaches a class on spiritual mapping at Fuller Theological Seminary....

Many of spiritual mapping's detractors have less of a problem with spiritual mapping than with its most common applications, "strategic-level warfare"-defined by Wagner as discerning and praying against territorial spirits assigned to a community -and "identificational repentance."

"Spiritual mapping is nothing more than keeping data on the beliefs of people according to geographic areas. The purpose at the WPC, however, is to disseminate information to its constituents so that they may engage in unbiblical forms of

"spiritual warfare."

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Celebration of Unity in 1990

This conference is reminiscent of the "Celebration of Unity" service held in 1990. On September 30th of that year 4500 Protestants gathered in the Kitsap Pavilion for a "Celebration of Unity" service. Despite their disclaimers, it was very much an ecumenical service, with a great diversity of groups including some who preach "a different gospel". For example, Rev. Richard Kroll, one of the speakers at the service was the clergyman of the Suquamish Community Congregational United Church of Christ. Their statement of purpose says they, "...welcome and accept all people into worship, participation in church life, full membership and leadership... may include sexual orientation. In the vision of unity, wholeness, integrity, compassion, and justice, as a community of God's people, we covenant to be open and affirming [including] ... lesbian and gay relationships, extended families, blended families and nuclear families."

The main speaker at the "Celebration of Unity" service was Joe Aldrich, President of Multnomah School of the Bible, and Steering Committee Member of the Coalition On Revival (COR). One of the organizers and participants was [Ron Boehme](#) of YWAM's "Revive America Project" and also on COR's Steering Committee. Ron continues to lead YWAM Port Orchard and is one of the founders of "Kings Kids" in Kitsap County. Boehme wrote the book, Leadership for the 21st Century, in which he promotes a "A Kingdom World View" and "A vision for Christ Lordship in the Nations" and quotes favorably [M. Scott Peck](#) and [John Naisbitt](#). Leadership for the 21st Century asks us "[to dream](#)" about world-wide revival and advocates that we take dominion, and bring about a world-wide Christian utopia through "servanthood" in every sphere of society.

Another of the organizers and participants of the 1990 event was Bill Robinson who is also promoting this upcoming conference with George Otis Jr. Originally, Bill was the youth pastor at First Church in Bremerton (now Lincoln Avenue Bible Church). He left there to found Peninsula Bible Fellowship (PBF) where he was the senior clergyman until recently. He is now a consultant for Church organizations.

The summer before the 1990 unity service a letter was sent out by Ron Boehme to many clergymen in the area. Dated June 21, 1990, Ron wrote,

"Dear Brothers,

"Warm greetings in Christ. This letter is to follow up on the wonderful prayer retreat that many of us enjoyed together at Warm Beach May 28-31. For those pastors and Christian leaders that attended--62 in all--we believe that a gracious outpouring of God's Spirit has begun. We will never be the same again...

...Many of us believe that a true heaven-sent revival has begun in the most spiritually barren part of the United States -- the Pacific Northwest. The week after the retreat, a few of us met with about 25 pastors from all over Washington and Oregon (representing over 500 pastors and Christian leaders who have been touched by God through the prayer summits), We shared together for hours the incredible things God is doing. It is truly a once-in-a-lifetime movement of God Spirit...

...Also enclosed is a copy of a "Covenant of Continuance" that we signed at the retreat. We would invite you to look it over and join with us in a long-term approach to spiritual change in our area...

...At the July 6 meeting, we will be choosing a date for having a second mini-retreat together including our wives, and also finalizing the date for a joint Sunday morning worship service where we will be closing the doors on our individual churches, and gathering as one Body in Christ at the Kitsap Pavilion.

A time of revival has begun. As in every spiritual awakening it will be maintained and broadened as we continue to pray and move forward. On behalf of Bill Robinson ... and the other coordinators, I want to thank you for your sacrificial service of Christ in the county, and encourage you to keep on. Let's join hearts and hands together in increasing prayer and activity to see Jesus lifted up in our area."

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Counterfeit Visions in 2001

Friday, April 6th will be a gathering of many well intentioned people; many who truly do love our Lord Jesus Christ; many who truly do desire to proclaim the Gospel to whoever will listen. But, tragically, this conference represents yet another step in the uniting of professing Christians at the expense of sound doctrine. I'm concerned that the speaker is preaching a false hope, a counterfeit [vision](#) of revival using mystical techniques that are closer to sorcery than anything truly commanded for us as the Church in the New Testament. I'm concerned that many professing Christians are being manipulated in a demagogic way to take over society in the name of Christendom. Professing Christians are being manipulated into thinking they must jump on grand bandwagons led by great [celebrity leaders](#) who promote massive programs and [crusades](#) and call it "revival".

We must realize that our Lord Jesus is the only one who needs to have a "global strategic" plan. We are instruments in his hand by the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. By being the Church together as local fellowships and implementing all we are called to be as the Church by the New Testament , we are already fulfilling God's purposes in our locality. The problem is, most are not really searching the scriptures for what our Lord has clearly called us to. Instead we are following these celebrity leaders and their agendas and programs and mystical and psychological techniques. We are called to rescue people out of this world system, not to "repossess" it, not to "reconstruct" it. Our calling is not to take dominion over the pagans or to engage in white magic mystical warfare against demons, but rather we are called to be the Church of Jesus together, to serve God and serve people, and proclaim Jesus Christ and him crucified to this lost world.

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

1 Corinthians 1:18-21

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The Pledge of Allegiance

My little girl was attending a Christian youth organization meeting and my wife and I were there to observe. I had just found out that the Pledge of Allegiance had been written by a member of an occult brotherhood, a Freemason. And there were all the little children, hands over their hearts, in a Masonic gesture, pledging allegiance to the flag of America. What did this have to do with the King of kings and the Lord of lords? It seemed like blasphemy in that context.

"I Pledge Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

The above pledge (except for "one Nation under God") was written by Francis J. Bellamy (1855-1931), a Baptist clergyman and Fabian Socialist, who was also a member of Little Falls Masonic Lodge No. 181, Little Falls, New York. The pledge was published in "The Youth's Companion" magazine on September 8, 1892 in Boston. The phrase, "one Nation under God", was added in 1954 by the U.S. Congress.

Followers of Jesus ought to re-examine this civil ritual for several reasons. This pledge is really an oath. Jesus said that we should not swear oaths, but to let our "yes" be yes and our "no" be no (Matthew 5:33-37).

We ought to consider what it is we are doing when we take part in a solemn ritual with pagans, Pagans, Mormons, Masons, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists etc. etc. and we speak of "one nation under God". What god are we referring to? Freemasonry teaches, "the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man." The Bible says that all who have not become a child of God by becoming reconciled to God through Jesus Christ, are an enemy of God. When we face the Red, White, and Blue with our hands over our hearts and speak of

"one nation under god", are we speaking of the god of the U.S. one dollar bill? "In god we trust"? The god of the one dollar bill is the god of the U.S. seal on the one dollar bill: equilateral triangle, All-seeing Eye of Osiris, and the Egyptian pyramid. All symbols of Freemasonry.

The more one looks into the history of Francis Bellamy and the Pledge, the more questions arise as to what has really been going on.

I encourage you to re-examine whether you, as a follower of [Jesus Christ](#), or your children, ought to be taking part in this Masonic ritual.

Questions or comments: please [email me](#), and refer to this page. [Back to the Top](#)

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Questions for Christians About *Psychology*

We ought to continue to evaluate the modern church as "Bereans" in order to discern what is the "Wisdom of God" and what is the "Wisdom of man". In order to pursue this, the following questions should be answered by everyone who professes to believe God's Word.

Consider a Christian who lived 300 years ago, long before the invention of modern psychology.

1. Did that Christian have and know everything he needed to live a godly life: Serving the Lord and serving people with biblical behavior and biblical relationships?
2. Has modern psychology added "new revelation" that God neglected to put in his word?
3. Has modern psychology improved upon what was already in God's word?
4. How, specifically, have you benefited from psychology over and above what was already available from the Bible through the teaching and preaching of sound doctrine?

We ought to sincerely desire to "wrestle" with the trends in the modern church, knowing that "... that serpent Satan who deceives the whole world..." is hard at work in these last days (Revelation 12:9)

[Humanistic & Transpersonal Psychology 1 of 2](#)

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Re-written Hymns

Re-written, by me, (in about 1989) to make a point as to the tragic trends in the Evangelical Church in the Last Days.

"Visualize and Affirm Yourself"

"On Self, that Sinking Sand I Stand"

"Visualize and Affirm Yourself"

[Sung to the tune of a "Trust and Obey"]

Visualize and Affirm yourself, for there's no other way,

To achieve your infinite potential, but to visualize and affirm yourself.

If you want to achieve, you must always believe,

In yourself, and take control of your life.

There is nobody else, you must reprogram the self,

Your subconscious controls all you are.

Visualize and Affirm yourself, for there's no other way

To achieve your infinite potential, but to visualize and affirm yourself.

"On Self, that Sinking Sand I stand"

[Sung to the tune of "On Christ that Solid Rock I stand"]

On self, that sinking sand I stand.

I've rejected Christ, that Solid Rock.

I've rejected Christ, that Solid Rock.

My hope is built, on my techniques

To stroke my self, while acting meek.

By incantations, and what my mind can see,

I can control my destiny.

On self, that sinking sand I stand.

I've rejected Christ, that Solid Rock.

I've rejected Christ, that Solid Rock.

I encourage you to compare these rewritten hymn lyrics to the real hymn lyrics to see how we have been deceived.

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Baha'i Faith

Below is an [article](#) written in 1990 for a home schooling newsletter. I posted the article on this website in February of 2000.

I've made some changes to the article (March 2001) based on email from adherents to Baha'i Faith. I have no problem correcting items of fact. Of course, I want to be factually correct. I have seen much in Evangelical Christian literature and "folklore" that is just plain untrue when it comes to describing non-Christian groups. And I want to be fair in properly representing any particular group I am critiquing.

But on other issues that are more subjective, I can't just let the adherents construct the debate. For example, if a Baha'i adherent says they do believe in the deity of Jesus, I have to examine that independently and decide if what they mean by that is really what I understand the Bible to be saying. I don't think that the Baha'i Faith concept of the divinity of Jesus is anywhere near the Biblical concept of the absolute uniqueness of Jesus being God in human flesh.

I have found it interesting that, in a time when most are being indoctrinated to believe that there are many paths to God, Baha'i Faith teaches there is one path. But according to the Bible, I consider it to be a false path, a false gospel. Baha'i Faith public relations emphasizes the unity of all the world's religions, but then you realize that it's only under the umbrella of Baha'i Faith. It's similar to the public relations and agenda of [Freemasonry](#), [Mormonism](#), and the [Roman Catholic Empire](#).

It is instructive for followers of Jesus, I believe, to see what the members of Baha'i Faith have to say. So far, every member of Baha'i Faith I've met or interacted with has been very kind and patient and humble. But the Truth is more important than social interactions. The

email I've posted makes it clearer than I can say that what they believe is contrary to God's Word, the Bible. And that Baha'i Faith is yet another example of a false Christ, a false gospel, and a counterfeit vision of global unity.

If you have any comments or questions, whether you're a Baha'i adherent, follower of Jesus, or other, please [email me](#).

- [Article](#)
- [Letters from adherents of Baha'i Faith](#)

Article written in 1990 for a home schooling newsletter:

"Intolerance" is one of the worst accusations one can make in this generation. In our society it is acceptable to be a "seeker of truth" but it is seriously frowned upon to claim to have found the truth, for that would imply an intolerance of other people's "truth". Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6)

In the last "News from H.O.M.E." (Jan/Feb 1990) a home schooling mom of the Baha'i Faith told of having been deeply troubled by her feeling unwelcomed by certain groups. She raised issues of "religious intolerance, bigotry, and self-righteousness"; her belief in "one God, and the brother and sisterhood of all his children"; and "spiritual values." Since many home schoolers in this area are Bible-believing Christians, it is quite possible that they were among those that offended her. This mother raises some important questions that would be fruitful for Christian home schoolers to explore.

The Baha'i Faith originated in Persia in 1844 and was founded by Ali Muhammed who was called the "Bab" or Gate. He prophesied that a great prophet would come but Ali Muhammed was executed by the

government for his teachings. When a man came on the scene who was called Baha'u'llah, he claimed to be that prophet. This Baha'u'llah is considered the greatest of prophets [a Baha'i Faith adherent would say "latest"] that have included, according to the Baha'is, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad (who founded Islam), Buddha, Krishna, Confucius, and Zoroaster. The Baha'i Faith teaches the unity of all the world's religions. It is tragic to note that the Baha'is have suffered great persecution in Iran and elsewhere.

The following is from an advertisement in the 1989 "Who's Who" published by the Port Orchard Independent. "The Baha'i Faith: The promise of world peace is our call to the peoples of the world. World peace is not only possible but inevitable. It is the next stage in the evolution of this planet - in the words of one great thinker, 'the planetization of mankind.' The principles of the Baha'i Faith... include the elimination of prejudice, the recognition of the common foundation of all religions, universal education, the elimination of the extremes of wealth and poverty, equality of men and women, harmony of science and religion, adoption of a universal auxiliary language, and the establishment of peace upheld by world government."

Baha'ism rejects the Christian concept of the trinity [Baha'i adherents believe in a trinity, but it's not the Christian concept of the Trinity], the deity of Jesus Christ [Baha'i adherents claim to believe in Jesus' divinity but not, I believe, in the way followers of Jesus believe in his uniqueness as God in human flesh.], his virgin birth, his substitutionary atonement for the sins of the world [Baha'i adherents claim to believe in the atonement but not that it was unique, like Christians believe], and his bodily resurrection. Baha'ism also rejects salvation by grace through faith apart from works and they reject the infallible authority of the Bible as the unique Word of God. [Baha'i Faith would claim to believe in the importance of faith but not in the sense of salvation by faith apart from works.]

It is a matter of personal integrity for each of us to objectively compare Baha'ism and Biblical Christianity and to recognize that they are mutually exclusive. Especially important for the Christian is to understand these contrasts in light of the historical context that the Bible gives us for man's past and future: Starting with Lucifer's self-exaltation in Isaiah 14:12-14; to the Garden of Eden, where Satan in

the form of the serpent tells Eve that she can be her own god and decide for herself what is right and wrong; to the world-wide rebellion in the time of Noah and again at the Tower of Babel; to Revelation 12:9 that speaks of "...that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world..."

Jesus said, "Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many." (Matthew 24:4,5) The Bible tells us that the inevitable direction of world history is toward the final rebellion manifested in a One-World Government, a One-World economic system, and a One-World Religion headed by the Anti-Christ. Even many who profess to be Bible-believing Christians will be synthesized into that world religion: "The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons."

To the Baha'i mom whose feelings were possibly hurt by Christians, I would say, "forgive us, please, if any of us were unkind to you." [12/29/04 - This is of great concern to me, that, because of our convictions about truth, we lose sight of our call to be motivated by love.] As to the issue of "bigotry", I would have to say that "tolerance" does not require that we abandon the concept of "absolute truth". Neither does it require that we embrace "all religions". We can be respectful of the sincerely held beliefs of others while still maintaining honest distinctions between our own beliefs and practices in areas such as education and those that differ. It is my conviction that for Christians, the education of our children is so inseparably linked to our Christianity that there can be no substantial mixing in this area with non-Christian people, organizations, or belief systems without compromising our principles. [12/29/04 - And yet... I can't rule out, of course, that the Lord might use a particular Christian family who homeschools, to be friends and encourage another family who homeschools who are not followers of Jesus. Perhaps this would be family to family. Perhaps this would be in the context of an organization.]

My prayer is that Christian home schoolers could approach those who are not Christians with sincere humility and kindness, without becoming unequally yoked, and always being prepared, "...to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you,

with meekness and fear..." 1 Peter 3:15 (See articles on [homeschooling](#))

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Confronting "Motivational" Training Programs

On November 20th, 1986, I was required to attend a one day "Train the Trainer" program. Since I was an instructor who taught new engineers about shipboard engineering power plants, I thought it was going to be useful in helping me to teach technical topics. However, midway through the day the contract instructor turned off the lights, told everyone to close their eyes, take a deep breath, and he led everyone on a guided imagery, visualization trip to Maui with sand between the toes and a breeze in the face. I'm sure that many Christians have been through similar situations in the years since this happened to me.

See the below articles for more of the story. I pray the Lord would give you insight that would help rescue others you know who are deceived by these false philosophies and techniques.

- [Introduction](#)
 - [Press Release of 1988: EEOC New Age Policy](#)
-

- [Summary of the Class Action Complaint](#)
 - [The "New Age" Religion: In General](#)
 - ["New Age Religion" at the Shipyard](#)
 - [Comparison with Biblical Christianity](#)
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 - [Conclusions: State Supported Religion?](#)
-

Introduction

The guided imagery, visualization technique prompted me to protest the class to my management, and I began to investigate other courses taught by the Naval Shipyard where I worked. I found that the "Increasing Human Effectiveness" course taught an entire life-philosophy that we can each create our own reality through the powers of our mind.

I was convinced that this was a case of the U.S. government teaching Eastern Mysticism and occult philosophies in the form of "Motivational Training". So, I first appealed by memo to my management and later submitted a class action religious discrimination complaint against the shipyard and the U.S. Navy via the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) system. The EEO complaint was eventually rejected.

On the way through the process, the story was picked up by the media along with several other similar cases throughout the country. Our stories ended up in the New York Times, on the Associated Press wire, in "Christianity Today", and ABC's 20/20 program, and in many other print and broadcast media.

After the EEO complaint was rejected, the next step would have been to file suit in federal district court. I consulted some attorneys who professed to be Christians and we counted the costs. It never seemed to me that they truly grasped the implications or my concerns and suing the government would have been very expensive. So I decided not to file suit, but wanted to continue confronting "Human Potential" training in the "market place of ideas".

At the time, I was still in a "Christian Activist" mode, so I formed a local informal group called, "Citizens Against a State Religion". We continued to expose and oppose human potential training in the government school districts, in the federal, state, and local government training programs, and in private corporation training.

A slight victory occurred in February 1988 when the Federal EEO commission issued a policy warning against forcing people to attend New Age training programs.

Eventually the Lord completed the process of drawing me out of the "Christian Activist" mentality. I began to realize that the very things I

was confronting in society at large were being embraced wholeheartedly among Evangelical Christians. I began to wonder what good it was to confront the pagans with these things when my fellow Christians were being deceived by the same things.

Since that time, I have gone through many phases in which I have tried to warn those who profess to be followers of the Lord Jesus. I am including articles on this website that tell the above story in the hopes that more individuals would be warned about these deceptions and that somehow others could gain from the experiences that the Lord Jesus brought my wife and me through.

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Billy Graham

Billy Graham is the most famous Protestant celebrity in the world. In 1949 Billy Graham came to Los Angeles for a tent meeting that proved to be the spring-board for his media stardom. Some believed it was the publicity from the newspaper empire of William Randolph Hearst that brought Graham to prominence. (The Saturday Evening Post, March 1986, p.44)

In these last days, global mass media has become a powerful force in choosing the issues and choosing personalities that society focuses on. Global media even chooses our heroes for us.

Billy Graham appears to be a good man with a sincere, humble ministry. But no human can be beyond critique. It is a dangerous trend that modern, media-addicted, professing Christians often set up their heroes to be gurus who are beyond criticism. Our only hope to not be deceived in these days is to have the conviction to "... let God be true but every man a liar." (Romans 3:4) And we must become "Bereans", trusting only the Bible as infallible.

Don't Be Blind

We can praise God to the extent that Christ is still preached at the "Billy Graham Crusades", while at the same time not being blind to the very serious unbiblical trends surrounding the ministry of Billy Graham.

At a time when the whole world is being united in a "Tower of Babel" vision of Global Unity based on a false peace and a disregard for the truth, it is tragic indeed that many of our most respected Protestant celebrities are taking part in leading their followers in this same direction.

Unbiblical Trends

Billy Graham in recent years has pursued the following seriously unbiblical directions:

1. He has endorsed the grossly unbiblical ministry of Robert Schuller.
2. He has yoked himself in ministry and ecumenical vision with Roman Catholics.
3. He has endorsed the unity in diversity objectives of the Williamsburg Charter Foundation.
4. He has endorsed George Bush's war for the New World Order against Iraq.
5. He has advocated the false gospels of modern psychology.

Robert Schuller

An endorsement of Robert Schuller by Billy Graham appears on the back cover of Robert Schuller's 1985 edition of Self-Esteem: The New Reformation (first published in 1982) along with the endorsement of W. Clement Stone who is on Schuller's international board of directors.

The 1000th Hour of Power Celebration:

- In the Seattle Post-Intelligencer on March 31, 1989, there is an advertisement promoting "An Epic Event! Dr. Robert H. Schuller and the Hour of Power 1000th consecutive telecast Sunday April 2, 1989". The ad promises, "Greetings from our five living presidents: President George Bush, Ronald Reagan, Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford, Richard M. Nixon"; and "Greetings from the Spiritual Leaders of the World: Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, Dr. Billy Graham, Mother Theresa, and Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr."

- "Billy Graham, who has also praised Norman Vincent Peale and the Pope, told how he was the one who, back in 1969, suggested to Schuller, "Bob, why don't you think of telecasting your services?" Graham went on to say, that as a result of his encouragement "...the Hour of Power was born [in 1970]." He concluded his praise of Schuller and his Possibility Thinking message with these words: "Bob, I want to thank you and say, 'God bless you, your family, your staff, the congregation and everybody that stands behind you'. And may you have many more years of ministry with the Hour of Power." Can Graham be ignorant of the heresies that Schuller promotes? Or does he endorse those who undermine the very gospel he preaches because he believes such distinctions no longer matter? Graham was

recently quoted in U.S. News & World Report (12/19/88): "World travel and getting to know clergy of all denominations has helped mold me into an ecumenical being. We're separated by theology and, in some instances, culture and race, but all of that means nothing to me any more."" (From the May 1989 CIB Bulletin)

Roman Catholics

In an interview (April 3rd, 1991) with an official of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association's Seattle-Tacoma Crusade, the policy on Roman Catholic crusade counselors was discussed. It was policy to allow a Roman Catholic priest to be a counselor as long as he went through the training. Roman Catholic counselors were accepted and trained for the Seattle-Tacoma crusades. The official said that he had "processed hundreds" of Catholics to be crusade counselors in the past. Someone who accepts Jesus at a Crusade is referred to Roman Catholic churches if they indicate they are Catholic on the questionnaire they are given.

Harald Bredesen, who is a founding board member of the 700 Club, wrote a letter on September 29, 1988 to Pope John Paul II, saying that he wanted, "Evangelical Protestants and Catholics joining together to single out the Pope of Rome as the man most worthy of receiving the Prince of Peace Prize." Bredesen says, "My heart is moved by a dream, Your Holiness. It is this: that what has already been discovered by men such as David and Justus DuPlessis, Billy Graham, Pat Robertson, Richard Neuhaus... regarding the riches and depth of Catholic piety, must become common knowledge among Evangelical Protestants everywhere." (From the March 1990 CIB Bulletin)

Dave Hunt says in his December 1990 newsletter, the CIB Bulletin, "When will those who are working together with Catholics to "evangelize the world by the year 2000" - Campus Crusade for Christ, Youth With A Mission, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Pat Robertson's CBN, Paul Crouch's TBN, and so many others - wake up to the truth about Roman Catholicism!"

Williamsburg Charter Foundation

The Williamsburg Charter Foundation was a private educational group that provided the focus for a movement to fill a void in public school curriculum in the area of teaching values and teaching about religion. Their goal was to

produce class materials by 1990 which was done. An example of the class materials that resulted is "Living with our Deepest Differences: Religious Liberty in a Pluralistic Society", which Ernest Boyer (President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching) says is a "major stride forward for the school reform movement in this country". There was a formal signing ceremony of the "Williamsburg Charter" on June 25, 1988.

According to a CBS television program produced in 1990 called "The Fourth R: Religion and the Public Schools", Billy Graham took part in the signing ceremony. Signing the charter with Billy Graham, were two former U.S. presidents (Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter) and two Supreme Court Chief Justices (Burger and Rehnquist), Senator Strom Thurmond, and many other "distinguished leaders in government, art, and the religious community.

The Williamsburg Charter Foundation brought together an incredible amalgamation of supporters: The Mormon church, the National Council of Churches, the National Association of Evangelicals, the Muslim American Community, the American Jewish Committee, National Organization for Women's Molly Yard, CWA's Beverly LaHaye, Phylis Schlafly, People for the American Way's Norman Lear, James Dobson, Chuck Colson, Oz Guinness (Executive Director), the Chairman of the Soviet Commission on Human Rights, and Billy Graham gave an address at the signing ceremony. (From a CIB Bulletin)

George Bush, the War against Iraq, and the New World Order

During a March 12th, 1991 CBS broadcast of Billy Graham's Long Island, New York crusade, Graham said in reference to the war, "As our President, President Bush, has said, it is not the people of Iraq we are at war with. It is some of the people in that regime. Pray for peace in the middle east, a just peace."

The night that the "New World Order" coalition began its saturation bombing of Iraq, Billy Graham spent the night with George Bush at the White House.

"In a speech January 16, 1991, Billy Graham declared: "There come times when we have to fight for peace." He went on to say that out of the present war in the Gulf may "come a new peace and, as suggested by the President, a new world order."" (March 1991 CIB Bulletin)

The False Gospel of Psychology

In The Billy Graham Christian Worker's Handbook , published in 1984 there are a number of places where psychology is advocated. For example, on pages 70 and 71, under the topic of "Depression": "Depressed persons have a negative self-image which is often accompanied by feelings of guilt, shame, and self-criticism." One of the counseling strategies is, "Suggest that he consider a serious commitment to professional counseling with a qualified pastor or a Christian psychologist until all issues involved in the depression are resolved in the light of Scripture."

In a February 1991 CWA newsletter is an advertisement for Rapha Hospital Treatment Centers, "Treating emotional problems and substance abuse for the Christian Community", providing "mental health, spiritual, and psychological help". In the advertisement, Billy Graham endorses a book written by the founder of the Rapha Hospital Treatment Centers. The book is titled, The Search for Significance, by Robert McGee. On the front cover as a subtitle it says, "We Build our Self-Worth on our Ability to please others or on the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ.". Billy Graham says, "The Search for Significance should be read by every Christian."

Loving The Truth

The issue is not whether Billy Graham is a Christian or not. There is no question that many people have become followers of Jesus after hearing the Gospel at a Billy Graham Crusade. But the glory goes to the Lord and not to men. It is by God's sovereignty that anyone is saved, no matter who is doing the preaching. Last days believers cannot allow a man's popularity to keep them from being Bereans and evaluating the message, the mixed messages, and the actions of any ministry.

It is not necessarily a question of whether this person or that is a false prophet or a wolf in sheep's clothing. But we have to realize that this is always a possibility. We are warned to expect deceptions in the last days.

"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." (Matthew 24:4, 5)

"Any many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many." (Matthew 24:11)

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Aspire Magazine: *Body, Mind, & Spirit*

(May 2, 1999)

[Index of previous Commentary on Current Events](#)

My daughter got a copy of the April/May 1999 issue in the mail. On the cover is, "Debby Boone moves beyond just getting it right - and gets real".

I would like to comment on two articles, both written by the same author, Marlee Alex:

1. [Debby Boone](#) - "Seek me in the things you fear" ???
 2. [Keeping an Eye on the Invisible](#) - Intuition ???
-

Debby Boone

The cover story on page 23, is called, "Risky Business" by Marlee Alex: "From behind her good girl image, actress, vocalist and children's book author Debby Boone gets real with others, herself - and God."

As a new Christian I was blessed and encouraged by Debby's example and witness on the celebrity scene. And of course her dad, Pat Boone, was someone famous I could point to and say, "He loves Jesus, too!" Unfortunately, people I looked up to twenty years ago continue to be a discouragement in that I very rarely hear any of them speak the Gospel of Jesus Christ with precision and instead they talk of worldly fluff and "God" and niceness. Often when celebrities speak, professing Christian or pagan, they speak of generalized values and "God", but then they also blur the discussion of what truth is, what is right and wrong, seemingly in order to make themselves look "tolerant".

In this article Debby Boone does refer to, "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27) but it's in the context of her wondering if she can be good enough to keep being successful! And she talks about "believing Christ in me."

In the article, Aspire magazine says: You've been described as a "reluctant risk-taker." Debby answers: Yes, by my dad. Aspire: What's the most significant risk you've taken?

Debby answers " "I played the role of Rizzo, the bad girl, in the Broadway musical "Grease". When I read the script I was shocked because I'd forgotten just how crass the show is - the stage play more so than the movie... I wondered, is it ok to play somebody who is promiscuous?...My dad came to see me and sat in the third row. I wanted to die doing the things in front of him that my character was called to do on stage: I flipped off people, wore this outfit you can't believe with all kinds of cleavage, and smoked... My own kids sat in the audience and watched their mother doing things they'd get in big trouble for at home."

Debby goes on to justify taking such a role by saying, "I've come to believe you're much better off in your art trying something new." And she says that God told her to "Seek me in the things you fear".

I don't believe her. Someone or some thing may have told Debby Boone that, but it wasn't the God of the Bible. That idea is found no where in scripture. It has much more in common with the teachings of Buddha.

I'm not really so concerned about which roles she takes or what plays she's in. These are disputable matters. You or I could definitely make a case against being in such a play. I also have no intention to create Jim's list of Pharisee do's and don'ts as far as which plays or movies to see or not see. But the Lord gives us wisdom as to what is edifying or not.

My problem is with the Evangelical subculture and its celebrities and its mass media, etc., which continues toward a trend of blurring the Gospel with fluff and false doctrine.

Keeping an Eye on the Invisible

The other article of concern to me is called, "Keeping an Eye on the Invisible - How to

live the benefits of intuition in a skeptical, show-me world". This was written by the same author, Marlee Alex, who wrote the above [Debby Boone](#) article. Marlee Alex, the end of the article says, "a writer and editor in Sister, Oregon, relies on intuition in a freelance career that requires consistent openness to new directions."

The article starts off with a half-truth: "Be still, and know..." - Psalm 46:10. Of course that is not the whole verse.... the most important part being left out! Be still and know... what? Just know? Knowledge? Gnosis? What?

The whole verse is: "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."

"Know that I am God"!

Well, what is it that Marlee Alex wants us to know?

"Conventional thought suggests you dismiss intuition, that power to know without knowing how you know. And yet..." Her first paragraph drifts off with that dot dot dot.

People who use intuition, she says, "...hold tenaciously to intuition's importance. They've found it an illuminating force in their lives: a way to better reason personal decisions, discern obstacles from opportunities, improve the success of business decisions, resolve issues from the past, navigate the changing water of relationships and better tune in to God."

Of course, no such doctrine is taught anywhere in God's Word. There is teaching about the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit in our lives as he brings understanding and wisdom from the Word of God or a miraculous word of wisdom or word of knowledge. Marlee Alex refers to 1 Corinthians 12:8 saying that perhaps this and other verses hint at "intuition". But, we're not to create doctrines by what we think the Bible "hints" at. Rather, we ought to derive our doctrine by the plain meaning of scripture. NEVER does the Bible say that man should look within and trust our "intuition". Instead the Bible teaches that the vain imaginations of man are evil, there is a way that SEEMS right to a man but in the end it leads to destruction.

The article asks rhetorically, "Or is intuition something to beware, some New Age way of thinking or mystical force?" Alex proceeds to answer her own question, "No, writes Laura

Day, a self-described 'practicing intuitive' and author of the best-selling Practical Intuition (Villard). Intuition and intuitives are not to be feared, she says: 'I'm not magical, New Age, psychic or a spiritual leader - I'm just your basic, strait-laced Jewish woman' - a woman who believes in listening to your life and for God."

But you don't look to your intuition to hear from God! And trying to deny intuition's connection with pagan mysticism only raises the question of where this is coming from.

A later section of the article is called, "Using the third eye & other ear"!!! "Third eye"? That's an occult concept from way back. In that section she tells of an artist, Wendy Hitchcock, who "understands how to use this eye for the invisible".

At the end of the article a writer, Noelle Quinn, says, "I had been taught to pray, read the Bible, visit Christian counselors - but the way God helped me put the final pieces in my difficult puzzle came from [within](#)."

Finally, Marlee Alex quotes the rest of Psalm 46:10, "Be still and know that I am God." But only after using the whole article to make the claim that "being still" means to [look within](#) and listen to your intuition. She ends with, "...are you ready to start developing this [creative gift](#)?"

In a side bar article by the editor, Jeanette Thomason, a video series for children is discussed: The Yellow Dyno. This video contains a song called, "When You Trust Your Inner Feelings". And Dyno tells children to "act upon what their sixth sense may be telling them." "Third Eye" and now "sixth sense"? This is another utterly occult term.

Rather than endorsing these concepts, followers of Jesus and lovers of the Truth ought to be exposing them and warning against them.

See ["The Human Potential Movement"](#)

1. [Debby Boone](#) - "Seek me in the things you fear" ???
2. [Keeping an Eye on the Invisible](#) - Intuition ???

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"Spiritual Disciplines"

Eastern mysticism and most of the worlds religions and philosophies are about progressing spiritually: Working on my self through mystical techniques to achieve inner peace or some state of bliss like Nirvana or achieving ever higher spiritual states or degrees; **Working on my self** through various things that I, myself do. Ultimately "working my way to heaven" in some sense.

The **Christianity** of the Bible is about enemies of God becoming reconciled to God through Jesus Christ in order to live in an eternal **love relationship with God**.

Christianity is about a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. A relationship is about: Spending time with Jesus; Talking to Jesus... prayer; Listening to Jesus as the Holy Spirit speaks truth to us through the written Word of God; Trusting and obeying Jesus; Performing good works that he has prepared for us to do - serving God and serving people.

A **body builder**, for example, works on himself by a discipline of weight lifting to build big muscles.

The Bible does not teach that we are to "work on ourselves" through the discipline of **techniques**. The Bible teaches that we are to pursue our relationship with Jesus, letting him bear fruit in our lives by **abiding in the Vine**, John 15. The Holy Spirit bears fruit in our lives as we walk in the Spirit, Galatians 5 and 6.

Do you see the distinction between a relationship with a Person vs. disciplines and techniques to work on ourselves?

["To Be My Disciple"](#)

[Walking in the Spirit](#)

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"What goes around, comes around" ???

Why do people say that? Do they know what that phrase is referring to?

Karma.

"Karma" is a concept from eastern mysticism: Hinduism, Buddhism, etc.

In these forms of pagan mysticism it is taught that "karma" is an impersonal force that controls the universe. A person develops "good karma" or "bad karma" through their actions. When a person performs "good" deeds it builds up good karma and that goodness will be returned to them by future good that comes into their lives. And if they do bad... bad things will happen to them.

Karma is an impersonal force, meaning that it is not a person. It's like "the Force" of the movie "Star Wars". What paganism is saying is that the universe is controlled, not by a personal God, but by a "Force"... a "life force". A karmic life force that is in everything and through everything and is in you and me, so that "god" is everywhere in everything and in you and me... so that you and I have the divinity within us... god is within us... so, in a sense we are god. Does this sound like the serpent in the Garden of Eden? It should because it comes from the same source as the occult "wisdom" of the serpent in Genesis 3:5:

"For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Those who believe in Karma also usually believe in reincarnation. They believe that you get a better deal in the "next life" by storing up good karma. Or, through various mystical techniques, one can escape the cycles of reincarnation altogether. Of course, reincarnation is yet another tragic deception, because the Bible says in Hebrews 9:27:

"And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,"

Some people may try to justify karma from the Bible by saying "A person reaps what he sows." However those words are found in Galatians 6:7-8:

"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life."

These verses do not justify karma or the phrase, "what goes around, comes around". These verses are not about an impersonal force. This section of scripture is about a God of holiness who is a righteous judge. It's not about a god who mindlessly gives an effect for a certain cause. In the context of the whole Bible, this is about God who is in control, who is sovereign who can do whatever he wants... and he wants to be just and holy and righteous.

And what we ought to be eternally grateful for, is that God is both all powerful AND he loves us! Which is why Romans 8:28 can be true:

"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."

I recommend rejecting the phrase, "what goes around, comes around"... reject karma... and trust in the God of Romans 8:28!

And the next time you hear someone say, "What goes around comes around!", at least pray the Lord would open their eyes. But consider saying something like, "Don't trust in Karma. Put your trust in the Sovereign God who created you and loves you! Put your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ."

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"Good Luck!" ???

Why do Christians say "Good luck!"?

Don't they know they are denying the sovereign God who loves them every time they tell someone, "Good luck!"?

I understand the worldly habits each of us are enslaved to. May the Lord set us free! I had been a Christian quite awhile before I finally realized that wishing luck for someone was incompatible with trusting in the Lord Jesus.

At best, luck is about "chance". At worst, luck is about the occult concept of karma.

When some people think of luck, they are meaning something to do with randomness... probabilities... accidents... chance. But to say that the universe is operated based on chance is to say there is no God.

1 The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."
They are corrupt, they have done abominable works,
there is none who does good.

2 The LORD looks down from heaven upon the
children of men, to see if there are any who
understand, who seek God.

3 They have all turned aside, they have together
become corrupt; there is none who does good, no, not
one.

Psalm 14:1-3

But when we promote the concept of luck we really are yoking ourselves with the pagan occult concept of Karma: "[What goes around, comes around!](#)"... "Good luck!"... "I wish you good karma not bad karma."... "I wish you good luck not bad luck".

But if it is the cultural norm, why shouldn't a Christian say, "good luck"? I agree that we should be willing to become all things to all people so that some may be saved (1Corinthians 9:22). However, in the context of scripture that means to "become all things" without compromising the truth of God's Word.

Why can't we say something encouraging that does not compromise the truth? Check out some examples from scripture:

"Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them: "The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace." '

Numbers 6:23-26

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."

Romans 16:24

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
24 My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

1 Corinthians 16:23-24

14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

2 Corinthians 13:14

18 Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Galatians 6:18

23 Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

Ephesians 6:23-24

25 Grace be with you all. Amen.

Hebrews 13:25

14 Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

1 Peter 5:14

21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

I John 5:21

21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Revelation 22:21

There may be some who do not want to be saying something

"religious" because they are ashamed of the Gospel. But we should have the conviction that Paul speaks to:

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

Romans 1:16

Others may recognize there is a time for speaking up about the Gospel and there is a time for simply being a friend. And here, I agree, that there are times that I don't want to impose what may sound like religious language upon a non-Christian friend. In this case I may not want to say, "The Lord bless you!"

But whether we replace "good luck" with the "Lord bless your life" or with something else... I think it is crucial that we not compromise the truth of who God is.

I recommend that we always communicate love and encouragement with a heart to be true to the God of Romans 8:28.

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"I have a VISION!" "Achieve your DREAMS" ???

"He is a great man of vision! - What a visionary!"

How often have you heard of people in the world making a statement like this about a worldly leader?

"You must dream big!" "You must achieve your dreams". These are like countless statements you hear in children's movies and in the government schools.

"I have a vision!" This might be the claim of a worldly social activist.

"I have a vision of greatness for this corporation," a powerful CEO might tell the stockholders.

Perhaps you've heard a politician tell of his "vision for peace and prosperity" if only we'll vote for him.

Or even Christian leaders might be heard to talk about, "my vision for this ministry".

And I've heard many Christians talk just like the world in referring to the "dream" of a great ministry or telling Christian kids to pursue their dreams.

As often happens, fads and trends and phrases that become common in worldly society soon become common among those who profess to follow the Lord Jesus... even if they are totally unbiblical.

And this is such a case. The uses of the terms "vision" and "dreams" as I have illustrated above, are unbiblical concepts. Such uses are found **nowhere in scripture** in a way endorsed by God's Word.

Daniel 1:17

As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all **visions** and **dreams**.

Joel 2:28

"And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream **dreams**, your young men shall see **visions**.

Acts 2:17

`And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see **visions**, your old men shall dream **dreams**.

In each of these verses, and many others, the Bible's use of the terms "visions" and "dreams" are referring to **miraculous revelations of God**.

The way worldly people use these terms in our day is such that they are referring to what they have **developed in their own imaginations**. When they say "my vision" they mean "my agenda". When they say "my dream" they mean "my desire... my goal... my wish".

But for followers of Jesus this should be our attitude:

Matthew 6:9-10

"In this manner, therefore, pray: our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. **Your will be done** on earth as it is in heaven.

Luke 22:42

saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless **not My will, but Yours, be done.**"

Now if a clergyman tells you about his "vision" for his church, ask him if he means that God spoke to him in a dream or if God gave him a miraculous vision. If so, let us compare this vision or dream with God's Word. If the person says that it was not miraculous revelation of God, then why use these terms in unbiblical ways?

Perhaps the person will say that what he meant was that God has "called" him to do this or that. Or that God gave him wisdom to pursue this action or that. If that is the case, then I recommend that he just say that! Those are Biblical concepts. Of course they too must be evaluated in the light of the Bible.

As to visions and dreams conjured up in the human imagination, see what the Bible says:

Genesis 6:5

5 Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Genesis 8:21

21 And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.

Genesis 11:6

6 And the LORD said, "Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them.

Jeremiah 17:9

9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?

Luke 1:51

51 He has shown strength with His arm; he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

Romans 1:21

21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

This custom of using "vision" and "dream" in these unbiblical ways are new in the last half of this century. Christians did not use these terms in these ways in the previous centuries. The rise of these deceptions coincides with other false gospels and occult techniques such as visualization, guided imagery, New Age emphasis on "dreams", positive thinking, reprogramming the subconscious and many other trends. (see [Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#))

If God has given you wisdom for action or called you to do

something then obey him. And give the glory to God. And I recommend you describe it in Biblical terms, not last days deception terms.

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Positive Thinking

The Bible doesn't teach "positive thinking". The Bible doesn't teach "negative thinking". The Bible teaches TRUTHFUL thinking.

"Finally, brethren, **whatever things are true**, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy-- meditate on these things."

Philippians 4:8

At best, "positive thinking" is a fleshly attempt to will your way to success, like the self-image psychology technique of "reprogramming the subconscious".

At worst, "positive thinking" is the equivalent of occult visualization.

The most famous advocate of "The Power of Positive Thinking" was the 33rd degree Freemason, Norman Vincent Peale, the founder of Guideposts magazine. His protégé, Robert Schuller, carries on the legacy of this false teaching with his "Possibility Thinking".

Christians should advocate trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ and not in SELF.

[You only want to hear good things?](#)

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"Positive" and "Negative" ???

Why do Christians use the terms, "positive" and "negative"?

"That Hollywood movie certainly had a positive message!", a Christian mom might say.

"I didn't hear anything negative in the State of the Union Message", a politically minded clergyman might say.

When it comes to electrical theory, "positive" and "negative" have meaning. But even then it is a RELATIVE concept! A ground potential is chosen arbitrarily, and any voltage above ground is called "positive" and any voltage below it is called "negative".

All the more, when we are speaking of ideas and behavior, the terms "positive" and "negative" are RELATIVISTIC. These terms have no relation to ABSOLUTE truth, i.e., Biblical Truth.

"Positive" and "negative" have much more in common, as concepts, with the "create your own reality" of eastern mysticism and the occult. These terms are rooted in "yin-yang" type philosophies.

Warning someone that they are on their way to the Lake of Fire without trusting in the real Jesus in terms of the real Gospel is considered "negative" by worldly thinking.

The Serpent telling Eve that she can be as God by disobeying God is considered "positive" by the world and "following your

dreams".

Attitudes, ideas, and behaviors are either Biblical or unbiblical, true or false, rebellion or surrender, sin or obedience, Truth or deception.

Followers of Jesus should speak in Biblical terms, not relativistic worldly terms.

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

Romans 12:2

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The New American Police State

By Richard Reeves

[Editor of Procinwarn.com note: I do not endorse the author or the writers he quotes. However, those Evangelicals who have yoked their hearts with the rulers of this world ought to consider these perspectives.]

FEBRUARY 17, 2006

Excerpts

NEW YORK — "When I saw that the neoconservative response to 9/11 was to turn a stateless war against terrorism into military attacks on Muslim states, I realized that the Bush administration was committing a strategic blunder with open-ended disastrous consequences for the United States that, in the end, would destroy Bush, the Republican Party and the conservative movement."

I agree with that, but I didn't write it. No liberal did.

The author is Paul Craig Roberts, one of the creators and champions of "supply-side economics," the great conservative cause of the early 1980s. As a Wall Street Journal editorial writer and then assistant secretary of the treasury under President Reagan, Roberts was a true believer and an effective advocate. His political stance is pretty well summed up in the title of his newest book: "The Tyranny of Good Intentions: How Prosecutors and Bureaucrats Are Trampling the Constitution in the Name of Justice."

"Americans have forgotten what it takes to remain free. Instead, every ideology, every group is determined to use government to advance its agenda. ... The United States is undergoing a coup against the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and democracy itself. The 'liberal press' has been co-opted. ... Media concentration permitted in the 1990s has put news and opinion in the hands of a few corporate executives who do not dare risk their broadcasting licenses by getting on the wrong side of government, or their advertising revenues by becoming 'controversial.'"

[See the entire commentary](#)

[The True Nature of the World System](#)

[The September 11th Turning Point](#)

Hegelian Synthesis

Evangelicals & Global Warming

Manipulate Evangelicals for years on a Right Wing Agenda.

Then, at some appropriate time, manipulate the leaders to manipulate the people to merge with the left for the sake of "Mother Earth"... but call it "stewardship".

[86 Evangelical Leaders](#)

[Join to Fight Global](#)

[Warming](#)

By LAURIE

GOODSTEIN - NY

Times 2/8/06

Some Excerpts:

"Despite opposition from some colleagues, 86 evangelical Christian leaders are backing a major initiative to fight global warming."

"Among signers of the statement, which will be released in Washington on Wednesday, are the presidents of 39 evangelical colleges, leaders of aid groups and churches, like the Salvation Army, and pastors of megachurches, including [Rick Warren](#), author of the best seller "The Purpose-Driven Life.""

"The Evangelical

Climate Initiative, at a cost of several hundred thousand dollars, is being supported by individuals and foundations, including the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Hewlett Foundation and the [Rockefeller Brothers Foundation](#)."

Hegelian Dialectic

Four Ways Christians Are Deceived

Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel

Federal Troops in the Streets

President Bush has discussed his interest in using the U.S. Military to:

- Coordinate domestic disaster response
- Enforce quarantines during disease epidemics such as the possible Bird Flu pandemic

[Bush seeks military option on bird flu](#)

10/8/05

[Posse Comitatus Act protections to be weakened?](#)

9/17/05

[The September 11th Turning Point](#)

[A Leader Shows Up On the Scene](#)

[Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#)

["U.S. Asks Court to Dismiss Abuse Suit That Names Pope"](#)

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

"The Justice Department has told a Texas court that Pope Benedict XVI enjoys immunity as head of state of the Holy See."

NY Times 9/21/05

[The Roman Catholic Empire](#)

Fanaticism

["How to Stop the Contagion"](#)

By [Fareed Zakaria](#)

Newsweek

I don't have the same political priorities as Mr. Zakaria, but his article has some insights about religious fanaticism that disciples of Jesus should consider. How he believes governments and societies should deal with those they

believe are fanatics
is also worth
examining. (7/26/05)

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Chuck Smith Jr. (formerly) of Calvary Chapel

Updated 8/12/06

Another Quote from Chuck Smith Jr's [discussion board](#) (posted 10/31/05, posted on this site 1/31/06):

*"Jesus Christ opened a door between humans and God, and I do not believe there is anyone in all of human history who has ever walked with God or known God or been embraced by God who has not passed through that door. **But I also doubt that everyone who has walked through the door knows that its name is Jesus.** Thankfully we can still reach our destination even though we don't know the name of every street we travel."*

*This is not what the Bible teaches.
Editor, Procinwarn.com*

*"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name..."
John 1:12*

"And they said, Believe

*on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and thou shalt be saved,
and thy house." Acts
16:31*

*"Neither is there
salvation in any other: for
there is none other name
under heaven given
among men, whereby we
must be saved." Acts 4:12*

CHUCK SMITH JR.

**PROMOTES
CONTEMPLATIVE AND
CATHOLIC RITUALS**

*[From Lighthouse Trails -
posted here 1/29/06]*

*"In a [January 15th sermon](#),
Calvary Chapel Pastor [Chuck
Smith Jr.](#) ended his message
by giving the sign of the cross,
a Catholic gesture. In light of
the following statement by
Smith Jr., this is not too
surprising: In his book, [The
End of the World As We
Know It](#), ... he stated: " More
and more Protestant
Christians—and we are
way behind the Roman
Catholics on this score—
are discovering a new,
yet old way of reading
the Bible: [lectio divina](#)."*

p. 103

It appears that Chuck Smith Jr. has jumped on the contemplative/emergent bandwagon."

"Related Information:

- [*The Tabernacle Experience with Chuck Smith Jr, \[and Chuck Smith Sr.\] Kay Warren and others.*](#)
- *Chuck Smith Jr. answers the Question: Do Good People Go to Hell? His answer: "No one's doctrine is perfect. I suppose that in some ways, we are all as far from the truth as the Mormons are from orthodox Christian theology. We will not have to pass a doctrinal exam to enter the kingdom of heaven. But we will have to pass another type of exam (i.e., 2 Corinthians 5:10). Were we good people? Did we follow Jesus in His compassion to others? "*
- [*See this and other comments by Chuck Smith Jr.*](#)
- *Chuck Smith Jr.'s*

Newest Book,
Frequently Avoided
Questions"

From Lighthouse Trails

"What Must I Do to be
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Items from the Religion News Blog

I agree with a lot that the editors of the Religion News Blog have to say, but there are a number of things I don't agree with. If you have any comments or questions please [write me](#).

These short portions of items are quoted with the intent of "[Fair Use](#)".

[Bible Contradictions](#) [and Other Bible Difficulties](#)

at the [Apologetics Index](#)

[*An assault on freedom of the press*](#)

6/30/06

Posted at the [ReligionNewsBlog.com](#)

The author of the above article would be considered "left wing" politically. And yet people who are "right wing" or "libertarian" ought to have similar concerns if they truly respect the U.S. Constitution.

Followers of the Lord Jesus Christ should face up to the true nature of the political leaders of this world system.

[The True Nature of the World System](#)

[A Leader Shows Up On the Scene](#)

Schuller Inherits Crystal Cathedral from Father

[From an article in the Los Angeles Times, USA, Jan. 2, 2005, By Dan Weikel and William Lobdell, Times Staff Writers, [posted on the Religion New Blog](#)]

Robert H. Schuller, 79, protégé of the late Norman Vincent Peale (33rd Degree Freemason) has turned over the reigns of power to his son, Robert A. Schuller, 51, as clergyman of the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, California.

"The Rev. Billy Graham said in a statement that the younger Schuller "is a great communicator and will more than fill his father's shoes."" (according to the article.)

Known for his "Possibility Thinking" form of Positive Thinking and his gospel of Self-Esteem, the senior Schuller has promoted seeker-friendly mega-churches for decades.

""The Crystal Cathedral has been very much based and rooted in a personality," Miller said. "The congregation will see the father in the son. But in the long term, as the father's influence and memory fades, he's going to have to make it on his own."

"Yet, it is possible for the sons of great ministers to continue the work of their fathers, and even flourish. At Lakewood Church in Houston, Pastor Joel Osteen expanded the congregation from 6,000 to 30,000, making it the largest church in the nation, after his father died in 1999."

The grandson, Robert V. Schuller, is at Fuller Seminary and is expected to help his father with his new duties.

[Positive Thinking](#)

[Son Inherits Country from Father](#)

[Jon Courson: Applegate Christian Fellowship](#)

[Billy Graham](#)

[Cult Leader Expels Critics](#)

"In Colorado City, meanwhile, recent [fissures within the group](#) have led to theories that its leader and self-proclaimed prophet, [Warren Jeffs](#), may be searching for a new home for many of his estimated 6,000 followers. Jeffs, said by former church members to have more than 30 wives, recently expelled more than a dozen men from the sect over their criticism of his leadership."

[Texans Wary About Polygamist Clan](#)

A glimpse of one cult leader is a glimpse of the [cult-like](#) tendencies of many religious leaders. *Editor, Procinwarn.com*

[Lawsuits and Governmental Scrutiny Increase Pressure on Polygamist \(FLDS\) Sect](#)

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Son Inherits Country From Father

"The Associated Press [via MSNBC.com]

"Updated: 8:55 p.m. ET Feb. 5, 2005

"LOME, Togo - The president of Togo, Africa's longest-ruling leader, died Saturday as he was being rushed to Europe for treatment of a heart attack, officials said. His son was named the new leader."

Let us ponder the concept of **figurehead** leaders. Does that concept belong in the church? Who should be our only figurehead? Actually our head?

[Counterfeit Christs: Is your pastor a one-man show?](#)

[Machiavelli and How Rulers Think](#)

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Both

Presidential Candidates

in 2004 were Members of the Same Occult Brotherhood

4/22/04

George W. Bush and John F. Kerry are both members of the Yale-based Order of the Skull & Bones.

This is the first time [both major candidates](#) in a Presidential election have been Bonesmen.

It's not a college fraternity. It's a life-long secret society.

...a kinder, gentler fascism.

The "Death's Head"



[The Symbol of the Skull & Bones](#)

[Freemasons and Other Occult Brotherhoods](#)

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Wikipedia article: [The Order of the Skull & Bones](#)

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"Faith-Based" Counterfeit

2001

Recently, I've heard several mature, knowledgeable followers of Jesus say that they feel George W. Bush is "better" than [Bill Clinton](#) because of his [morality](#). This greatly concerns me because it's missing the big picture about the Last Days and the whole nature of the enemy's historic purpose in the World System.

I'm convinced that George W. Bush is far more dangerous than Clinton was. Clinton's blatant immorality reinforced the licentiousness of the pagan society at large, which is evil. But nothing is more important than the [Gospel](#) of Jesus Christ. Clinton never was any great threat to deceiving the supposedly Bible-believing Evangelical Church. His behavior publicly disqualified him from being an influence in the minds of the Evangelical subculture. It is George W. Bush who IS in a position to have the trust and respect and admiration and loyalty and worship of the Evangelical System. He is perverting the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the professing church! He is [uniting](#) "religious conservatives"... "people of faith"... "faith-based organizations", Mormons, Moonies, Masons, Muslims, Catholics, and Evangelicals with a "faith-based" vision for the [New World](#).

Clinton's setting of an immoral pagan example for pagan society didn't really make things worse... pagan society is already lost as lost can be. But George W. Bush's influence among Evangelicals is a setup for Satan's true priority... perverting the message of the

Church of Jesus... or at least what has appeared to be the Church of Jesus.

I use to think that the closer something was to [Christianity](#), the better. Now I realize that the closer something is, the worse it is! The more clever the counterfeit!

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Bush and Gore Deception

7/30/2000

This presidential campaign will be a telling example of the degree to which professing Evangelical Christians are being deceived in these Last Days.

[Left-wing Evangelicals](#) will be manipulated and mobilized to yoke with Al Gore, the Southern Baptist, because they care about the poor, the environment, abortion rights, gun control, world hunger, [tolerance](#), [feminism](#), homosexual rights, unity, America's heritage, the American Dream, morality, and family values.

[Right-wing Evangelicals](#) will be manipulated and mobilized to yoke with George W. Bush, the Methodist, because they care about the [prolife agenda](#), [second amendment rights](#), military strength, capitalism, opposing the homosexual agenda, unity, [America's heritage](#), the [American Dream](#), morality, and family values.

But if you want to understand the true nature of Al Gore's priorities and New World Order vision read his book, [Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit](#).

And if you want to understand the true nature of George W. Bush's priorities and New World Order vision then know that he is a member of the occult brotherhood called the Order of the [Skull and Bones](#) as were his father and grandfather.

Some professing Christians may justify their yoking with Bush or Gore as the choosing between the "Lesser of Two Evils". But, did our Lord Jesus pick sides between the licentiousness of the woman caught in adultery and the legalism of the Pharisees? Did Jesus choose sides between the tax collector collaborators and the political radical zealots? Did Jesus politically campaign for or against Caesar? Did Paul politically campaign for or against Caesar? Did Paul take sides between the temple prostitutes and the Religious Legalists? Did Paul promote Plato's Republic or Caesar's Tyranny?

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Chuck Smith on TBN?

9/1/03

A number of circumstances are causing me to re-evaluate how I speak about my concerns with Paul & Jan Crouch and Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN). A few weeks ago I was blessed of the Lord to get to know Jim Spencer of Boise, Idaho. Jim is a former Mormon who became a follower of Jesus Christ, pastored a church, and now ministers through authoring books, speaking, and his web sites, including Mazeministry.com. Jim is licensed in the Foursquare denomination (which I do not endorse, but I love and appreciate Jim). Jim Spencer wrote a book in 1993 called, Heresy Hunters: Character Assassination in the Church, in which he calls into question the tactics of some "cult busters". Jim was invited to speak on TBN about this book and then later about his ministry to Mormons. He is supportive of Paul and Jan Crouch and TBN, though I doubt he endorses everything on TBN. I continue to have serious [concerns](#) about TBN as described below. My original commentary item on "[Chuck Smith on TBN](#)" is at the bottom of this page.

[Please write](#) with your comments on any of these people or issues.

On TBN, are there promoted the false gospels of "Positive Confession", "Health and Wealth", "Prosperity Doctrine"? Are these teachings false gospels?

On TBN, are there promoted the false gospels of psychology and self-esteem ?

On TBN is there promoted the yoking with Roman Catholicism? Is the Roman Catholic gospel the same as the gospel Paul and Jan Crouch preach?

The below item was written 1/2/00. [Modified 3/21/04]

Why was Chuck Smith on the Trinity Broadcasting Network's "Praise the Lord" program on December 27th, 1999?

TBN is one of the most widely viewed sources of false teaching in the country, if not the world.

Chuck Smith is founder of mega-church, Calvary Chapel, in Costa Mesa, California and the leader of a global system of affiliated clergymen.

Does Chuck Smith justify it as "making the most of an opportunity"? Does he consider TBN to be a neutral medium of television apart from the views taught by the TBN founders? Does he warn against the false teaching of TBN and Paul and Jan Crouch? Do Paul and Jan Crouch consider their gospel to be the same as Roman Catholicism? Does Chuck Smith consider that Paul and Jan Crouch preach the same Gospel as he does? [Let me know](#) what you think of this situation.

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World Trade Organization

11/26/99

The worldly powers of global corporations are clashing this week with the worldly powers of a protest coalition of leftists, labor organizations, and environmentalist groups. The Third World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference begins Tuesday, November 30th, in Seattle, Washington.

“THE CONTROVERSIAL 4-day meeting will bring an estimated 50,000–100,000 delegates, observers, journalists and protesters from around the globe. Traffic problems and congestion, and some major street closures can be expected in downtown Seattle.” (King 5 TV website)

From the WTO website, <http://www.wto.org/> (11/26/99):

“In brief, the World Trade Organization (WTO) is the only international organization dealing with the global rules of trade between nations. Its main function is to ensure that trade flows as smoothly, predictably and freely as possible.”

“The goal is to improve the welfare of the peoples of the member countries.”

“The multilateral trading system — past, present and future.

"The World Trade Organization came into being in 1995. One of the youngest of the international organizations, the WTO is the successor to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) established in the wake of the Second World War.

"So while the WTO is still young, the multilateral trading system that was originally set up under GATT is already 50 years old. The system celebrated its golden jubilee in Geneva on 19 May 1998, with many heads of state and government leaders attending.”

For a glimpse at part of the coalition of protesters, excerpts follow from the website of "Seattle WTO – Mobilization Against Corporate Globalization"

<http://www.seattle99.org/> [12/20/2001 This site is gone now. Try WTOwatch.org]

"We are a group of International, National and Seattle groups who have come together to oppose the destruction of people and environment that untrammled free trade promises. We are diverse in our approaches and messages but unified in calling for citizens around the world become involved in setting their own destiny.

"We encourage those who can to come to Seattle to be counted in our call for the involvement of Civil Society in the assessment of the impact of the WTO on people, governments and the environment. For those who can't we encourage you to work in your own communities."

One of the ways that people are controlled is by allowing themselves to be polarized by propaganda hype and worldly conflicts. Whether it's the Powers of Financial Capitalism or the masses appearing to rise up in rebellion, both are led by enemies of God for worldly agendas. Followers of the Lord Jesus have a different calling: to rescue people out of the world system and not to fight the World's battles.

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Spirit 105.3 - KCMS Radio

Why would the CRISTA Ministries want to change the name of one of its three radio stations from "Christian" to "Spirit"? Recently, the Seattle radio station with call letters KCMS changed its name from the Christian Music Station to "Spirit 105.3": "THE HOPE IS IN THE HITS".

According to Bill Virgin of the SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER REPORTER newspaper - "Christian radio KCMS prefers to let music deliver the message" (October 21, 1999)

"KCMS-FM, operated by Shoreline-based CRISTA Ministries, is advertising itself these days as "Spirit 105.3," and that reflects more than a new marketing campaign. Michael Tedesco, the station's promotions director, says the station has decided to deliberately move away from a model used by many Christian music stations.

"This market is so unique, and so removed from the Bible Belt, we felt we had to go in a different direction," he says.

"The station isn't banning music with a Christian message; KCMS-FM's old tag line was "the message is in the music," and Tedesco says that underlying message is one of hope. But rather than proselytize between the songs, the station will rely on the music to deliver the message.

"Believers are going to know the message, but we don't want it so much in your face . . . that non-believers will be turned off," he says."

The reason this is of concern to me is that increasingly, professing Evangelical Christian leaders and organizations are moving away from the name of Jesus towards a general message of "The Spirit" and "spirituality". And this trend is occurring at a time when many of the other worlds leaders and organizations are promoting a [Universal Religious Vision](#) that also ignores or rejects the name of Jesus as the only hope for individuals.

The CREDO Institute promotes [CREDO](#) spirituality among the Chaplains of the U.S. Navy: "We want to carry on the work of the Spirit...Homemakers and homeless, prisoners and judges, bishops and workers, students, sailors, searchers and skeptics; people of many faiths – all are part of the Credo family"

A well known author, [M. Scott Peck](#), who is often quoted by Evangelical Christian authors, also promotes a work of the "Spirit" with or without naming the name of Jesus. The following quotes are from his book, [The Different Drum: Community Making and Peace](#) in the chapter titled, "The True Meaning of Community".

"Community is a **spirit** - but not in the way that the familiar phrase 'community spirit' is usually understood.... The spirit of community is a manifestation of the

Holy Spirit. This does not mean that community is solely a Christian phenomenon. I have seen community develop among Christians and Jews, Christians and atheists, Jews and Muslims, Muslims and Hindus. People of any religious persuasion or none whatever can develop community."

"The members of a group who have achieved genuine community do take pleasure – even delight – in themselves as a collective."

"When a group enters community there is a dramatic change in spirit. And then new spirit is almost palpable."

[The spirit of community], "...is thought of as descending upon the group, just as the Holy Spirit is said to have descended upon Jesus at his baptism in the form of a dove. ... Thus for those of Christian orientation the work of community building is seen as preparation for the descent of the Holy Spirit. The spirit of community is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit. This does not mean that community is solely a Christian phenomenon. I have seen community develop among Christians and Jews, Christians and atheists, Jews and Muslims, Muslims and Hindus. People of any religious persuasion or none whatever can develop community.... Any group of people (no matter what their religious persuasion or whether the word "Jesus" is ever spoken) who are willing to practice the love, discipline, and sacrifice that are required for the spirit of community, that Jesus extolled and exemplified, will be gathered together in his name and he will be there."

If people who profess to be followers of the Lord Jesus back away from the name of Jesus and try to preach a message of "the spirit" with out preaching the Jesus of the Bible in terms of the Gospel of the Bible, then their message becomes "A different Gospel" (see Galatians chapter 1). Because...

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Acts 4:12

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["God" ...a false god](#)

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Young Life: Ecumenical? (2/27/99)

"Young Life, an ecumenical Christian outreach ministry to youth, will be starting soon in North Kitsap." This was an announcement in the February 27, 1999 Bremerton Sun.

I've known a number of people who came to the Lord through Young Life, which I praise God for. There are several people who I greatly respect who are involved with Young Life.

But is "ecumenical" a term that a follower of Jesus should want to use in these last days? Within the broad scope of Christendom, "Ecumenical" means a movement towards increasing ecclesiastical unity, where religious denominations negotiate mergers, until eventually all protestant denominations can unite with Roman Catholicism. The "vision" of ecumenicalism doesn't stop there.

As the term and concept of "ecumenicalism" has infested evangelicalism, its meaning has been blurred. Many use it to mean, not organizational unity, but just a unity that crosses denominational boundaries. This sounds good on the surface, but it nearly always represents a unity at the expense of the truth; at the expense of sound doctrine (God's Word).

It's possible that the Young Life workers, who submitted the announcement to the Sun, simply meant that their organization was "non-denominational". If that's all they meant, then that is what they should say. To use the term "ecumenical" either shows an organization's true colors, or, at the very least, serves to blur the distinctions in these perilous last days. (See [Four Ways Christians are Being Deceived](#))

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Impeachment of President Clinton (1/30/99)

It is obvious that President Clinton is an adulterer, dishonest, and generally immoral. According to God's Word we should continue to respect him as a leader, pray for him, and trust in the sovereignty of God

(Romans 13:1-7, Titus 3:1-2, 1 Peter 2:13-20, 1 Timothy 2:1-2).

Those who defend him and support him as a leader are promoting an ungodly ruler who is in rebellion against God. If you want to begin to understand President Clinton's true "vision" for his country and the World System, check out a copy of Tragedy and Hope (1966) by Carroll Quigley, from your local library system.

[Carroll Quigley](#) was President Clinton's professor at Georgetown University. Clinton said, in his first nomination acceptance speech, that Mr. Quigley clarified his "vision", naming him by name. (See [Nation ID Numbers](#).)

It is important to realize, however, that those who are campaigning for President Clinton's ouster are not necessarily the "Good Guys". This is yet another case in which Satan is working both sides of a worldly conflict. There are enemies of God on both sides. Realize that if you are not a child of God you are an enemy of God ([Be Reconciled with God](#)).

Often times you hear religious leaders refer to John the Baptist in justifying the crusades against immoral political leaders. But it is one thing to rebuke a leader for immorality (Mark 6:17-28), and quite another thing to yoke with worldly political agendas to oust a political leader. There is no indication that John the Baptist ever became a political activist to try to get a new Tetrarch. (See [Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism](#))

Followers of Jesus in these last days must step out of these worldly polarizations. We must realize that this World System is under the control of the evil one (1 John 5:19); that the rulers of this world are in rebellion against God (Psalm 2:2). We must realize that our hope is not in a "moral" political leader. "Moral" conservative Republicans will continue to lead us into the New World Order system of the Counterfeit Christ just as assuredly as a licentious liberal democrat. We ought to look to the New Testament for our calling and our purpose, realizing that our citizenship is in heaven (John 18:36, Philippians 3:20), not in this pagan World System.

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Amy Grant and Gary Chapman Separating (1/6/99)

Amy Grant and her husband are separating after 16 years of marriage, according to the Bremerton Sun news services. "The contemporary Christian music performers asked for prayers "during this sad time," they said in a statement issued by their representatives." (CURRENT NEWS SUMMARY for January 4th, 1999, by the Editors at ReligionToday.com)

It's been years since I was able to endorse Amy Grant's ministry/message/career, but I am grieved anytime I hear of marriages breaking up... ESPECIALLY when it is people who profess to belong to Jesus.

I pray for their reconciliation. A sure way to restore their marriage, by the grace of God, is for both of them to die to themselves... die to their own agendas... pick up their crosses and follow the Lord Jesus.

John Glenn - Freemason (11/3/98)

The Evangelical media has been spotlighting John Glenn's comments about belief in God and his Church involvement. And yet John Glenn is a Freemason.

"John Glenn's return to space has reinvigorated his faith. The experiences of seeing the Earth from the vantage point of 340 miles up "only strengthens my beliefs," he said during a news conference from the space capsule. The 77-year-old Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) elder said he prays every day and believes that "everybody should." (CURRENT NEWS SUMMARY for November 2nd, 1998, by the Editors at ReligionToday.com)

It is of great concern to me that the media of the Evangelical subculture lacks discernment... or worse. We can expect to hear important people speak increasingly about "God" as we move closer to the rule of the Counterfeit Christ. And yet, if they do not profess the Jesus of the Bible in terms of the Gospel of the Bible, they are speaking deception.

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CBD Promotes Paganism (10/10/98)

The Christian Book Distributors (CBD) 1998 "Christmas Catalogue" offers videos and books from the "Touched by an Angel" TV program. An accompanying description reads, "Of all TV programs today, 'Touched by an Angel' is high above the rest in promoting sound Christian values."

However, the concept of "Christian values" has become a smoke screen for false gospels in these last days. The message of this TV program has nothing to do with Jesus Christ and him crucified; nothing to do with Jesus' words, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6)

Followers of Jesus must come to realize that any system of morals or ethics or values that either ignores

Jesus Christ or rejects Jesus Christ is just another pagan religion. Even a system of "Christian" morals or values, without Jesus, is just another pagan religion.

That fact that the CEO and board of directors of CBD claim by their corporation's title to be "Christian" Book Distributors, is yet another example of the corrupt nature of the Evangelical subculture. At best, it shows incredible lack of discernment to include materials from "Touched by an Angel". At worst, it represents the trend in the last days towards a false unity, based on false gospels, driven by a love of money.

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Foursquare and Apostolics ??? (8/29/98)

"Abundant Life Foursquare Church in Bremerton is conducting a revival Friday and Saturday featuring special music by More Than Milk, a Christian rap group from Emmanuel Apostolic Church in Bremerton," according to a news item in the August 27th, 1998 Bremerton Sun.

What do Bible believing Evangelical Christians have in common with such a religious group? People who go to Foursquare fellowships are generally people who profess a relationship with the God of the Bible. But Emmanuel Apostolic is a member organization of the denomination called the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World. They teach that you are not saved unless you are baptized in "Jesus' name" only. That you must speak in tongues as an evidence of salvation. They do not believe in the Trinity, but teach that there is "Jesus only".

This is not the God of the Bible. These are not the teachings of God's Word.

There is great pressure in these last days to [blur the distinctions and unequally yoke](#) with unbiblical groups in the name of "community"; in the name of "unity".

But it is a matter of integrity to stand for the uncompromised truth of the Word of God.

"Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables."

2 Timothy 4:2-4

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Y2K (7/23/98)

I'm not really sure what to make of all of the hype, both among Evangelicals and in the world's mass media, about the alleged coming disaster associated with the Year 2000 software problem. In the 23 years I've been a follower of Jesus, I've seen a lot of major bandwagons come and go... a lot of hype campaigns. Of course, I believe that the world system is going to get worse and worse as the rebellion of mankind culminates in the rule of the counterfeit Christ. But when each media hype comes along and each Christian fad sweeps through, I'm concerned about what I call, "the boy who cried wolf" syndrome. The world's media publicize that Christian's are all worked up about this flap or that... then nothing really comes of it. The world is inoculated against the truth. When the real "wolf" comes, nobody will pay attention.

Perhaps Y2K will result in major calamity. Maybe it won't. Meanwhile, the only thing I can "hang my hat on" is the truth of God's Word. I recommend not jumping on any bandwagon, but I recommend continuing to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified and warning of the coming judgment and global deception.

Roy Rogers (7/6/98)

Most followers of Jesus do not know that the late Roy Rogers was a freemason.

Christ Memorial Church - Poulsbo, Washington (6/21/98)

A Father's Day advertisement in a local newspaper announces, "special guest - Dan Miller has been

Robert Schuller's guest on 'The Hour of Power' TV program and with Dr. James Dobson on his national radio program." The ad goes on to say, "Dan's is an incredibly uplifting story. His dreams seemed doomed when he contracted polio at age 18. But he didn't let severe paralysis stop him from accomplishing his dreams. It is the inspiring story of Dan-the-man, an 'awesome dude' who offers each of us a whole new perspective for overcoming adversity. His theme: 'It's a great day, and I choose to enjoy it!'"

To people in the world reading this ad, this is just another "human potential" success story. Who does it sound like it is exalting? Not the Lord Jesus. It's praising a man and his positive thinking. Which is no wonder, since his boast is having been associated with Robert Schuller and James Dobson! Schuller was a protégé of the late Norman Vincent Peale, and teaches the false gospel of Self-Esteem as does James Dobson. James Dobson's teachings are based primarily on Humanistic Psychology. So why does this Assembly of God church organization in Poulsbo promote this "broken cistern that can't hold water"? May the Lord help us to proclaim Jesus Christ and Him crucified instead of the false gospels of this world system.

"Be astonished, O heavens, at this, And be horribly afraid; Be very desolate," says the LORD. 'For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns — broken cisterns that can hold no water.

Jeremiah 2:12-13

[verse added 8/1/2004]

Southern Baptists in Salt Lake City (6/18/98)

America's largest protestant denomination recently held its national convention in Salt Lake City, Utah... headquarters of the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints", the Mormons. The mass media reported that the Baptists witnessed door to door to the largely Mormon population, and took controversial stands for the roles of men and women in the family. I rejoice whenever the real Jesus and the real gospel is preached, so I praise God to the extent that it happened during this convention. I also applaud the Baptists taking a stand for the Biblical view of the servant leadership of husbands and the submission of wives to that leadership. Some questions I have for the Southern Baptists, however, are: How many of you are yoked with the unbiblical "Promise Keepers" movement? How do you justify the existence of your vast denominational religious system? How many of you preach the Gospel one minute and the false gospels of psychology the next? How many of you are tolerating Freemasons in leadership in your congregation or your denomination?

Overlake Christian Church (6/11/98)

The Clergyman-in-charge of Overlake Christian Church, in Washington State, is accused of immorality in a public restroom and years of fondling young men. He eventually resigns. There is incredible drama surrounding this huge church and their support of their pastor. This is really another example of the unbiblical situations that develop when New Testament concepts of leadership are perverted by "churchianity". God's Word never calls for one man to have so much authority; so much power over such an empire; so much prestige by followers. This kind of spectacle is the result of an unbiblical power structure and guruism. And it is not unlike the perversions that have gone on among Catholic priests due to their unbiblical clergy/priesthood system.

Orel Hershiser (6/11/98)

This guy is a pitcher for the San Francisco Giants, and he's supposed to be a Christian. And yet he takes part in "plunkfests"... the intentional throwing at batters in retribution for previous wrongs. This seems wrong to me. Not a good witness. Of course there have been times that I have not been a good witness. May the Holy Spirit convict Orel about his sin... and me about mine.

The Initiative Against Partial Birth Abortion (6/11/98)

Abortion is evil. Infanticide is evil. They are symptoms of mankind's rebellion against God. God's wrath is coming upon the earth because of this rebellion. It is understandable that professing Christians want to do something to save babies. May the Lord give us opportunities. It is Biblical to warn against evil and the coming judgment... in the context of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, NOT to try to reconstruct society. The problem with mobilizing Christians for political action is that it tends to distract from our calling in these last days. And it perverts the Gospel when Christians yoke with Mormons, Moonies, Masons, and Catholics in the name of prolife, traditional family values, and conservative agendas.

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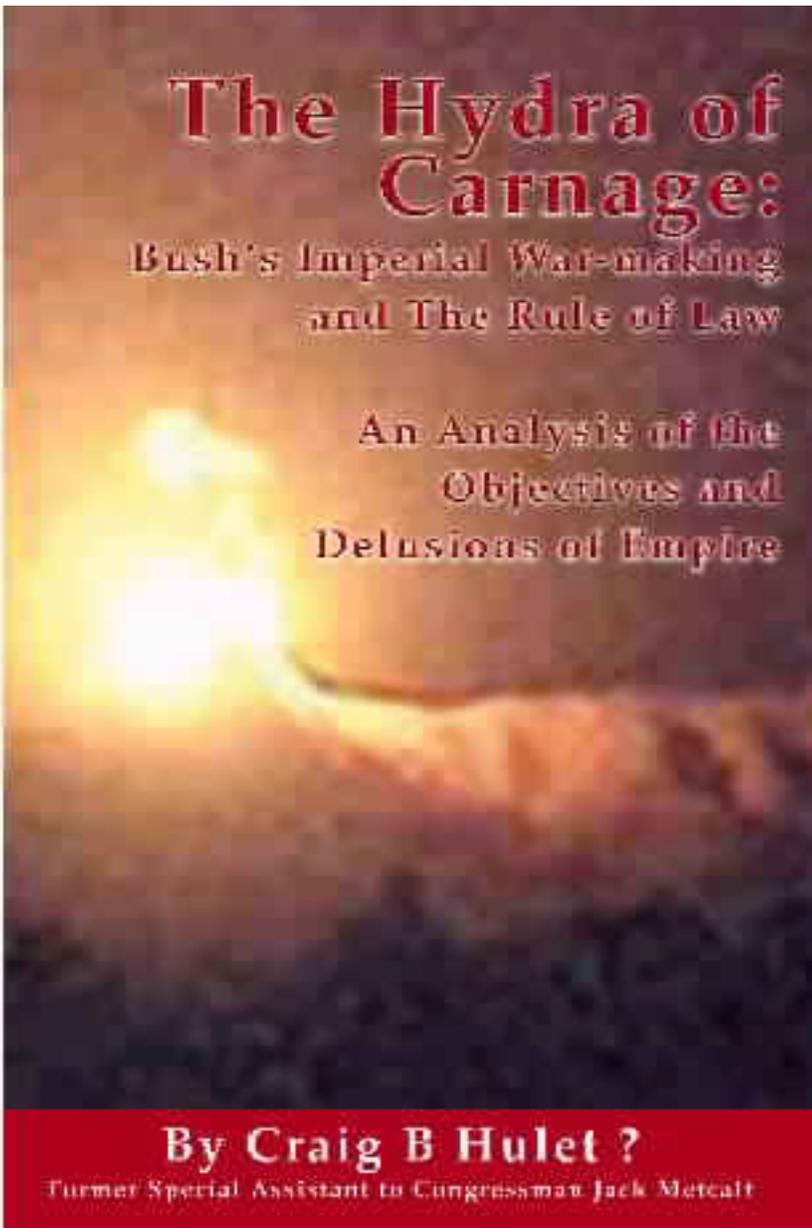
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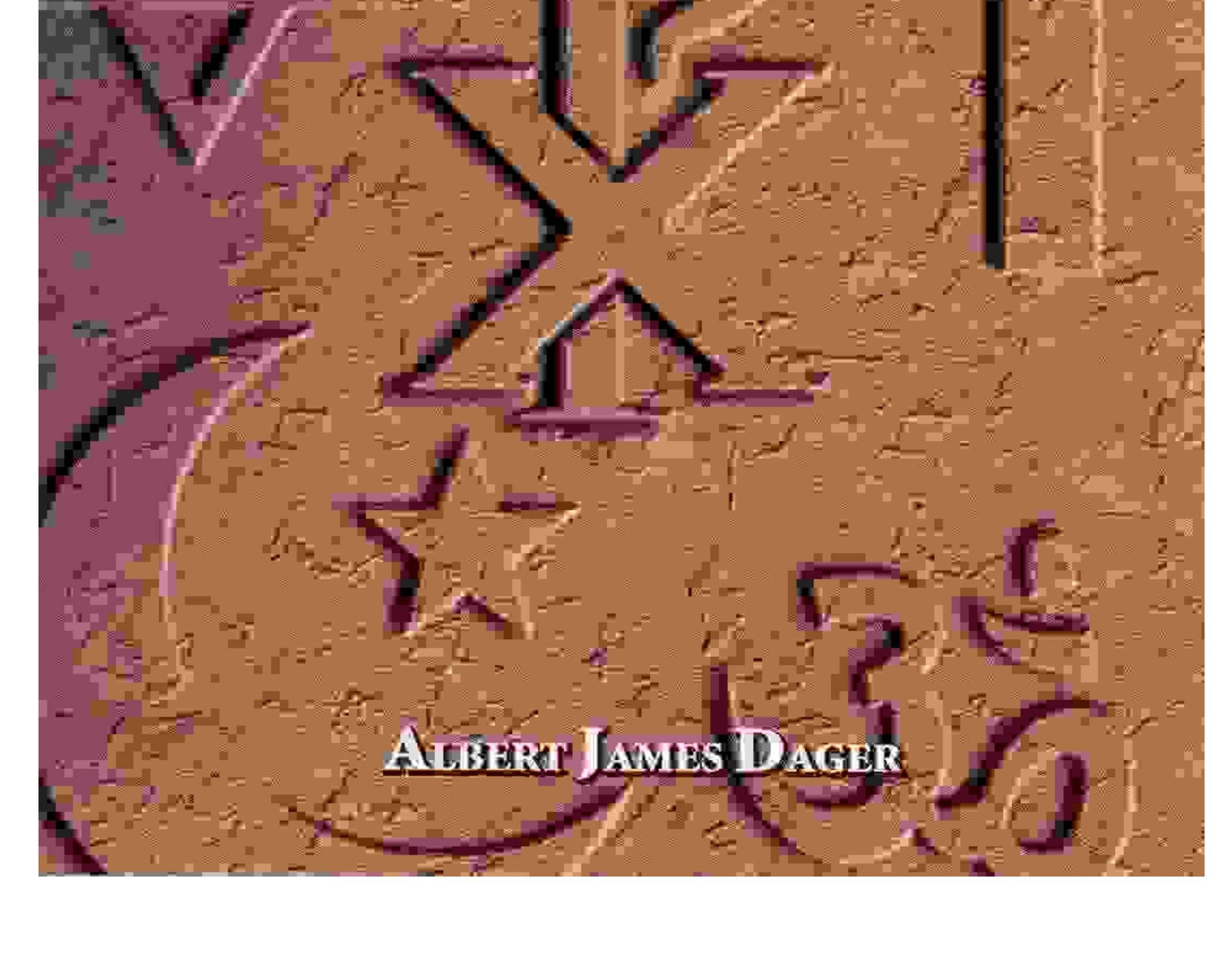
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LIKE
CHRIST?

Facing the Truth,
Holiness & Love of
the Lord Jesus Christ
Personally & Historically

by
Steve Phillips

ARE WE LIKE CHRIST?

January 2005

<http://phillipsmissionforum.org/>

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BEGIN HERE

All histories are selective short accounts. The Bible itself is condensed narrative. In the bibliography are listed 47,618 pages of references used in writing the 381 pages of this book. The content that has been included, has been selected in order to lead the reader to follow the Pattern of Christ based upon the Word of God alone.

The perspective of this book is that there exists one unchanging Pattern for the church which is Christ Jesus Himself. In character and in method of ministry, He is the perfect example and standard for all who follow Him. All that He was and everything He did had the full approval of His Father in heaven.

No improvement can be or ought to be made upon this Pattern. Nothing is to be ignored or deleted. Likeness to Christ will always meet with the Father's, "Well done." Departure from Him will ever be encountered otherwise. All is to be evaluated and adjusted in light of the perfect Pattern of Christ according to His Word which cannot be broken [Jn.10:35].

Forever, O Lord, Your Word is settled in heaven [Ps.119:89]. This is the unchanging reference point for all things pertaining to life and godliness by which we become partakers of the divine nature[2 Pet.1:3,4]. It is this Word that abides forever [Isa.40:8], is right concerning everything [Ps.119:128], and apart from which, there is no light [Isa.8:20].

The very words of the Bible are inspired [Mt.5:18] and alone are authoritative for all believers in every generation and in every place [I Cor.1:2; 4:17; 14:37]. It is the Word of Christ that will judge one and all on the last day [Jn.12:48].

Therefore, nothing else is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness except the teaching that is

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according to the inspired Scriptures [2 Tim.3:16,17]. All else is worthless for godliness, and deadly to spiritual health and eternal well-being [Mk.7:5-9; Col.2:16-23]. This is the outlook from which this book has been written. The sincere prayer of the author is:

[1] To stimulate the brethren to love and good deeds by reorienting our hearts and churches back to the only enduring foundation of Christ and His Word.

[2] To encourage brethren who are being persecuted by prevailing institutional religions to endure all with patience and joy without compromise out of love for Christ.

[3] To provide a biblical and historical frame of reference for Christian beliefs and practices among West African brethren especially.

Christ and His Word: All else will be swept away in an overflowing flood [Mt.7:24-27] and rise in disastrous smoke [I Cor.3:10-15]. May the Lord preserve us for Himself without spot or blemish or any such thing that we might become His devoted and loving bride [Eph.5:27]. To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus, both now, and unto all generations. Amen.

Test all things; hold fast what is good

[I Thess.5:21]

They received the Word with all eagerness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so

[Acts 17:11]

ARE WE LIKE CHRIST?

1

IN THE FULNESS OF TIME

In the fulness of time, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law [Gal.4:4]. It was the right time for Christ to come and die for the ungodly [Rom.5:6]. Then He, the Desire of all nations, came to fill His house with glory [Hab.2:7].

All great movements in the soul of a man or in the history of the world need proper preparation. God is never in a hurry and does all things well without regret. And this is how He prepared the world for the coming of His Son.

THE ROMAN PREPARATION

Under the mighty leadership of Caesar Augustus just 27 years before Christ, the Roman Empire asserted its world rule. Three major changes took place that prepared the world for the spread of the gospel of Christ.

[1] Men were united under a system of law as citizens of one

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kingdom. Tribal fighting, revolt, and independent governing were not tolerated, and men were expected to submit to a law that was not their own, but was imposed on them by their conquering king.

Such was to be the coming of the kingdom of heaven. Christ would unite all of His own from various tribes and peoples under His kingship according to the law of His Word. That established a new kingdom and culture for all whose **citizenship is in heaven** [Phil.3:20].

[2] The *Pax Romana* [Roman Peace] was enforced by the military throughout the Roman world making travel safe from armed robbers once again. Since their excellent road system radiated out from Rome to every strategic center of the empire, movement throughout was made without difficulty.

[3] As the Romans conquered different lands, it was viewed by the people as a conquering of their gods as well. They believed that the Roman gods must be stronger than their own. But when they learned about the Roman gods, they knew that they were no better. This disillusionment led many to look for a true God to replace their own weak and useless ones.

Stop and Think: How does tribalism and lawlessness hinder the preaching of the gospel? How can even war lead a people to reconsider whether their gods are true or powerful?

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE GREEKS

The Greeks, who were the world rulers before being defeated by Rome, developed and spread a universal trade language known as *Koine* [common] Greek. This was the language in use in New Testament [NT] times.

It was also the language into which the Old Testament [OT]

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translation known as the *LXX* or Septuagint was made [*LXX* “Seventy,” since it was claimed that seventy scholars produced it in seventy days]. This translation made in the 200's BC was the Bible version used by the believers at the time of Christ and in the years following. The NT was written in this same *Koine* Greek and was the language that the gospel was preached in by the Apostles on their missionary journeys.

Stop and Think: How can the Bible being available in a common tribal or trade language be useful in preaching God's truth?

ISRAEL'S CONDITION

Many things had changed in the nation of Israel between the time of Malachi [writing in 400 BC] and the coming of Christ. And these are the conditions that Jesus met when He came.

ISRAEL: SYNAGOGUES

Synagogues [a gathering together/assembly] came into being probably after Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC. Israelites who were in the foreign land of Babylon as captives for seventy years met together in a synagogue wherever ten families could gather.

Even after returning to the land of Israel and the Temple was rebuilt under Ezra and Nehemiah, the Jews continued to meet in their local synagogues throughout the land. In these meetings, rabbis [teacher/master] translated and explained the Hebrew OT into the local language and the people joined in prayer together. Each year

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the entire OT was read and taught in each synagogue and any male was free to teach, though prominence was given to the rabbi or scribe among them.

Differing schools of thought arose around prominent rabbis who gained a following. Pupils studied the commentaries of their rabbi rather than the text of the OT itself. Over time the “correct” interpretation of the rabbi came to have as much authority as the text of the OT itself in the minds of their followers.

Eventually the scribes, who faithfully copied the text of the OT onto hand-written manuscripts, feared to proclaim any understanding of Scripture unless it was backed by the “authority” of some master. But this was an “authority” of a man-made office from which doctrine that was nothing more than human opinion was taught.

This is how the “tradition of the elders” spoken of in the NT developed. It is also why Jesus’ teaching amazed men, for His authority and message was drawn from the eternal spring of wisdom itself.

The thoughts of man became elevated to the same level as the Scriptures themselves and the ceremonial took on the same significance as the moral and spiritual. Whenever this occurs, the text of the Word is soon neglected and forgotten while true godliness declines and disappears.

Stop and think: What are the dangers of basing your faith on the explanations of men rather than knowledge of the text of the Word of God itself?

ISRAEL: PHARISEES

In the years preceding Christ’s coming many Jews were being

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influenced by Greek culture to compromise their faith and practices. As a result the Pharisees [separated ones] arose in order to instruct the people to follow the law of God more strictly. But their teachings from the Scriptures too soon turned to little more than the burden of traditions that **neither our forefathers nor we have been able to bear** [Acts 15:10].

Jesus condemned these man-made rules as worthless to make men acceptable to God [Mk.7:5-13]. They thought that obeying their commands would prevent men from disobeying God. For example, some Pharisees taught that it was illegal to spit on the ground on the Sabbath. They explained that the spit would “plow” the dust and thus the man would be “working” on the Sabbath.

Thus the people were taught oral traditions from these rabbis as being more important than the Law itself. Pharisees insisted that their oral tradition was given by God at the time of the giving of the written Law on Mt. Sinai. This, they claimed, explained and “corrected” anything that the Scriptures did not seem to agree with. And so it was that man-made opinions were exalted above the Word of God and chaff was fed to multitudes as if it were the bread of God.

Stop and think: How can oral tradition actually cancel the Word of God? Why is their teaching called leaven? [Mt.15:11,12].

ISRAEL: SADDUCEES

A second major group arose during the years before Christ who were willing to accept many aspects of Greek culture. They rejected the Pharisees’ strictness based on oral tradition in preference for the wealth and power that befriending politicians brought them.

These Sadducees [the righteous ones] were the rulers of the

ARE WE LIKE CHRIST?

Temple ceremonies and even bought and sold the office of the High Priest among themselves. Since they did not believe in the resurrection, angels, or spirits [Acts 23:8], they imagined that worldly prosperity was an indication of God's favor upon them.

Love of money, political and social influence, joined with a despising of the poor and unfortunate were what characterized their miserable and heartless lives.

Though they could not escape close association due to the common Temple they frequented, Pharisees and Sadducees actually hated each other; the Pharisees because they viewed the Sadducees as abandoning true religion, and the Sadducees because of the arrogance of their imagined social and religious superiority since they were the wealthy elite and the High Priesthood was under their control [see Acts 23:1-10].

The Council or Sanhedrin [a seating together] was made up of seventy-one prominent members of the High Priest's family, Jewish elders, and scribes. It served as a Jewish supreme court of sorts in judging cases involving interpretation and violation of the Law. Both Sadducees and Pharisees were members of the Council. It was this Council that ordered the crucifixion of Christ, the stoning of Stephen, and attempted to kill Paul [Acts 23:1-10].

Stop and think: What happens when the moral and spiritual aspects of the kingdom of God are replaced by the material and political?

ISRAEL: ESSENES

Some Israelites did not accept either the traditions of the Pharisees or the corrupted influence of the Sadducees in the Temple. The Essenes believed themselves to be the true Israel and withdrew

ARE WE LIKE CHRIST?

from Jerusalem by forming their own separate communities. There they lived apart from fellow Israelites in a disciplined and simple manner.

Each member of the Essene community was expected to be devout and regular in his study of the Scriptures and other religious books. Manual labor was expected of all in order to make the community self-supporting. They shared things in common and submitted to strict discipline enforced by an overseer.

Sabbath keeping was taken to an extreme, God-ordained sacrifices and feasts were rejected, and marriage was either discouraged or forbidden. Many thought that matter and the physical body was evil. They believed that physical isolation from corrupted conditions would make them holy before God.

Stop and think: Why can isolating oneself from corrupted situations never purify either you or those whom you have separated from?

ISRAEL: ZEALOTS

Roman rule was not popular with most Jews. The Roman yoke was a reproach and a bondage to the Israelite. The Pharisees viewed Roman oppression as a judgment of God for the sins of the nation that must be patiently borne until God was pleased to remove it. Many expected the promised Messiah [Christ/Anointed One] to free them from it.

Some were violently opposed to Rome and refused to pay taxes to Caesar and even led followers in revolt. These were the Zealots. They advocated taking up the sword against their enemies as did Israel of old. Various of their leaders perished in their rebellions as did Theudas and Judas [Acts 5:35-39].

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Even one of Jesus' own disciples came from this background [Lk.6:15]. Eventually the Zealots succeeded in winning the majority of the people to their side. Their continual increasing defiance of Rome finally brought about the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

Stop and think: Why is using political force not part of the gospel of Christ?

ISRAEL: SAMARITANS

During the days of Nehemiah in about 430 BC, one of the grandsons of Eliashib the High Priest married the daughter of Sanballat, the enemy of the Jews. This wicked man, Sanballat, furiously opposed Ezra and Nehemiah's rebuilding of the Temple and the wall of Jerusalem [Neh.4:1,7,8].

When Nehemiah learned that this unholy marriage had taken place defiling the priesthood, he drove Sanballat's son-in-law out of Jerusalem [Neh.13:28]. As he left he carried with him a copy of the law of Moses which later came to be known as the Samaritan Pentateuch [the five books].

They settled in the area between Jerusalem and Galilee, establishing a religion centered in Mt. Gerizim. They claimed that this was the place of blessing where God commanded His name to dwell, and not Jerusalem, according to their understanding of Deut.12:11; 11:29; 27:12,13.

This was why such hostility developed between the Jews and the Samaritans [Jn.4:9] since both claimed to have the true religion [Jn.4:20], even though Samaritans worshiped ignorantly without salvation [Jn.4:22].

Stop and think: How does unholy compromise lead to false religion? If the root is corrupt, what of the fruit?

ARE WE LIKE CHRIST?

ISRAEL: APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE

Many writings before the birth of Jesus claimed to be prophetic of the coming kingdom of the Messiah. In these apocalyptic [revelation] works the promised kingdom was represented as an earthly paradise for the Jews with Jerusalem as its capital.

These ideas filled the minds of the multitudes and probably accounted for Jesus' popular reception as He rode into Jerusalem as their King [Mk.11:9,10]. It explains their enthusiasm to take and make Him King by force, because He had prospered them with gain without their labor, when the loaves and fish were multiplied [Jn.6:14,15].

Stop and think: How can popular ideas about Jesus keep someone from truly knowing Him as He is?

ARE WE LIKE CHRIST?

2

THE LIFE WAS MANIFESTED

PATTERN

Christ Jesus the Lord is the Pattern for His people. He came, delighting to do the Father's will. He emptied Himself of honor to take the form of a servant in order to deliver men from sin. This is the NT Pattern for the church.

Glory was revealed in His flesh [Jn.1:14]. Men heard, beheld, and handled that manifested life [I Jn.1:1,2]. The excellency of God's character was manifest in His own body on earth. So it is now that His body, the church, is the visible expression of Christ, her Head.

The church is the city set on a hill, the light of the world [Mt.5:14], like unto Christ, the true Light of men [Jn.1:9, 8:12]. **As He is, so are we in this world** [I Jn.4:17]; in truth, holiness, and love.

Christ Jesus is the Pattern for the church both as to character and in ministry. Conformity to Him is the standard. His mind is to dwell in His own and govern their every thought and action in all humility, considering others as more important than self [Phil.2:3-5].

ARE WE LIKE CHRIST?

In this, as in all things, the Lord Jesus is our example that we **should do as I did to you** [Jn.13:15].

Jesus was utterly unlike the religion that He came to dwell among, both in character and in approach to teaching, training, and influencing men. Because He was greater in love, humility, and service, He called those whom lesser men cast away; fishermen, lepers, children, women, uneducated, and the poor.

Unlike the Pharisees, He was not rigid in self-devised regulations which they imposed upon multitudes whom they despised. He was no Sadducee, compromising the Word by courting the favor of the political and influential out of a heart filled with greed.

Though a King indeed, he used no force to promote religious ends as did the Zealots. The corruption of the Temple in Jerusalem did not impel Him to physically isolate Himself from sinful men like the Essenes thought they must. He was even known as the friend of tax-gatherers and sinners while maintaining spotless integrity among them.

Stop and think: Will following the Pattern of Christ Jesus lead us to conform to popular religious ideas and practices surrounding us?

BIRTH

Jesus came, obscure and humble, amid a religious routine of disinterested and even antagonistic scribes [Mt.2:4-6] who handled truth with no intent of following its light from heaven [Mt.2:2,9,10].

Yet into the darkness of this hollow religion the true Light shown, being witnessed by shepherds who gathered around the Lamb of God. There in Bethlehem [house of bread] the true Bread

ARE WE LIKE CHRIST?

of heaven was laid in a crude feeding box to be partaken of by all who hungered and thirsted for righteousness [Lk.2:15-20].

Wisemen from the East, men of the world as they were, nevertheless, were led by stages with light from above to finally bow in worship before the Christ of God [Mt.2:2, 9-11]. It is God's way to lead from the imperfect to the perfect, from the vague to the clear without berating error or chastising the ignorant.

Rather, He sets forth truth to enlighten and clarify instead of merely pointing out errors without providing solutions. And so in the end, these strangers to Israel were shown to possess more wisdom than all of the scribes in Jerusalem combined.

Stop and think: How is Mt.13:12 illustrated both in the wise men from the East and in the scribes of Jerusalem?

WORLD

Herod fitly shows the fury of the world's power as set against Christ [Mt.2:16]. The heart of man will tolerate no rival King; two cannot reign from the same throne. And so, from the days of Cain, the wicked have always determined to eliminate the righteous and to silence the troublesome conviction of conscience that they bring.

It is no wonder, then, that His followers would also suffer at the hands of the world. If the Lord of the house is blasphemed and cast out as Beelzebub ["lord of the house" of demons], how could the members receive anything less [Mt.10:25]? Christians **walk in the same manner as He walked** [I Jn.2:6] and therefore must suffer with Him whom they follow [Jn.15:18-23].

Yet this is a blessed condition indeed; persecuted, rejected, and scorned. Such occasions caused the Lord Jesus to rejoice greatly

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in the Holy Spirit [Mt.11:20,25; Lk.10:21]. And these times are our opportunity to also do the same [Mt.5:10-12].

Stop and think: Why is it normal for a Christian to suffer and what blessing is associated with it? [I Pet.2:20; 4:14-16; Phil.1:28-30].

GENEALOGY

His incarnation [taking on of a body] exposes once and for all the misguided idea that matter is evil and spirit is good. His very birth shows the error and folly of imagining that severe treatment of the body or subjecting it by external rules could ever be a means of spirituality [Col.2:20-23].

Christ's becoming flesh is carefully noted in Matthew and Luke's genealogies [Mt.1; Lk.3]. These link Christ to the entire history of humanity as well as to that of the nation of Israel.

Matthew's connects Christ to all that is of God from the past though originating a new element of life from above. He was associated in background and history with the nation of Israel as their rightful King, though independent in His source of life [Mt.1:20,23].

He came as the fulfiller of the Law and Prophets, not as the perpetuator of them [Mt.5:17]. He was the messenger of a new law and a new covenant, launched from the platform of the old but soaring aloft into a new realm, leaving the old behind. His repeated words, **You have heard...but I say to you...** [Mt.5:21,22,27,28, 31-34, 38,39, 43,44] usher in a new standard of life, holiness, and love.

Luke shows Christ as true man and partaker of the human condition, traceable back to the first man, Adam. He comes as Head

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of a new race, a new humanity, as the second Man and last Adam [I Cor.15:45-49]. Christ sympathetically identifies with all men and their common lot in life though He is separate from the human corruption which is our natural state due to sin.

Genealogies inform us that a man's condition can be traced to a root cause. They show that no man lives unto himself, that our lives influence others for good or ill. And most significantly, they show that it is only grace that can interrupt and transform the natural tendencies inherited from forefathers.

Stop and think: How is it possible for a man to be free from the prejudices and defilement of one's ancestors? [I Pet.1:18,19; Col.1:13,14].

PREPARATION

Silent years passed in Nazareth of which the Lord in His Word has revealed nothing. We are cautioned thereby not to intrude by imagination into what God has kept concealed [Deut.29:29]. The false "gospels" of Christ's infancy "miracles" incorporated into the *Quran* testify to the vanity of speculation where heaven is silent.

What is recorded, however, is most instructive. It reveals that the Lord Jesus passed through a perfectly natural development process into maturity of wisdom and stature [Lk.2:52]. The means at His disposal to this end were not extraordinary, but were the common portion of all men.

In an obscure village where the totality of the individual life is seen and neighbors known thoroughly, is where He spent these quiet years. The rumbling bustle of the city where more are seen and fewer known was not the arena for His upbringing. It was in the

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sanctity of the commonplace that the virtue of His life blossomed into full fruitfulness.

By prolonged quiet reflection through the means available to all is how His character thrived; in the care of godly parents, meditation upon the wonders of the natural creation, habitual gathering with the people of God, secret communion with the Father, and by pondering the depths of the Scriptures.

This became the Pattern for Christianity; to flourish in the commonplace, in the home in contrast to the public concourse. Thus the home was converted into a “church” and parents into “ministers” by the example of our Lord during His days in Nazareth. Here quiet development of character is cultivated. Consistency of life, regular recourse to secret devotion, and practical usefulness is ingrained.

Out of His thirty-three years of earthly life, only three were engaged in ministry. The remaining 91% were passed in quiet development of character and obtaining a comprehensive grasp of eternal purposes into which the unique contribution of His life would fit.

Though at age twelve He was fully conscious that He **must be about My Father’s business** [Lk.2:49], that business for the next eighteen years was that of simple submission in the carpenter’s shop [Mk.6:3]. In such humble scenes one learns the discipline of the often repeated mundane tasks that fit the soul for future larger responsibilities [Lk.16:10].

Faithfulness is cultivated, not in dramatic public exploits, but in the daily sweeping of planer shavings. Through such menial chores one learns the discipline of self-restraint even though one’s thoughts and ambitions are grand, lofty, and godly.

Preparation precedes service. God must first make the man

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before He can send him. Character is the bedrock of usefulness in the design of heaven.

Over the years in the synagogue of Nazareth, Christ habitually devoted Himself to the Scriptures and gathering with the people of God even though the majority had not the mind of God [Lk.4:16]. In this He has shown us to endure patiently with the ignorant and misguided though we may be advanced spiritually beyond those we associate with.

Stop and think: How do the length of years and type of preparation that the Son of God experienced explain why there are few laborers in the Lord's harvest? [Mt.9:37,38; Prov.25:19; 26:6].

BAPTISM

All OT priests before entering their service must wash at the laver and then be anointed with oil as consecration for the solemn task before them [Ex.29:4-7]. So it was at the beginning of Christ's ministry that our great High Priest was dipped in the waters of Jordan followed by the Spirit then coming upon Him [Mt.3:13-17].

His great task as both priest and sacrifice depended upon His identification with defiled humanity. He came to take upon Himself the sins of the world and to carry them away in His own sinless body on the cross [I Pet.2:21-24].

At the Jordan He publicly became as a sinner in the eyes of all who lined the stream bank and witnessed His baptism. John protested, knowing that He had nothing to repent of. But Christ did not hide His face from such humiliation and reproach [Isa.50:6].

That process which would fulfill all righteousness could not be accomplished if Jesus did not become **a reproach of men and despised by the people** [Ps.22:6]. Everlasting righteousness could

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never have been accomplished had Christ not been **numbered with the transgressors** [Isa.53:12].

And thus He submitted to baptism **to fulfill all righteousness** [Mt.3:15] and thereby set His face as a flint on the course of shame and reproach that the remaining years of His life would righteously fulfill.

Stop and think: What happens to fulfilling all righteousness when men do not wish to be identified with people who might bring shame to their reputation? [Gal.2:11-14].

TEMPTATION

Christ was assaulted with the fiercest storm of temptation ever encountered by a man. He repelled every attack from the same storehouse of ammunition: **It is written** [Mt.4:4,7,10] effectively nullified every evil suggestion hurled against Him.

Satan unsuccessfully employed every wicked scheme in his arsenal against our Lord. His three mightiest weapons were launched against the Lord of glory to no avail. At the battle's end, Jesus' testimony was that He was **tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin** [Heb.4:15].

The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life [1 Jn.2:16] had no effect upon Him who steadfastly fought against them with the Spirit's mighty two-edged sword [Heb.4:12; Eph.6:17]. See how He met each one unshaken and victorious.

Turning stones into bread was a temptation to rely upon one's own wisdom and ability to provide for self without reference to the God of heaven. This, Christ refused utterly because He lived, not by His own words, but **by every word that proceeds from the mouth**

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of God [Mt.4:4]. This was victory over the appeal to the lust of the flesh.

He was assailed next with the presumptuous arrogance that would make God His own servant rather than He, the servant of God. It was a test whether He would distort the Scriptures to His own end in order to “compel” God to respond to His will instead of Him humbly submitting to the will of the Father. **You shall not tempt the Lord your God** [Mt.4:7] silenced this wicked suggestion to indulge the pride of life.

Finally, the lust of the eyes was presented before Him in all of its glory: Kingdoms, wealth, and universal dominion were to be His if He would but deviate from His appointed course. It was a temptation to visualize the end and possess it without regard for the means by which it was gained [Rom.3:8].

This was a devilish allurement to begin at the end rather than the beginning: to embrace the outward in its developed form though obtaining it by compromise under the delusion of filling it with spiritual reality afterwards.

See the devil flee before the Spirit’s sword, **Away with you, Satan! For it is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve”** [Mt.4:10]. May we go and also resist the enemy in like manner.

Stop and think: There are no other temptations facing us other than three [I Jn.2:15-17]. What is the perfect Pattern for resisting evil?

TEACHING

Christ in the midst of Judaism is the Pattern of the true church in the midst of a professedly Christian religion. Though Jews

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considered themselves to be the true people of God, heirs of the Covenants, and those who habitually kept holy days, heard the Word, and offered sacrifices, they did not love, obey, or know God [Jn.5:42, 45-47; 8:19].

Outwardly they were circumcised but inwardly the flesh had never been cut out of their hearts [Rom.2:28,29]. It was among such that Christ moved uncompromisingly and undefiled while graciously speaking the truth in love [Eph.4:15].

It was not from the scribes that He learned the words of life or the ways of righteousness. He owed nothing to human wisdom, its schools or literature, religious or otherwise. He drank from the eternal fount of God Himself through the conduit of His Word.

This was the cause of the multitudes' amazement. Where did He get these things? [Mk.6:2]. Never did a man teach like Him [Jn.7:46], teaching with **authority, and not as their scribes** [Mt.7:29]. They wondered because **He speaks boldly** [Jn.7:26] and they **marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth** [Lk.4:22].

Such was His doctrine, derived with authority from the throne of God itself, fearlessly proclaimed with all boldness [Mk.11:15-18], and mingled with the grace that had been poured upon His lips [Ps.45:2].

The common language of the people was used by Him. Rarely did He speak words of more than two syllables. His appeal was to the heart, not to the intellect.

Analogy was always present in His message. Vivid, sometimes startling imagery, borrowed or even wrested from the commonplace of life, was transported by Him into the realm of timeless spiritual truth.

Masterfully a single point was deeply brooded over so that its

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full spectrum was gathered into a memorable condensed expression. Christ's teaching compressed the greatest volume of truth into the smallest capsule of conveyance; capable of being memorized in a moment, but taking a lifetime to unravel.

Paul's expositions were fluent and closely reasoned like carefully forged links in a chain attached to a weighty logical conclusion as its anchor. Those of Christ were filled with the proverbial, pictorial, and expressed as parables without systematizing doctrine. His design was to conceal truth from the casual, disinterested, and carnal [Mt.13:10-15], while gladly expounding their depths to those who desired to know and follow [Mk.4:10,11].

His audience was as varied as the landscape of humanity: from swelling multitudes to single individuals, learned doctors to cherished children, rich princes to decrepit beggars, immoral women to indignant synagogue rulers, amongst eager disciples or hostile opponents, in Temple courts or fishing boats, by blazing well-side or evening's cool, He preached the Word, in season and out of season for our everlasting enlightenment.

Stop and think: Neither human wisdom, tradition, nor His own opinion was the source of Christ's teaching. Where must we obtain our doctrine and how should it be spoken? [Jn.7:15-17; 2 Tim.3:15-17; I Pet.4:10,11; Jer.23:18,22; Eph.4:15].

MIRACLES

Christ went about doing good [Acts 10:38]. Compassion moved Him to His works of mercy [Mt.14:14]. Yet not every one who received the miraculous was spiritually benefitted thereby [Mt.11:20, Jn.12:37]. And should the spirit of a man remain untouched though his body has been relieved, the last state has

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become worse than the first.

By definition, a miracle is an abnormal event brought about by supernatural power. Miracles are not to be expected as a regular normal course of life. They are periodic and unusual, not customary and routine. Otherwise, they would cease to be miraculous.

Few men in the pages of Scripture performed miracles. There have only been three main times in all of biblical history that it was so. Moses and Joshua were the first. Centuries later Elijah and Elisha were the next, followed some eight-hundred and fifty years afterwards by Christ and the Apostles. The point is that miracles were never designed to be normative for the believer; neither the receiving nor performing of them.

Jesus' miracles served three main purposes: [1] They lovingly relieved the temporal miseries of sin that afflict men, [2] thereby divine proof was offered that God was in Christ in all of His fulness, and [3] they provided parables of a deeper and lasting salvation, the healing of the soul.

These last two aspects are why John refers to Christ's miracles as "signs." The literal events point to something far more significant and enduring than the immediate blessing received. Physical diseases removed portray pictorially the greater work of restoration of the inner man for all eternity.

Bread that is multiplied reveals the true Bread from heaven who gives everlasting life to the world [Jn.6]. Blindness healed leads to the opening of the eyes of the heart to see Christ for who He truly is, unless one refuses the entrance of that Light which alone can enable one to see [Jn.9; Mt.15:14].

Leprosy pictures the inner working of deadly corruption that manifests itself through outbreaks of the flesh. Lameness shows the inability of man to walk in God's ways; deafness, the hardened heart

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that will not listen to God's Word; the withered hand, the powerlessness to perform any work that is good.

Healing of our souls is what we need [Ps.41:4]. Indeed, from the sole of our foot to the crown of our heads, we are sick in rebellion [Isa.1:5,6]. Only the touch of Christ, the Great Physician, can cure us of such unrighteous illnesses of the heart [Mk.2:17].

Stop and think: Compare one whose body was healed but not his soul, with one who endures bodily affliction in this life but whose soul is delivered from sin. Now, define blessing and the focus of ministry.

PRAYER

During the days of Jesus' life on earth, He offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the One who could save Him from death, and He was heard because of His godly fear [Heb.5:7].

Prayer, for Christ, was the habitual means of regular communion as well as the recourse of special petition at crucial junctures. He would often slip away [Lk.5:16] and pray to His Father in secret [Lk.9:18].

There, apart from the rumble of toiling towns and the silly emptiness of its endless round of amusements, He sought privacy both in time and place. In the quietness of early morning [Mk.1:35] or in the stillness of the night [Lk.6:12], in the freshness of mountain heights [Mt.14:23] or in the sanctity of the inner room [Mt.6:5,6], His voice was heard on high.

When pressed by the external demands of the thronging multitudes' incessant needs, He then withdrew for prayer [Lk.5:15,16]. For Him it was a reason to pray, not an excuse to

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neglect it. Or when faced with major decisions of weighty consequence, prolonged prayer always preceded them [Lk.6:12,13].

Yet not all praying is meant to be in private. He prayed in the company of men also [Mk.14:22,23], giving thanks to the Father for all good things [Jn.6:11], and encouraged His followers to do likewise [Mt.18:19]. Corporate earnest united prayer stimulates the spirit like a meaningful conversation does the mind.

It was His delight to pray with the children [Mt.19:13-15] and equally His solemn obligation to intercede for erring Apostles [Lk.22:32]. His consistent devotion to prayer drew out the desire of disciples to be like their Master in this most spiritual grace [Lk.11:1] and, as well, rebuked their failure in the same [Mt.26:40].

While praying at His baptism, heaven was opened and the Spirit of God descended as a dove upon Him [Lk.3:21,22]. Revelation of His glory shone forth on the mountain as He was praying [Lk.9:28,29].

Agonizing cries split the night air from His prostrate form in Gethsemane's gloom [Lk.22:44]. While He was strengthened from heaven during His utter abandonment of self-will [Lk.22:41-43], disciples received no power to resist temptation due to their carnal indulgence when they ought to have prayed [Lk.22:46]. And when the hour and power of darkness came upon them, they who boasted self-confidently of their devotion unto death, all left Him and fled [Lk.22:53; Mt.26:56].

No thoughts of self can be discovered in any of His prayers. Ever and always the glory of His Father and the welfare of His brethren filled His petitions, even just some few hours before the cross [Jn.17]. Jesus died praying; praying for enemies' forgiveness [Lk.23:34] and humbly expressing with His last breath what could well be the hallmark of His life, **Father, into Your hands I commit**

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My spirit [Lk.23:46].

Stop and think: If the Lord of glory thus resorted to and needed prayer, being what He was, how much more us, being what we are?

SCRIPTURES

One does not need to read far in the Gospels to see that Christ, the living Word, had treasured the written Word of God richly within Himself. So thoroughly familiar was He with the Scriptures that on the strength of a single text the devil fled [Mt.4:10,11], mouths of contradicting wisemen were stopped [Mt.22:41-46], and centuries of foolish human tradition was confounded [Mt.12:2-7].

So accurately did He know God's Word that His explanation of the tense of one verb in one quotation exposed the error and scattered the doctrine of His strongest religious opponents [Mt.22:31,32]. Down to the smallest letter of the alphabet and the tiniest stroke of the pen is how holy and unchanging the entire Law and Prophets were to Him [Mt.5:17,18].

He knew the hidden and less traveled paths through the Word and was able to pluck unusual phrases from obscure places to address the needs of the moment [Jn.10:33-36]. Not only was the text precisely in His mind, its truest meaning and intention dwelt in His heart in fullest measure [Mt.5:27,28].

Wherever one could conceivably turn in the pages of the Bible, He was no stranger there but rather the Master of it. Whether the histories of David and the kings [Mt.12:3,4,42], that of the prophets [Lk.4:25-27], or of Noah, Abraham, and the patriarchs [Mt.24:37; Jn.8:39,40; 1:51], the details of all were His familiar

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delight.

Israel's wanderings in the wilderness were fertile fields for His preaching and doctrine [Jn.3:14]. He could, as well, visit Hosea [Mt.9:13], borrow from Micah [Mt.10:35,36], announce Zechariah [Mt.26:31], or bring forth Malachi [Mt.11:10]. Deuteronomy, Psalms, and Isaiah, like intimate friends, were frequented and invited forth more often than any others during His discourses.

The whole of God's revelation was possessed comprehensively in addition to its countless particulars. Sweeping themes of deepest insight were His studied portion. Words of grace lay ready upon His tongue having been received morning by morning through His awakened ear [Isa.50:4].

At once He could tell with authority which were the greatest commandments and declare that the entire Scriptures were summarized thereby [Mt.22:36-40]. Capably He could survey the whole of the revelation of God from beginning to end while pointing out its spiritual consequence [Mt.23:34,35]. With burning conviction from Genesis to Malachi, He explained everything in all of the Old Testament pertaining to Himself [Lk.24:25-27].

The Scriptures testify of Christ [Jn.5:39], and throughout all of His life He testified of them, both by word and by deed.

Stop and think: If the Lord of glory thus resorted to and needed the Scriptures, being what He was, how much more us, being what we are? By what means are we to become like Him in His knowledge of and dependence upon the Word of God? [Prov.2:1-12; 2 Tim.2:15; Ps.119].

HOLY SPIRIT

Dependence upon self never characterized the Lord Jesus.

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Though being **God manifest in the flesh** [I Tim.3:16], He did not rely upon His own wisdom or ability. From His birth to His resurrection, He was dependent upon the Holy Spirit [Lk.1:35; Rom.1:4].

In the spotless Lamb of God, the Spirit of God found One that He could rest upon and abide with [Jn.1:33] without ever being grieved. During the days of Christ's flesh He was full of, led by, and walked in the power of the Spirit [Lk.4:1; Mt.4:1; Lk.4:14].

All of His preaching of the gospel [Lk.4:17,18] and teaching of the doctrine of God [Jn.3:34] was done under the influence and revelation of the Holy Spirit. Miracles performed by the Son of God were the expression of that power that descended upon Him at His baptism [Lk.5:17; Mt.12:28].

Strength for obedience, even to the death of the cross, was received by the Lord Jesus from this same eternal Spirit [Heb.9:14]. And it is this very Holy Spirit that our Lord Jesus has sent as an everlasting Comforter to abide with all who love Him in truth [Jn.14:16,17].

Stop and think: How does Jesus' life in the Holy Spirit relate to the history of the wisdom, schemes, and programs of the church? [Jn.6:63].

DISCIPLES

Disciples are yoked to Christ as learners who walk with Him in meekness and lowliness [Mt.11:29]. By definition, a disciple is a learner. The goal of such association is conformity to the Master [Lk.6:40] through denial and even hatred of self [Lk.9:23; 14:26] by willingly suffering all for His name's sake [Lk.14:27].

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Apprenticeship was ever Christ's method to instruct, train, and equip disciples. His practice was that His followers would learn spiritual principles by observation and participation. His life and teaching both in public and private were observed by them and later explained apart from the multitudes [Mk.4:34]. They also participated in serving men by way of preaching, teaching, healing, and giving to the poor.

For them to be able to repeat mechanically memorized information gained in a classroom setting was never His purpose. Rather, on the shores of Galilee or along the highways and in the marketplace, His school required men to reason about spiritual issues for themselves.

By encountering life' situations with the Word of God and by the use of repeated questions, disciples' inner character was developed. The barrenness of a mere academic exercise of mind was not His aim and could never be thought of as training.

Jesus brought no gold from heaven to fund the work committed into their hands. As He trusted in His Father, so must His disciples. He built no temples, established no ceremonial procedures, and founded no institutions; a maximizing of power with a minimum of machinery. None of these external things can ever maintain godliness, only men who have been transformed by the Son of God.

No human means, entertainment, or enticements were used to attract men to Himself. Christ alone is the single desire of a disciple, not the bait of gain or interests of any other kind.

Stop and think: We are commanded to make disciples [Mt.28:18-20]. Based on what we see in Jesus, what does this involve?

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APOSTLES

Jesus Himself was the Apostle [Heb.3:1] and knew what was required to be one. The word “apostle” means “sent forth.” It describes one who by character and understanding can represent the interests of the one who sent him.

Christ did nothing except what He saw and heard from His Father, therefore apostles must go forth with no novelty of message and representation. They are ambassadors, and an ambassador dare not speak or act beyond what he has been authorized to do.

As the Apostle, He only did what He had authority to do from His Father. No independent message and judgment is fitting in an apostle.

I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me [Jn.5:30].

I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak [Jn.12:49].

This is the apostolic process: Men are chosen to first be with Him, separated from the unbroken tradition of their customary life until transformed. They then could be sent forth back into that culture without being overtaken by it when conformity to Christ’s character and message was consistent with His own [Mk.3:14]. This explains why laborers are yet few. The Father does not send just anyone into His vineyard.

In the extension of the kingdom of heaven, Wisdom dictated to perpetuate life by life, not by pen or sword; the number of trees in one pawpaw cannot be counted. Grace dictated that those chosen be from the mainstream of common humanity and not

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from the exceptional or elite, that no flesh may boast in His presence.

And thus it was that unlearned fishermen [Acts4:13], a tax collector, a political zealot, and volatile sons of thunder became chosen vessels of worldwide blessing. It was a grassroots endeavor so that whatever noteworthy and commendable would be attributable to Christ and not to man.

Christ's prayer summarizes His apostolic work, **I have given to them the Words which You have given Me; and they have received them** [Jn.17:8]. Two by two they were thus sent forth, vindicating the wisdom of a three stranded strength entwined together with His own [Eccl.4:9-12].

Stop and think: How can the difference be known between one who has been sent, from him who has merely gone? [Jer.23:21,22]. Why were they sent two by two?

SINLESSNESS

In self-forgetful humility, Christ is the perfect Pattern of sinlessness. We are not to think of His holiness as a detached and rigid correctness while isolated from men and the concourse of life in this world. Jesus' perfection was rather seen in a pure expression of an uninterrupted love for God and man which never was provoked to act unbecomingly by seeking His own interests [I Cor.13:5,6].

All beatitudes found their full expression in Christ [Mt.5:1-12]. Emptied of His riches in glory, He dwelt below in the humility of poverty [2 Cor.8:9]. As the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief [Isa.53:3], His mourning was blessed.

Who can attain to His meekness, unstained by even one spot of pride? Have any hungered and thirsted for righteousness as He, unspoiled by self-seeking in the least? Bitterness and revenge found

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no place in His bosom full of mercy.

Purity of heart was His constant portion. He is our peace and peacemaker, the One who even joyously endured the despising and persecution of men [Heb.12:2].

Sinlessness was evident in every aspect of His life from His earliest days; in submission to parents [Lk.2:51] and in patient endurance of brothers' scorn [Jn.7:3-5]. During long years of tireless carpentry in Nazareth, not one annoyance boiled within.

When disappointed [Mt.26:40,41], insulted [Jn.8:46-49], or falsely accused [Mk.15:55-61], nothing clouded the clarity of His soul. Though unappreciated and dishonored [Lk.17:17], no revenge or self-pity could be detected within. Even His treacherous betrayer was called, "Friend" [Mt.26:48-50]. No matter how He was examined, in any situation and in every aspect of character, sinless purity was discovered.

Stop and think: How do pride, anger, and vengeance spoil purity?

CONTROVERSY

Willingness to engage in controversy stems from the joyful and certain sense of possessing the truth while being convinced of its value for all men. This conviction is what makes error hateful and inspires the determination to sweep it away in truth's blessed light.

But in the midst of controversy, we must distinguish between the propagators of heresy and those ignorant and misguided influenced by it [Heb.5:2]. The former we may well rebuke to silence their evil folly [Tit.1:9-13]. The latter must be dealt with gently if perchance God would open their hearts to repent and come to the knowledge of the truth [2 Tim.2:23-26].

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As the King of Truth [Jn.18:37], Christ was a controversialist who had to assail nearly the entire religious system of His day. Yet though He contended earnestly for the truth, Jesus possessed fervency of spirit while tempered with self-restraint, even in the midst of murderous antagonists.

Hypocritical Pharisees intent upon His destruction were exposed and rebuked for their wickedness [Mt.22:15-22]. Yet one from among them [Mt.22:34-36], who was not of their spirit of malice, asked a reasonable question and was answered with truth and grace [Mk.12:28-34]. Jesus then turned back to His adversaries who willfully neither understood the Scriptures nor the power of God and silenced their nonsense with truth that could not be refuted [Mk.12:35-40].

Stop and think: How does zeal for truth blend with grace in the Lord Jesus in illustration of Prov.26:4,5?

HATED

Simply stated, Jesus was hated by the world because He loved what men hated and hated what men loved. **But of the Son He says...You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness** [Heb.1:8,9].

This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed [Jn.3:19,20].

His testifying to the world that its deeds were evil made Him the object of their scorn and anger [Jn.7:7]. He viewed their man-made traditions as one of the greatest evils of His day while

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refusing to practice any of them in the least. This provoked the world's fury to the fullest.

Particularly, His disregard of their arrogant lording their views of the Sabbath over men provoked their rage. That very day of rest, joy, and blessing from God had been turned by them into a curse and grievous burden that no man could bear.

Christ purposefully performed the merciful and beneficial works of His Father on this day. By doing so, He consciously rebuked the wicked maliciousness that exalts religious observance above relieving human misery.

Yet so entrenched were they in their delusion, that the miraculous works themselves became no testimony to them of His person and mission. Rather, since He set aside their invented religious rules, it merely proved to them that His mission was devilish and not divine.

Underlying all their malice was the fear of losing their following [Jn.12:19; Mk.11:18], and ultimately, their favor with Rome [Jn.11:47] along with the earthly rewards that would bring.

Stop and think: What is gained and what is lost through compromise?

KINGDOM

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand [Mt.3:2; 4:17]. This is a call for slaves to submit to a new rule under a new King. In it there is a new means of access to God with a different kind of righteousness, beyond that of scribes and Pharisees [Mt.5:20].

Old wine, to its last dissatisfying drop, has finished. New wine along with its new wineskin has come [Lk.5:37-39]. It is a kingdom of Spirit and truth rather than governed by externals and

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tradition [Jn.4:20-24]; coming not with signs, but one that is within you [Lk.17:20,21].

In this spiritual and internal kingdom of character [Rom.14:17], earthly and outward qualifications of rank and regiment do not reign. Here, none can make Him King by force and demand loaves from His hand ever after, for this is not what the kingdom of heaven is [Jn.6:14,15,26,27]. Those attempting to, stumble over their own bellies and go their way without bread or Christ either one.

The kingdom of heaven belongs to the poor and persecuted [Lk.6:20; Mt.5:10], not to the aggressive and triumphant, the proud Pharisee, luxurious Sadducee, or schooled scribe [I Cor.1:26-29]. Entrance is obtained by all who are born again [Jn.3:3,5] who thereby gain victory to overcome the world [I Jn.5:4,5], not by might or sword, but by being slaves to the truth of which Christ is the King [Jn.18:36,37].

Stop and think: What is the single concern of a slave? Jesus said that His kingdom was not of this world [Jn.18:36]. Describe the place that politics, tribal preference, and social status have in His kingdom.

LEADERSHIP

Christ's moral and spiritual superiority qualified Him to lead by truth and example and not like the majority of men who use dominating force in the absence of both. It is the rulers of the world that exercise authority and lord it over those whom they view as under and less than themselves [Lk.22:25,26].

But it shall not be so among leaders in His church. There the

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greatest are servants, the first the last, and leaders are as the youngest, performing lowly unwanted tasks. True leadership in the church is patterned after the Son of Man who **did not come to be served, but to serve** [Mt.20:28].

It is the Life that is the Light of men [Jn.1:4] and the beholding and handling of it that leads to fellowship [I Jn.1:1-3]. Dictating from a distance is not the Pattern of Christ. Precept lacks power unless it be incarnate. Only as the truth is lived will weight be lent to words [Prov.26:7; 29:19]. Christ has not only told us the way [Jn.12:49,50], but He has shown it to us as well [Lk.22:27; Jn.13:12-15].

Nothing in true godliness or leadership is produced by force or external codes. Christ's object and method was to persuade and win the hearts of men, not to subjugate them or merely modify outward behavior. His manner that we must follow is that of a compelling example of love and holiness merged with the persuasive power of truth. Lord of all that He is, He has provided a servant's Pattern for us to imitate, not that of lordship [see Appendix 1 *NT Leadership*].

Stop and think: How does the rule of a man over one's soul prevent someone from following Christ? What is the true Pattern of leadership in the church of the Lord Jesus?

LOVE

If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them [Lk.6:32]. Being perfect as the Father in heaven, is defined in terms of one's love [Mt.5:43-48]. And in this, our Lord Jesus excelled all men.

None were excluded from the broad self-sacrificing benefit

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of His loving heart. Neither a rich ruler nor miserable beggars were refused. Whether the most notable among teachers or be they ignorant multitudes, all were loved.

Children were embraced and violent persecutors prayed for. Repulsive lepers were kindly touched and weeping harlots washed His feet with shameful tears.

No distinctions of social status, nationality, age, gender, disease, occupation, education, religion, morality, tribe, or wealth determined His love. He loved because He was full of God, and God is love.

Love moved Him to pity and relieve the world's misery. Love compelled Him to speak the truth to expose the secrets of hearts [Mk.10:21]. And love for His Father led Him to lay down His life in obedience to His every command [Jn.14:31].

Stop and think: Without love we are nothing [I Cor.13:2,3] and our religion stinks. Define love by considering the life of Christ.

CROSS

And what shall I say, "Father, save Me from this hour?" But for this purpose I came to this hour [Jn.12:27]. The cross was the grand climax of Christ's coming to this world [I Tim.1:15].

It was because the blood of bulls and goats could never take away sins that a body was prepared for Him [Heb.10:4,5]; a body in which iniquity would be taken away according to the will of God [Heb.10:6-10].

He was crucified through weakness [2 Cor.13:4]. There is no other avenue for the power of God to be revealed [2 Cor.12:9,10]. The cross, a seeming triumph of wickedness over all that is righteous and good, was actually the ultimate victory over it. Shame and

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reproach borne righteously leads to glory and honor unendingly.

This cross was described by Him as a baptism which would plunge Him into darkened depths of sorrow and judgment [Lk.12:50]. It was His cup received from the Father's hand [Mk.10:38; 14:36]; a cup of deepest red [Ps.75:8], full of horror and desolation [Ezek.23:33], fire, brimstone, and burning wind [Ps.11:6].

From it He would drink down the wrath of heaven to its last bitter drop. Thereafter, the cup we share became the cup of blessing [I Cor.10:16].

Yet when He speaks of His cross, that of our own is not far behind [Mt.16:21,24]. A grain of wheat that falls to the ground must surely die in order to bear much fruit. This He spoke regarding His glorification at the cross and, as well, of his servants who must hate and lose their own lives in order keep them unto eternal life [Jn.12:23-25].

It is finished [Jn.19:30] announces a debt discharged; a payment made in full. Thus the cross of the Lord Jesus once and for all settled every obligation of guilty man, paid every offense, and satisfied the demands of the righteous Judge against sinful men.

Nothing can, or need be, added to it. The ransom is paid, souls have been purchased, and pardon obtained. Hallelujah for the cross.

Stop and think: Christ has by Himself fully paid the debt to release us from sin's penalty. What then remains for us in order to fill up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions? [Col.1:24 - 2:2; 2 Cor.4:7-12].

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RESURRECTION

Christ is the Resurrection and the Life [Jn.11:25]. It was a moral requirement that He not be held in the power of death [Acts 2:24], since He voluntarily entered into it, being sinless [Jn.10:17,18]. The gospel writers all portray the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus as the spiritual pivot of human history.

Matthew emphasizes the glory, majesty, and authority of the risen Christ as triumphing over all wisdom and power of men until the end of the age. Mark presents the historical reality of repeated appearances that convince the reluctant and unbelieving.

Luke sets forth the spiritual necessity of Christ's death and resurrection as foretold in the words of the Law and Prophets. John's record shows the transforming power of the risen Lord in the midst of His own as seen in Mary, Thomas, and Peter.

All carnal objections to the resurrection of Christ are crushed beneath the historical, logical, and moral weight of the rolled-away stone [see Appendix 2 *Resurrection*]. But it was not that disciples met an empty tomb that convinced them, it was that they met a living Lord.

Christianity itself underwent a resurrection of sorts after the Lord Jesus was raised. As Christ was raised in a transfigured body, so also were His followers.

Apostles who fled identification with Christ and who hid in fear and gloom were raised up unto power and fearless proclamation. They who were clothed with the carnal dress of worldly desires and hopes, cast those garments of death aside leaving them in the darkness of the tomb.

No more were they disputing who was the greatest among them [Mk.9:33,34]. Gone was self-confidence in their own

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commitment and carnal methods [Mt.26:35, 51, 52]. Forgotten was their desire for honor in the coming kingdom [Mk.10:35-37]. Instead, spiritual concerns for the glory of Christ and testifying to the souls of men consumed them though faced with persecution and death.

And thus, it was not their verbal testimony alone that provided the undeniable proof that Jesus was risen from the dead. It was that they themselves were also transformed and possessed that very life which can only be explained as coming from the living Christ.

Stop and think: How are Mt.10:26-33 and Jn.13:34,35 illustrated in the resurrection of the disciples?

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3

SO SEND I YOU

As the Father has sent Me, so send I you [Jn.20:21]

WHOM DOES GOD SEND?

The work of the gospel is a work of transformation into the image of Christ. The Lord Jesus is the Pattern for both the one proclaiming and the one receiving the message of Life. Conformity to Christ, in character, doctrine, and in method, is required if one will be sent.

It is why laborers continue to be few though harvests are great [Mt.9:36-38]. God does not; no, rather, He cannot send forth workers into His harvest who neither are moved with the compassion of Christ for downtrodden sheep, nor capable of expounding the gospel of the kingdom.

Small boys are unfit to do a man's work. God is no fool. He does not entrust the eternal well-being of undying souls into the hands of those who are unlike His Son. The whole purpose of the sending forth of the gospel is that men might **gain the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ** [2 Thess.2:14].

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How then could God conceivably send forth someone with His approval who is unlike the Lord Jesus Christ in character, doctrine, and method of ministry? A laborer who is lacking in any of these three essentials, could not possibly be fit to serve the purposes of the God of heaven.

Many have gone forth, few have been sent. The necessity to pray to the Lord of the harvest for suitable laborers is still quite relevant. Ripened harvests lacking suitable laborers spoil and rot with all as loss.

The following will focus upon four who were sent by the God of heaven. The apostolic period served as a transition from the visible and physical presence of Christ with His people, to being wholly cast upon the invisible presence of Christ by the Spirit. Four major phases of that transition took place through Peter, Stephen, Paul and John.

PETER

Keys of the kingdom [Mt.16:19] were placed in his hands by the Lord Jesus Christ. Peter was the initiator, a pioneer, who accessed several new gateways into fresh spiritual realms for the saints of God to follow thereafter.

Pentecost found him unlocking the stiff rusty gate of tradition unto the flooding light of salvation and a New Covenant for the Jew. Three thousand gladly rushed through the opened passageway to eternal life, accessed by the Key of the Gospel in his hand [Acts 2:14-42].

Through him doors of mercy swung wide unto the afflicted and sorrowing. Miracles were first introduced through the church to a suffering world at the Temple's Beautiful Gate [Acts 3:1-10], and

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Peter held that Key of Compassion.

It was Peter who first passed through the door of persecution, imprisonment, and stripes for the sake of the Name [Acts 4&5]. The Key of No-compromise gained admittance to that prison cell of suffering in behalf of Christ.

Reluctantly, a key was withdrawn from an Israelite's robe to extend salvation's blessing beyond the borders of Judea unto the remotest part of the earth. Peter's narrow thinking required arresting by repeated visions before that key would be inserted to unlock blessing to the "unclean" Gentiles [Acts 10:9-16].

Yet he yielded to the message from heaven. Peter arose without misgivings and threw open the barred door to the heathen in Cornelius' house [Acts 11:1-18]. Thereafter, every tribe, people, tongue, and nation have thankfully streamed through it to the glory of God.

This final Key pulled from Peter's robe, was the golden one of Obedience; Peter's own obedience, which led to **the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake** [Rom.1:5].

STEPHEN

Stephen is the link between Jerusalem and the uttermost parts of the earth. In him the church moved from being merely another Jewish sect to becoming the universal body of Christ. Stephen's teaching and death was Peter's forerunner leading the way out of a narrow Judaism unto reaching even the Gentiles.

That same doctrine and self-sacrifice were the goads that pricked the conscience of Saul of Tarsus. Stephen's prayer was heard by the risen Christ [Acts 7:60] and eventually Saul became Paul, the

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Apostle to the nations. What Peter began in the house of Cornelius, Paul continued to the regions beyond, and Stephen was their common host to both.

How did he do this? It was by his deep insight into the truth of Jn.4:21-24 coupled with his death to self for the sake of Christ and the gospel.

In answering his accusers' charges [Acts 6:10-15], he showed that the God of glory is not restricted to any one people or "holy" place [Acts 7:1-8]. He demonstrated that though they possessed the Law, the Jews had never kept it from the moment it was given [Acts 7:38-41].

What had they ever done but reject and kill the servants of the God they claimed to serve? [Acts 7:51-53]. Finally, the very Christ of God was despised, rejected, and slain in their wicked malice.

His martyrdom was truly as a grain of wheat falling to the ground, dying, that brought forth much fruit. It was the seed sown of an eventual vast host of Greeks who then indeed would see Jesus [Jn.12:20-26] at long last.

Stop and think: Stephen was the first Christian martyr [a witness who died for his faith]. Tertullian of Africa [c. 200 AD] said, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." What did he mean by that and how can this be seen in Stephen? [Acts 8:4; 9:1-6; 11:19-26].

PAUL

Jesus never traveled even up to 120 miles from His birthplace. Paul, in about ten years' time, had established the church in four major regions of the Empire where there had been no

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churches before; in Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia, and Asia. Yet he too had not reached all peoples with the gospel.

Like that of the Lord Jesus, the scope of his work was foundational, not one from start to finish. The growth and development of it he entrusted into the hands of faithful men as did His Lord.

Whatever may have developed afterwards could not be attributed to a faulty foundation on his part. Like Christ [Jn.17:4], He could truly say that his work was done, though vast regions were left unvisited by him. In his final letter he could truthfully proclaim, **I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith** [2 Tim.4:7].

Paul's early days were spent as a disciple at the feet of one of Israel's best and most noble rabbis, Gamaliel [Acts 5:33-39]. This man, respectfully referred to as the "Beauty of the Law," trained his scholars diligently by the study of the Scriptures. They were required to memorize it and learn the views of Jewish commentators. Open forum discussions were an essential part of their training where minds were sharpened by successive rapid-fire questions.

But brilliance and education did not save his soul. Even the memorizing of the Word of God and careful attention to ancestral tradition could not transform him from the outside in.

Christianity begins with God arresting our maddened course, striking us to the dust where we abandon all for the sake of the Christ of Glory. On the road to Damascus [Acts 9:1-19], the Lord of Glory brought him into the Light and the transformation began there.

Serving the High Priest of Jerusalem was forgotten in the presence of the great High Priest who had entered the heavens. His all consuming mission at Damascus was abandoned in the realization

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that he did not even know what the Lord wished him to do [Acts 9:5,6]. Awaiting him was a new mission assignment unto the nations [Acts 9:15].

Saul, who had caused so much suffering and sorrow, must be shown **how much he must suffer for My name's sake** [Acts 9:16]. The persecutor must become the persecuted.

Weighty letters from the highest religious authorities [Acts 9:2] were dropped and scattered along the road. His hands must be free to receive and pen thirteen letters from the throne of God to be included in the NT Scriptures. Saul of Tarsus, mighty in Israel, was struck to the dust and became Paul [small], lowly and despised.

His conversion on the Damascus road was the seed of his entire doctrine. Life as he knew it came to an abrupt end: He had been crucified with Christ. The totality of his previous life was of no account and suitable only to be unceremoniously buried along the road in Damascus dust.

Saul of Tarsus died that day. Paul arose in his place. He was no more Saul, the captain of his own soul and leader of men. That day he became Paul the slave, blinded and led by the hand into the knowledge of Christ and of a God he had never known.

Who are you, Lord? [Acts 9:5] signaled his fresh beginning. He confessed that he knew nothing, that before now he had been a self-willed rebel. Christ Jesus was seen to be Lord, and Paul a slave; the basis of his repeated theme of believers being servants/slaves of Christ [Rom.6:14-23]. Christ's reply, **I am Jesus whom you are persecuting**, pierced his soul with a terrifying realization. Hatred of Christians was actually hatred of Jesus Himself. Jesus and His people are one [I Cor.12:12,13].

This was the initial revelation to his heart of his loftiest and most frequently repeated doctrine; the believers' Union with Christ.

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His epistles are full of phrases such as “in Christ,” “by Christ,” “through Christ,” and “with Christ.”

He learned that day that love for the church, the body of Christ, is the most practical and fundamental expression of love for Christ Himself [I Cor.13:1-3]. Christ in glory ever after was his focus. It was this that he wrote of and prayed that God would grant insight into by the illumination of the Holy Spirit [Eph.1:15-23; Col.1:9-12].

In one blazing burst of Light he learned that circumcision and law-keeping are vain hopes of attaining unto salvation. They had not assisted him in the slightest, but were actually his greatest hindrance. Christ did not improve upon a righteousness that Paul already had by these means. Rather, Paul’s was cast out as so much worthless dung in order to attain the righteousness that comes by Christ alone [Phil.3:4-9].

Law was ordained of God to demonstrate the utter failure of human nature to attain unto righteousness, even among the most devoted and privileged among men, i.e., the Jews. The Cross, however, God appointed to resolve the problem of human nature.

The flesh must be crucified, not modified through religious exercise [Gal.2:20,21]. This, only union with the living Christ will accomplish. And Paul saw it, beginning from that day forward.

In Jerusalem, Paul and Peter met and together resolutely resisted the entangling vines of fleshly tradition threatening the church [Acts 15:1-29]. Left unchecked, those tentacles would have wound about the neck of the bride and strangled her, ere the Bridegroom could kiss her with the kisses of His lips.

They steadfastly refused and rebuked the Law’s crushing burden of man-made tradition. At the same time, they guarded against that false form of liberty that imagines freedom as being license without restraint.

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While declaring that circumcision cannot save and sanctify, they did not ignore that idolatry destroys and corrupts. No alliance with blood, images, and immorality could be tolerated any more than a Jewish yoke.

This is what was forbidden to Gentiles in the decision of the brethren in Acts 15; not a carnal accommodation to Jewish prejudice, but a repentance from all idolatrous practices and associations.

The idolatrous mystery religions among the Gentiles involved a variety of myths about a virgin-born savior-god who died and was brought to life again by *Magna Mater* [The Great Mother]. Many had rituals involving eating the flesh of a slain bull still dripping with blood. This, they supposed, made them partakers of the life of the god and possessed of its spirit. Not infrequently, sacred and sometimes wild dancing was practiced along with fornication as part of their “worship.”

For Paul and Peter, opening salvation’s door to the Gentiles was not an invitation for their idolatry to follow along into the church with them.

Paul had been cut free from the bigotry of bondage, but never fell into the bigotry of liberty. He neither tolerated evil, nor did he compel the immature to follow his liberty though their conscience had not yet been developed to that point.

He consistently rose above the mere logic of his own position into wider, nobler, and more lofty realms. Love transcended his personal convictions and maturity to embrace and assist the weak, immature, and the small of soul [I Thess.5:14].

For Paul, labor was always based upon thought, and life upon doctrine. Harmony between truth and practice is a necessity in Paul. He could never be content with correct doctrine, even in a

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Peter [I Cor.15:11], which was not matched by correct example as well [Gal.2:11-14].

Paul had attained to a degree of likeness to Christ worthy of imitation [I Cor.11:1]. Perhaps this is nowhere seen more clearly than in I Thessalonians chapter 2, where he describes his deepest convictions, longings, and affection. May we also imitate the Pattern of Christ.

Stop and think: What correspondence between Paul and Christ can be seen?

JOHN

John was the last of the Apostles who made the final contributions to the NT revelation. His writings set forth Christ as the sufficiency for the church during the following centuries up until His return.

In the history of God's people, the time came when it was announced, Moses my servant is dead [Josh.1:2]. Some years afterwards, Joshua and the elders who survived him had been gathered to their people. And then the people of God were tested as they had not been before.

The test was this: What is to be done in the absence of notable spiritual leaders? How will the kingdom of heaven advance in the hands of the average believer when they are gone?

The answer to those questions is little different for the church today as it was for Israel following Joshua's departure. Like them, the church has recourse to the Lord Himself and the fellowship of like-minded brethren. These are the means for sustained victory in accomplishing the will of the Lord in our generation [Jud.1:1-4].

John is the bridge from apostolic beginnings, to a church

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that is completely dependent upon the Lord apart from her founding human leaders. His five writings set forth Christ in the glory of His perfect example and boundless supply. This is what will preserve the church; to be cast wholly upon Him as Support, Guide, and Pattern.

What shall we do when Peter is no more among us to feed [Jn.21:15-17] and guide the flock of God [I Pet.5:1-3]? We have the abiding presence of Jesus, **the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls** [I Pet.2:25].

How can the whole counsel of God be maintained when all have turned away from the Apostle [2 Tim.1:15] and Paul has departed to be with Christ? We are left with **the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus [to] guard through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the good deposit which has been entrusted to [us]** [2 Tim.1:13,14].

Before departing from this life, John left the church with an abiding legacy, sufficient for all time and effective in every situation. His Gospel summarizes the blessed portion of those who have not seen either Jesus or the Apostles, **and yet believed** [Jn.20:29]. Chapters are in [].

[1] Jesus is the Word, the full and final revelation of the unseen God. He is the Lamb, the one Sacrifice that has forever satisfied the righteous demands of the holy God against sinful men.

[2] Worship is in Christ, the true Temple, where the glory of God is fully revealed.

[3] If we look to Christ in simple trusting faith as Israel looked to the Serpent in the wilderness, salvation from sin's deadly poison will cleanse the heart. The Lord Jesus is the church's

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Bridegroom; loving, nourishing, and cherishing His devoted bride.

[4] Living Water springs up unto eternal life within the heart of even the most corrupt and destitute who drink from Him. Worship is universally accessible to all who approach the Father in Spirit and Truth.

[6] Those feeding upon Christ, the living Bread, will be filled and strengthened, never to hunger again.

[8] Revelation and guidance radiate upon the path of life from Jesus, the Light of the world. Jesus is the eternal and unchanging reference point, the everlasting God, the great I AM.

[10] The Good Shepherd leads, protects, and feeds His own sheep who hear and follow His voice. Jesus the Lord is the Door to salvation's pastures and refreshing streams.

[11] Dead men in trespasses and sins and all who enter eternity after death of the body have but one hope, Jesus Christ, the Resurrection and the Life.

[13] Cleansing from defilement, washing from sin, is only performed by God's lowly Servant, the Lord Jesus Christ.

[14] How shall we walk? Where shall we go? What is true and right? Where shall enablement come from? All direction, reality, and transforming power comes from Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

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[15] Life-bearing sap courses in the fibers of every branch of the true Vine, bearing fruit unto the glory of God.

John's Gospel contains seven miracles that he calls signs. A sign points to a reality beyond itself. It is not that reality, but indicates aspects about it while pointing the way to its realization.

These signs set forth the Lord Jesus Christ as the supernatural source of all spiritual blessing for His people. They show what He can and will do for His church though physically absent from their midst. The seven signs are these:

[2] Water to Wine. They have no wine. Empty stone waterpots bring no word of a ready supply, but rather only a message of discomfort and alarm. Jewish customs of purification are empty expectations. Nothing is there to gladden the guests awaiting to partake with joy.

Jesus Himself fills, transforms, and provides the joy of purification at the blessed wedding feast. Servants alone know the source of this best supply of New Covenant wine which **cheers God and man** [Jud.9:13].

[4] Nobleman's Son. The Word of Jesus delivers from the cause of death and heals the sickness of our souls [Ps.41:4]. He does so from far distances apart from the agency of man while He Himself is physically absent.

[5] Lame Man. Sin has left us enfeebled and helpless for so long a time. No man can help. No angel can strengthen and raise up. Pharisees' only concerns are arresting violators of their laws. Only Jesus can make a man walk with power on the straight path and

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narrow way.

[6] 5,000 Fed. Meager substance placed in the hands of Christ becomes sufficient provision for weary thousands. Taken, blessed, broken, and given is the spiritual sequence for multitudes' blessing [Mt.14:19]. Jesus' abundance is not dependent upon the disciples' purse or village stores.

[6] Stilling the Storm. Storms and darkness descend upon disciples' struggle against tempest's blast. And Jesus has not come to them. Seemingly abandoned to the threatening waves with no light to guide, He yet sees them from upon the mount. The Lord Jesus is sovereign over darkness, storms, and disaster and will come to guide our craft safely to harbors of rest on heavenly shores [Ps.107:29,30].

[9] Blind Man. From birth, all has been darkness. Not one glimmer of hope had ever penetrated the gross blackness. Stumbling beggars and groping for mercy are we, one and all. These are the ones that the works of God can be displayed in; possessing no insight, wisdom, or vision of their own. Sight is received by washing according to the Word of Christ.

The one who has seen the Light can never be convinced that he is yet in darkness, or that religious darkness is Light. Only those who imagine that they see apart from the touch of Christ will insist that it is so. Their darkness remains, as they abide in wilful blindness as strangers to the Light of day, though they vainly protest that they see.

[11] Lazarus Raised. By this time he stinks. Death's corrupting odor of decaying flesh repulses one and all. Hear them

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hopelessly wail in the finality of death's despair. Both the living and the dead are helpless in death's wake. The living weep and the dead rot; both impotent to reverse the stroke of this final enemy.

Jesus but speaks the Word and the spirit returns, the soul awakes, and the body pulses revitalized. Death to life abundant is the portion of all the dead who hear the voice of the Son of God.

Jesus assured us, **It is to your advantage that I go away** [Jn.16:7].

We have Christ and He is sufficient for all things needful for the life and maintenance of His people. He is our Pattern; every other standard and system only obscures or corrupts His own.

His Word is our portion and possession, what then might councils and codes add to that? This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, not the priestly rulers and ceremonies of Christendom.

Cathedrals and sanctuaries are empty buildings of men, but not the true Temple of God which is Christ Himself. Forgiveness and cleansing, healing and restoration come by simple faith in Christ alone, the true lifted Serpent in religious wastelands.

Affection poured upon any other than the Bridegroom of the church becomes spiritual harlotry. Ceremonies can never open a springing fount of Living Water. Worship is no more defined by sacred places, priestly sacrifice, feasts and fasts, or holy days and seasons. The heavens are open to the simplest believer through the Spirit and Truth as it is in Christ.

Souls are fed, strengthened, and blessed by partaking directly of Christ, the Living Bread, apart from priestly mediators. Decrees, councils, traditions, and pronouncements of men provide no light for the pathway; Jesus is the Light of the World.

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Sovereign and all-sufficient is the great I AM who needs nothing aside from His own limitless self-existence to supply everything necessary for life and godliness in His church.

Doors to the Father, ways to forgiveness, and means to eternal life are not many and varied, but only one. Christ is the Door. Through Him alone we must enter to partake of His Shepherd care that no man, organization, or system can provide.

What possible benefit can ceremonies provide for a dead man? Will they raise him to life again? Are they not shown to be meaningless religious traditions in the presence of the Resurrection and the Life?

Which of the religious rulers of men will set aside his honor and position, appear as a lowly servant, and do the work of a slave in behalf of the brethren? Even if they would, who can cleanse from the defilement of sin? None but Christ, the true Servant.

Any man, ministry, or denomination claiming that spiritual progress will be hindered or impossible apart from themselves, is a false and wicked perversion of the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Brethren, apart from Christ, the true Vine, we can do nothing.

This is what we must do since Christ is not physically present with us and the Apostles are no more: **[Look] unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith** [Heb.12:2]. The promise of His Word abides. **He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, How shall He not also with Him freely give us all things?** [Rom.8:32].

This is the sufficiency for the church throughout all generations, despite the departure from the Pattern of Christ all around. He is yet present to all who will draw near to Him by faith.

Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age

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[Mt.28:20]. He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” [Heb.13:5].

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4

THE STORM BREAKS

PERSECUTION AND ITS CAUSES

While Christianity was viewed by Rome as a sect of the Jews, it did not draw their attention since Judaism had legal status in the empire. But as Christianity increasingly became separate from the synagogues and spread throughout the Roman world, it was recognized to be an illegal religion and persecution broke out.

Persecution moved in ten waves from the time of Nero in 64 AD to Diocletian in 303 AD. The first was fairly localized in the immediate area of Rome. That of the last was enforced throughout the empire. Between times there were periods of relative peace for the church, sometimes only a few years and at one time nearly forty.

The real reasons behind the persecutions was hatred of the light [Jn.3:19,20] and the fact that Christians had an absolute standard in the Scriptures which judged the empire. No authoritarian rule can tolerate citizens who have a reference point other than itself.

But to justify their cruel assault upon the law-abiding Christians, Rome accused them of four crimes:

[1] ATHEISM because they refused to worship the Emperor as Lord. This, Rome claimed, was treason against the state.

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[2] HATRED of mankind because they despised their games, amusements, and theatre.

The theatre portrayed drunkenness and shameless immorality in the most graphic scenes, often literally performed before the admiring and lustful audience.

At the games, 180,000 spectators would crowd the *Circus Maximus* [The Greatest Stadium] to witness the day-long chariot races. There they foolishly gambled away their earnings and frequented the legalized booths of harlots surrounding the arena.

Emperors had huge man-made lakes constructed for multitudes to witness re-enactments of famous naval battles where thousands of live combatants slaughtered themselves before cheering audiences. In the Colosseum [another large stadium], elephants, tigers, lions, apes, crocodiles and other wild beasts were made to fight to the death before the delighted crowds.

Captives of war, condemned criminals [including Christians] or disobedient slaves were thrown before ravenous beasts or compelled to engage in deadly combat as gladiators. Blond-haired Germans, blacks from Africa, even dwarfs and women entertained the populace by their brutality and slaughter.

Nero himself would join in the bloody battles for the morbid delight that murder brought to his demented soul. The public applauded this inhumane cruelty and reveled in their fellow humans' flow of blood that one Roman historian called, "a cannibal banquet for the soul."

It is of little wonder that Christians who attended the games and the theatre were excommunicated from the church. Tertullian [c.200] wrote, "With such dainties, let the devil's guests be feasted."

[3] IMMORALITY and cannibalism because they had no temples, priests, or ritual ceremonies. Therefore they were viewed as

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an immoral secret cult society that they imagined fed on the flesh of Jesus.

[4] CALAMITY. The image makers, who were losing money [Acts 19:24-27] along with the pagan priests and occultists, incited the popular prejudice against the Christians. They blamed the Christians for all calamities, wars, tempest, and pestilence which plagued mankind, saying that the gods were angry because the people had left off the old ways.

NERO AND DIOCLETIAN

Nero was the first to unleash the fury of imperial Rome against the saints. He was an almost indescribably wicked and perverted man. At night he would disguise himself as a common man and roam the streets of Rome with other rogues, raping women and murdering young boys.

His own mother was a victim of his assassination. His favorite wife that he had seduced from her husband, was kicked to death by him when she was fully pregnant. Afterwards, he found a young boy who resembled her, had him castrated, and used him as his new homosexual "wife."

Christians were fed to his crocodiles to the amusement of his guests while the night skies were lit up from other believers who served as human torches around his gardens. Paul was beheaded under his regime and Peter crucified upside down during Nero's reign.

Imagining to rebuild Rome to his own glory, he had the city set ablaze in 64 AD. Nearly seventy percent of the city rose in smoke and thousands went homeless with countless businesses ruined. Rumors spread quickly among the hostile population that he was to

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blame.

In order to divert suspicion from himself, Nero charged the Christian “haters of mankind” for the wicked deed which turned the unreasoning mobs against the brethren. And thus the houses of believers were broken into and the disciples dragged off to be beaten, tortured, burnt, crucified, or thrown to the beasts and gladiators at their games.

Diocletian instigated the last and most furious of the ten waves of persecution. In 303 he issued a decree for all church buildings to be destroyed. All copies of the Bible were to be collected and burnt. Christians were deprived of all civil rights and government employment.

All were to sacrifice to the gods or be executed. Any groups meeting as Christians were to be put to death. Some Christians were sunk by whole shiploads in the depths of the sea. Others had eyes, ears, nose, or hands cut off and were left to wander about as a warning to other yet undiscovered Christians.

Eventually he commanded all provisions sold in the markets to be sprinkled with sacrificial wine. This was done so that the church would be forced into either apostasy or starvation. It was a horrific fiery trial whose smoke engulfed the Empire for ten dreadful years.

CATACOMBS

Yet the Catacombs, a maze of underground burial tunnels beneath Rome, preach their silent testimony of the triumph of the gospel. Though skeletons of the saints have heads cut off, ribs and shoulder blades broken, or bones blackened by fire, nevertheless, the inscriptions found breathe forth a peace and rest unknown to the

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unbelievers.

“Here lies Marcia, put to rest in a dream of peace.”
“Lawrence to his sweetest son, borne away by angels.” “Victorious in peace and in Christ.” “Simplicius, may you live in Christ.”

Contrast these with those of the pagans, such as: “Live for the present hour, since we are sure of nothing more.” “I lift my hands against the gods who took me away at the age of twenty though I had done no harm.” “Once I was not. Now I am not. I know nothing about it, and it is no concern of mine.” “Traveler, curse me not as you pass, for I am in darkness and cannot answer.”

Stop and think: What distinguishes Christian death and burial from the traditional burial in your tribe? Is there a clear difference?

Following are some accounts of various faithful martyrs who testified the good confession. They endured as seeing Him who is unseen, not accepting their release, that they might obtain a better resurrection. In the face of unspeakable horrors, they joined in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God and entered into the joy of their Lord. [“c.” is an abbreviation for the Latin *circa* meaning, “about”].

CLEMENT OF ROME c.30 - 100 AD

Clement, the fellow worker of Paul [Phil.4:3], wrote a letter of encouragement to the brethren at Corinth to strengthen them in the midst of sufferings. The following is a brief portion of that letter:

Be contentious, brethren, and jealous about the things that pertain to salvation [probably a reference to Jude 3]. You have searched

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the Scriptures, which are true, which were given through the Holy Spirit; and you know that nothing unrighteous or counterfeit is written in them.

You will not find that righteous persons have been thrust out by holy men. Righteous men were persecuted, but it was by the lawless; they were imprisoned, but it was by the unholy.

They were stoned by transgressors: they were slain by those who had conceived a detestable and unrighteous jealousy. Suffering these things, they endured nobly.

Stop and think: Often the godly who say that the Word of God must be obeyed are accused of being unreasonable or causing division. What was the view of these early brethren about such things? [3]n.9,10].

IGNATIUS c.35 - 107 AD

Emperor Trajan had offered sacrifices to the gods in Antioch for victories he gained in battle as if his triumph came from them. When Ignatius learned of this, he reproved the Emperor openly before many in the pagan temple itself.

As a result, he was led bound to Rome in order to be executed publicly by being torn to pieces by wild beasts in the Colosseum. Along the way he wrote several letters to encourage the brethren. In one of them are recorded these words:

“Come fire and cross and grappling with wild beasts...crushing of my whole body, come cruel tortures of the devil to assail me. Only be it mine to attain unto Jesus Christ. Only pray for me, that inward and outward strength be given me, not only to

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speak or write this, but also to perform and endure it, so that I may not only be called a Christian, but also be found one in truth.”

Godly Ignatius was brought forth into the midst of the arena with the assembled multitudes who gathered gladly for the spectacle. He boldly raised his voice and addressed them all, “O you Romans, all you who have come to witness with your own eyes this combat, I am the grain of God. I am ground by the teeth of the beast, that I may be found to be a pure bread of Christ, who is to me the Bread of Life.” Thereupon the gates to the pits were opened and two raging lions rushed upon him leaving but a few mangled bodily remains of him whose soul had departed to eternal safety in Jesus.

POLYCARP c.69 - 156 AD

As Timothy was to Paul, so Polycarp was to the Apostle John. Polycarp’s own disciple, Irenaeus, said this about him, “He always taught what he had learned from the Apostles.” And indeed, his letter to the brethren in Philippi is interwoven with quotes from Paul, Peter, and John.

Distinguished for his godliness, this dignified servant of Christ met his end at the hand of persecutors after living into his eighties. The account of his martyrdom is as follows.

When his friends discovered that he was to be taken by the haters of Christ, they urged him to flee to the next city. Though reluctant, he was persuaded by their appeals to Mt.10:23 and thereby joined some friends in a nearby farm. While there he devoted himself night and day to prayers for the churches throughout the world.

Having eventually been discovered, he kindly welcomed his

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persecuting captors in Christian hospitality by preparing a table and inviting them to dine. He asked and received permission from them to pray yet one more hour which he did in their presence to their amazement, shame, and even leading some of them to repentance.

Then, taken before the proconsul [a Roman official], he was repeatedly commanded to worship Caesar and deny Christ. Polycarp replied, "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He never did me wrong; and how can I now blaspheme my King who has preserved me from all evil, and so faithfully redeemed me?"

Next the proconsul threatened him with being torn to pieces by wild beasts or being burned alive to which he answered, "You threaten fire that burns for a moment and is soon extinguished, for you know nothing of the judgment to come and the fire of eternal punishment reserved for the wicked. But why do you delay? Bring what you wish: You shall not, by either of them, move me to deny Christ, my Lord and Savior."

And upon saying this, Polycarp was led to the place of execution. He stood upon the pile of wood about to be lit and consume him while praying with thanksgiving. He blessed the Lord for being considered worthy to suffer as a sacrifice thus for "Thy well-beloved Son, the eternal High Priest, unto whom, with Thee and the Holy Spirit, be the glory, now and forever. Amen." Upon which the fire was lit, but it seemed not to affect him at all, and so a sword was plunged into his aged form and his soul ascended to everlasting comfort in Jesus.

Stop and think: How did Polycarp interpret Jn.18:36 and James 5:6?

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FELICITAS c.164 AD

A Christian widow at Rome along with her seven sons and the church that met in their home, were used of the Lord to convert many to Christ. Full of fury, the pagan priests raised complaint to the Emperor and caused them to be brought before Publius, the Roman judge.

At first, using flattery, fair words, and false promises, he attempted to persuade her to deny Christ. But seeing that this did not move her, these soon were turned to violent threats.

Felicitas simply replied, "I am neither moved by your flatteries and entreaties, nor am I intimidated by your threats; for I experience in my heart the working of the Holy Spirit, which gives me a living power, and prepares me for the conflict of suffering, to endure all that you may lay upon me, for the confession of my faith."

Trying yet another devious means, he then attempted to persuade her by appealing to her womanly affections. "At least have pity and a mother's compassion on your sons by telling them to escape your fate!"

To this she stated, "Your compassion is pure wickedness, and your admonition is nothing but cruelty, for, if my sons should sacrifice to the gods, they would not ransom their lives, but sell them to the hellish fiend, whose slaves in soul and body they would become, and be reserved by him in chains of darkness for everlasting fire."

Then turning away from Publius, she exhorted her sons, "Remain steadfast in the faith, and in the confession of Christ. Behold, heaven is open before you; therefore fight valiantly for your souls and show that you are faithful in the love of Christ."

While she spoke thus to her sons she was beaten repeatedly

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in the face with her tormentors' fists, but even this did not silence her. Seeing that she would not deny the Lord Jesus, each of her sons were tortured and executed before her eyes; some by being whipped to death, others by beatings with rods, still others by being thrown off high places or beheaded. At last, this saintly soul was killed by the sword and joined her faithful sons in the everlasting arms of Jesus.

Stop and think: Who overcame in this conflict, Felicitas or Publius? [Rev.12:11].

SANCTUS c.172 AD

This dear brother, a deacon who ministered to the poor, was captured and tormented by the enemies of Christ. Red-hot copper plates were applied to all parts of his body until he was little more than one continuous wound from head to toe.

All along they constantly questioned him in order to obtain information to betray others. Though greatly afflicted he would simply say, "I am a Christian; that is my name, my parentage, and my country; indeed, I am altogether nothing else than a Christian." Throughout all, he remained fearless and unmoved, for the fire upon his body was tempered by the heavenly comfort of Christ in his soul.

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BLANDINA c.172 AD

Blandina, noble and godly, was released from her earthly body after having been made the public mocking sport of a pagan multitude for several days. Subjected to severe whippings, beatings, and being cut, carved, and torn with all manner of hooks, knives, and claws of iron, she was placed in their midst and commanded to deny Christ and swear to the gods.

Not only did she refuse, but openly reproved the folly of their idolatry which brought their fury to a climax. Blandina was then roasted over an open fire, bound in a net, and thrown to the wild bulls in their stadium as the crowd cheered. After being repeatedly tossed high into the air upon piercing horns, she thus was ushered into the glory of her Lord that she had so faithfully testified to.

Stop and think: To what extent should Mt.10:24-33 govern our actions?

PERPETUA c.202 AD

A beloved African sister of wealthy and noble birth, highly educated and honorably married, was taken captive by persecutors of the faith. Only twenty-two years old and with babe at her breast, she was begged by her aged and pagan father to deny Christ because of the shame that she was bringing upon the family.

What a scene it was! Before the court and a great assembled multitude, he threw himself at her feet, pleading with her tenderly, weeping and kissing her hands. "My daughter," he appealed, "pity my grey hairs, pity your father, if I am still worthy to be called your father. Do not expose me to such shame before men! Look upon your child - your son - who, if you die, cannot survive without you!"

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Imagine the pull upon this daughter's heart: the threats of merciless Rome, the honor and loving tears of her elderly father, the cries of her infant son. How they all pressed to the depths of her young soul! "Offer sacrifice for the welfare of the Emperor!" demanded the governor.

And thus she stood before her judges, the assembled crowd, her pathetic father, the admiring hosts of heaven, and the hateful legions of hell. But firmly and calmly like Abraham, whose eye was not upon his son but upon the God of resurrection, she said, "That I cannot do. I am a Christian."

Her condemnation was sealed by that simple statement and so was led to the stadium before the bloodthirsty throng. Yet even this did not silence Psalms of praise to God from pouring through her pure lips before them all. Only the tossing and goring upon the horns of the wild bull put an end to her song here below. But she continues singing above, having entered into the joy of her Lord where she was received with, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Stop and think: How does honoring Christ relate to honoring parents, family, and the government? [Mt. 10:34-39]. What would you have told Perpetua to do?

CASSIAN c.302 AD

A teacher of children by profession, his judges pronounced this sentence upon him because he was a Christian. "Let the schoolteacher be pricked, cut, and stabbed to death by his own scholars [students] with pens, knives and other sharp instruments such as they use in school."

Thereupon he was stripped naked with hands bound behind him while the children fell upon him with stones, boards, and sharp

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tools. After unspeakable torment, his body could endure no more of their torture and so departed this life into that painless eternal rest above.

EULALIA c.302 AD

Not more than twelve or thirteen years old, this lovely girl was filled with fervent devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ. Boldly she appeared before the judge and all the officials saying, "Are you not ashamed to cast your own souls and those of others at once into eternal judgment by denying the only true God, the Father of us all, and the Creator of all things?"

"O you wretched men! Do you seek the Christians, that you may put them to death? Behold, here am I, an adversary of your satanical sacrifices! I confess with heart and mouth God alone; but Isis, Apollo, and Venus are vain idols!"

Whereupon the judge, filled with rage, called for the executioner with this charge, "Strip her and inflict various punishments upon her so that she may feel the wrath of the gods of her fathers and learn thereby that it will be hard for her to despise the command of our Prince" [i.e. the Emperor].

After further threats of unspeakable torments, she was urged with these soft words, "Daughter, you can escape all these tortures with little trouble if you will only take a few grains of salt and incense on the tips of your fingers, and sacrifice it."

Without a word she replied by pushing far away from her the wretched images, altar, and sacrificial book, sending all scattering to the floor. Instantly two executioners tore open her sides down to the ribs with sharp hooks so that her young blood flowed freely down her sides.

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Eulalia, counting the gashes on her body exclaimed, “Behold, Lord Jesus Christ! Thy name is being written on my body; what great delight it affords me to read these letters, because they are signs of Thy victory! Behold, my purple blood confesses Thy holy name.”

This she proclaimed without shame, fear, or self-pity, but even rejoiced to suffer such for her Lord. Provoked by such “stubbornness,” the merciless pagans applied burning torches to her open wounds and, catching her hair on fire, she was consumed in its smoke and flame.

JUSTUS c.303 AD

A father and his two sons, while journeying along the road, had been accused to the soldiers of Diocletian by evil informers. Justus, the youngest son, learned of their evil intent and quickly rushed to warn his father and brother to hide in a nearby cave while he kept a watch out for the Emperor’s horsemen.

Upon their approach, he went forth and replied to their questions about his identity and the location of his companions in this way, “I am called Justus, and I freely confess that I am also a Christian. But since I regard you as persecutors of the Christians, it is not lawful for me to betray my companions.”

To this, they drew their swords and threatened to slay him on the spot if he did not betray his fellows and lead them to their place of hiding. Justus replied, “Truly, I shall consider myself happy, if I may be permitted to suffer all manner of punishment, yes, death itself, for the name of Christ; for I am ready to lose my soul in this world that I may keep it unto life eternal.” Having said so, the sword flashed in fury and struck off his head and he entered into that life

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that he had so faithfully testified to and longed for.

THE SCRIPTURES: WHAT WILL I DIE FOR?

Diocletian's edict that all the sacred books of the Christians should be burned was a fiery trial for the saints of God. Since the copies were hand written and not the common possession of all as our printed Bibles are to us today, the leaders of the churches were particularly sought after and afflicted in this way since they surely had copies with them.

It was a circumstance that required the church to seriously face the question, "What are we willing to die for? What books are actually the Word of God; which are merely the words of men?"

The authority of the NT writings had long been recognized and accepted by the church [I Cor.14:37; 2 Pet.3:1,2,15,16; compare I Tim.5:18 with Lk.10:7]. No Council told the Christians what to believe. The Spirit of God who was the Supreme Author of the Word of God did that [2 Pet.1:20,21; I Jn.2:27; Jn.16:13].

Including the NT books in a Council's declaration did not give them authority: They had authority already as from God and were included by the Council because of it. The Synod of Carthage [397 AD] merely stated what was already common knowledge and believed when it canonized [accepted as genuine and inspired] the 27 books of the NT.

The Apocrypha was rejected by Christ, the Apostles, and the believers following them, and not included as part of the NT Canon: Only the Roman Catholic Church incorporated them officially as "inspired" in 1546 AD in order to buttress their false claims.

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FELIX c.303 AD

Felix, a bishop in the church of Thibarisis in Africa, was arrested and brought before the Procurator [Roman official] who demanded from him his copies of the Word of God in order to burn them. Their conversation went as follows.

“It were better, that I should be burned, than the divine Scriptures,” testified the godly Felix.

To this the Procurator replied, “Nevertheless, the command of the Emperors must have the precedence over your word.”

Felix responded, “God’s command comes before the commands of men. We must obey God rather than men.”

“O Felix, why will you not deliver up the books of the Lord your God? Or perhaps, you do not have any?”

“Indeed, I have them, but I do not wish to give them to you.”

“Put Felix to death with the sword.”

Then did Felix raise his voice loudly and exclaim, “I thank Thee, O Lord, that You have redeemed me and I have lived to be fifty-six years old. I have kept myself pure; have kept the Gospels and evangelical books; and have preached the faith and truth in their purity.

“O Lord God of heaven and earth, Jesus Christ! I bow my neck to the sword, as an offering unto Thee, who abides in eternal glory and majesty forever and ever. Amen.” And so saying, he joined the hosts of martyrs above who had sealed their testimony with their own blood.

Stop and think: Comment on the statement, “If the truth is lost, all is lost.”

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PRIMUS & FELICIAN c.303 AD

These two aged brothers were brought bound before their accusers who demanded, “Will you sacrifice to the gods, and live in honors and see good days, or be tortured unto death?”

Felician replied, “How can you speak to me of pleasant days? I am now eighty years old, and have been enlightened with the saving knowledge of Christ for about thirty years; yea, I am still finding the greatest joy of my heart in His service.

“And you would persuade me to forsake my Savior, and accept instead of Him the vain lusts of this world! Far be it from me; for I have resolved to cleave to Christ, my Lord and my God, to the very last breath of my life!”

He was then thrown back into prison while they did what they could to convince his brother to deny the faith. “Your brother has apostatized and sacrificed to the gods. Be wise and do likewise and you will go free.”

Primus, however, was persuaded in his heart that this was not so and said, “That is a lie.” Seeing that their devices had failed, his tormenters proceeded to beat him with sticks, burn his flesh with lamps, and pour molten lead down his throat.

Thereafter, his brother was brought forth from his cell, afflicted with whipping, nailed through hands and feet, and inhumanly tortured. When both were dead, the judge cast their corpses out for the birds and wild dogs to devour.

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LAPSED

For the first three hundred years, persecution came in ten “waves,” with periods of relative peace between. Many were faithful and did not yield to temptations to deny Christ. These were the Confessors [faithful survivors of torture and prison] and Martyrs.

Others weakened and compromised their faith out of fear, cowardice, or unbelief. Yet when the “wave” had passed and persecution had died down, multitudes of these Lapsed [fallen/apostate] sought to be received into the fellowship of the church once again.

Some had actually sacrificed to the pagan gods. Others had paid to obtain false documents saying that they had sacrificed. *Traditores* [traitors] handed over the Scriptures to be destroyed in order to spare their lives.

What was to be done? Should they be restored and received back into the church? If so, on what basis? These questions caused serious division in the churches throughout the empire.

Some said that those who sacrificed could not be re-admitted until their death-bed or until they proved themselves faithful during the next persecution. Others said they must be restored because of the forgiveness of Christ, while others proposed various forms of discipline for the Lapsed to show their sincerity.

Who should decide? Many thought that the Confessors should be the ones to make that judgment. Few Bishops agreed, thinking this would weaken their authority over the churches.

Stop and think: In your church gathering is the widow of a Martyr along with her children, a Confessor who is partially crippled due to his sufferings, and several others who had homes and businesses destroyed by persecution. The persecution has ended for

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the moment and three Lapsed request to join you at the Lord's Supper. What should that church do?

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5

LEAVEN IN THE MEAL

The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened [Mt.13:33]

INWARD AND OUTWARD KINGDOM

Leaven, in the Scriptures, represents a corrupting influence [I Cor.5:6-8]. It is what the kingdom of heaven is like.

Early in its development, this leaven of corruption entered within the pure meal that was the church. It was a living, progressive, and transforming power that changed it from what it was at the beginning.

This is a mystery, though well established as fact. Jesus said that the **sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth [Mt.8:12].** Yet at the same time, **many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven [Mt.8:11].**

Many will be in the kingdom of heaven while the very sons of the kingdom will be cast out. This is surely a mystery.

There is an outward and an inward kingdom. One has all the external features of that kingdom, but none of its essential spiritual realities. The other may not even be associated with the

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former in its outward form, but possesses the true life of that kingdom within.

Such were the Jews in Jesus' day, full of form and ceremony though their hearts were far from Him; sons of the kingdom but cast out. Such was the tendency of the church in Jerusalem as seen in Acts 21.

There they boasted in their shame, zealously promoted law above grace, and embraced tradition as godliness. They required obedience to worthless ceremonies while offering vain assurances that they had not abandoned their previous convictions [Acts 21:17-26].

Though Galatians had already been penned, Paul agreed to their carnal scheme. Their leaven spread to him because he was explicitly disobedient to the Spirit of God by even coming to Jerusalem [Acts 21:4].

A vital lesson is gained by this. Only spiritual men can maintain spiritual simplicity. As soon as we lean on the arm of the flesh, immediately tradition, ceremony, and religion promoted by worldly means begin to take over.

It is why the old leaven must be purged. Left within, the whole becomes affected throughout. But it can only be removed when the heart is broken and contrite and trembles at His Word [Isa.66:2].

The pulling down of temples, as happened to Jerusalem in 70 AD, does not clean the leaven from the heart. Twenty years afterwards, Diotrefes demonstrates the effect that tolerating its presence brings.

He loved to take Christ's place of preeminence in the church. Truth was set aside for his own doctrine and tradition. The truly godly and spiritual were slandered and warned against. Any

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who disagreed with him were persecuted, punished, and cast out of “his” church [3 Jn.9,10].

Our Lord Jesus warned us of wolves dressed in sheep’s clothing who would not spare the flock [Mt.7:15]. Paul warned of leaders arising, speaking perverse things to draw disciples away after themselves [Acts 20:29,30]. And he confirms to us that a mystery of lawlessness is already at work [2 Thess.2:7].

Peter assures us that false teachers will secretly bring in destructive heresies. Many will be captured through covetousness to follow deceptive words and the way of the truth will be blasphemed [2 Pet.2:1-3]. Jude exhorts us to contend earnestly for the faith because men such as these have crept in unnoticed into the midst of the brethren [Jude 3,4]. And by the time John writes, already many antichrists had gone out into the world [1 Jn.2:18; 2 Jn.7].

Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward [2 Jn.8]. But gradually, more and more were slowly seduced from the simplicity of Christ [2 Cor.11:2-4] and drifted from the Word of God [Heb.2:1] into the traditions of men. And thus the leaven began its subtle work.

AUTHORITY

Beginning in the first century, the OT divisions of High Priest, Priests, Levites, and Israelites became associated with the Bishop, Presbyters [Elders], Deacons, and Laity [common people] in the church. The brethren in the churches released their responsibilities and privileges to the Presbyters, the Presbyters to the Bishop, and the Bishops eventually to the universal Bishop, who

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came to be called Pope.

The movement in authority was from the individual assembly being subject to Christ alone, to handing themselves over to the Episcopate [the Bishop ruling over the congregation]. The Bishops of the various congregations relinquished themselves to the Metropolitans [the city Bishops as having more authority than the rural ones].

These Metropolitans bowed themselves to the Bishops of the Apostolic Mother Churches [those churches that the Apostles ministered in and wrote letters to]. Above these were the Patriarchs [the political and religious capitols of the Empire: Alexandria, Antioch, Rome, and Constantinople]. Finally, all churches and Bishops were required to acknowledge Rome with its Universal Bishop, the Pope, as the supreme head of Christendom.

WORLDLY PRACTICES

At first, Christians met in private homes for teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer. Later, during times of relative peace from persecution during the 200's, special buildings began to be used for worship meetings. Incense, a sign of respect for the emperor, began to be burned in churches as part of Christian worship to show "honor" to God.

Special dress for the officiating ministers began to be worn. Gestures of respect, once reserved for the emperor, were now expected to be given to ministers. Choirs and processions similar to imperial pageantry were introduced into church gatherings.

Several centuries passed before all of these factors fully developed. Leaven does not spread through the whole all at once, but begins its work internally and unseen in its initial stages.

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Eventually, its hidden work within manifests itself by the outward transforming effect it has upon the dough. And these were the initial stages.

IGNATIUS c.35 - 107 AD

In this man, so admirable in many ways, were to be found seeds of an emphasis which eventually blossomed into widespread departure. And as with any sowing, the extent of the eventual harvest was not immediately evident. A shift from the foundation, however small that shift may be, signals eventual disaster for whatever is erected upon it.

Such was true of Ignatius' ideas about the place and role the bishop had within a local assembly. To him, the Bishop [Overseer] and the Presbytery [Elders] were conceived of as separate and distinct "offices," with the Bishop over all [see Appendix 1 *NT Leadership*]. In his seven letters, quotes such as these are to be found.

"Your bishop presides in the place of God and your presbyters in the place of the assembly of the Apostles." "Let all reverence the bishop as Jesus Christ...and the presbyters as the Sanhedrin of God."

"It is not lawful apart from the bishop either to baptize or to hold a love-feast." "He who does anything without the knowledge of the bishop renders service to the devil."

Stop and think: How is the command of I Thess.5:21 to be applied in examining Ignatius' life and teachings?

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IRENAEUS c.180 AD

Irenaeus followed Ignatius by about two generations and laid emphasis upon unbroken episcopal [bishops] succession traced back to the Apostles as a testimony to apostolic teaching and as a defense against heresies. He was the first to use the title *Potentioorem Principalitatem* [highest power/ruler] with respect to the Bishop of Rome as over other bishops.

CYPRIAN c.250 AD

Cyprian promoted the episcopacy as a special priesthood that offers sacrifice which mediates between God and the people. He called the bishop of Rome the successor of Peter, and the church of Rome as the “chair of Peter and fount of priestly unity.” Yet he opposed Pope Stephen of Rome, accusing him of error and abuse of power, calling tradition without truth as “old error.”

To Cyprian, the Catholic [Universal] church must have visible unity. Whoever separates himself from the Catholic church is a foreigner, a profane person, an enemy, condemns himself, and must be shunned.

“No one can have God for his Father, who has not the Church for his Mother,” he argued. Like the ark of Noah, salvation is only within the church as the bearer of the Holy Spirit and of all grace.

His error was in blindly identifying the spiritual unity of the church with outward uniformity of association. There was only remaining one step from his teaching that, “Apart from the visible church, there is no salvation,” to the complete error of Romanism,

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“Apart from the Roman Catholic Church, there is no salvation.”

Stop and think: How does John 14:6 relate to Cyprian’s ideas about the church and salvation?

AUGUSTINE 354 - 430 AD

In his great treatise, *The City of God*, Augustine took the prevalent ideas about the church to their logical conclusion. He contended that through the Church alone, God mediates His grace to men. Outside the communion of the visible Catholic Church, he claims, there can be no salvation.

His view of the church as an earthly organization with an external visible unity, led him to adopt carnal means to see it built up and established. He even advocated the use of force, if need be, to “compel them to come in,” based on a perversion of Luke 14:23.

Tradition, intercession of saints, ceremonies, purgatory, the Apocrypha, infant baptism, and the use of relics were some of the errors that he approved of. Yet he also spoke clearly about the grace of God alone as being sufficient unto salvation. He was a man of mixture, like many who possess extreme abilities of mind and character.

On the one hand, his own conversion was brought about through the convicting power of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God alone. On the other hand, he was willing to replace that spiritual influence by threats of pain inflicted by man in order to extort a confession of salvation from others.

These errors became the basis of Roman Catholic theology and led to the unspeakable suffering and evils that darkened the history of Christendom throughout the following centuries.

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6

UNTIL ALL WAS LEAVENED

BABEL'S LEGACY

Since the days of the tower of Babel, deeply ingrained in all cultures is the demand for a priest and a shrine along with authoritarian rule. The church was originally persecuted for not having temples and priests along with rituals and idolatrous sacrifices. But that spiritual simplicity gradually gave way to leaning wholly on the arm of the flesh [Jer.17:5-10] in that outward form of the kingdom.

Initially, through meekness, love, and purity, Christianity had spiritually triumphed over Rome. Yet in the end, through compromise, greed, and lust, pagan Rome triumphed over the church.

It was the church's choice to erect its own shrines complete with images, priests, superstitious rituals, and oppressive rule. And, like heathen Rome but even more furiously so, the church of Rome persecuted those who did not bow at their altars and acknowledge

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their priests and pontiffs.

Thus the church that had triumphed outwardly, perished inwardly. It is not elephants that spoil the vine, it is the little foxes [S. of S. 2:15]. As God gave Israel a king in His wrath [Hos.13:11] because they did not want Him to reign over them [I Sam.8:7], so He gave His professed people the Roman Catholic Church.

Christ's warnings about leaven went unheeded; warnings about the leaven of Pharisees, Sadducees, and that of Herod [Mt.15:12; Mk.8:15]. And so it was that through the next centuries, the traditions of the Pharisees, the luxury and philosophy of Sadducees, and the politics of Herod spread their corruption throughout the whole.

An astonishing and horrible thing has been committed in land: the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule by their own power; and My people love to have it so! But what will you do in the end? [Jer.5:30,31].

CONSTANTINE 309 - 337 AD

On the eve of the decisive battle for control of the Empire, Constantine saw a vision of a cross and heard a voice saying, "In this sign conquer." Taking this as a divine sign, he went forth and defeated the rival emperor at Milvian bridge at the banks of Tiber river. He entered Rome as the undisputed ruler of the West and issued the Edict of Milan in 313 AD that proclaimed tolerance of all religions and restoration of the Christians' properties taken by Diocletian.

Caesar had met Christ in the arena and Christ emerged as the victor. The church had not only survived, but triumphed against all of the savage and carnal means hurled against it by the world. The

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cross had gained the victory through spiritual weapons alone. Thereby the weakness and foolishness of God was shown to be superior to the strength and wisdom of men [I Cor.1:25-29].

Yet two evils proceeded from this otherwise triumph of Christianity over paganism. First, Christianity became accepted and even desirable to multitudes. Countless numbers swelled the ranks of the church in order to earn the approval of the State who now promoted this new religion.

Secondly, the State was granted say in matters belonging to the church. Constantine himself called for the Council of Nicea and presided there as the overseer of the doctrine being debated amongst the assembled bishops. His word prevailed in the verdict to ban the Arians, though he later recalled them and banned Athanasius who had contended for the true teaching of Christ!

Though he assumed such roles, Constantine himself rarely conformed to the requirements of Christian worship and cared little for discussion about differences in Christian truth, even respecting the person of Christ Himself. His interest in religion and the council was simply political, not wanting there to be a division between East and West factions within his Empire.

He continued to offer the imperial sacrifices to the Roman gods as the *Pontifex Maximus* [the highest priest] of the Apollo cult. Pagan magic formulas to protect crops and heal diseases continued to be his trust. Images of the sun god were not removed from newly made imperial coins.

A violent temper characterized him, even to murdering his son, nephew, and brother-in-law. Actually, he proved to be little more than a politician who delayed his baptism until his death bed saying, “Let us now cast away all duplicity” [compromise/deceit], hoping thereby to “insure” his entrance into the kingdom above.

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Stop and think: What expectation does someone like Constantine have as he faces death? [Lk.9:23-26].

WORLDLINESS

With the new capital of the Empire now moved to Constantinople in 334 AD, bishops who once were fed to wild beasts in the Empire's arenas now dined with the Emperor at the palace. Those who had properties, possessions, and positions wrenched from their hands, now had all restored and their purses fattened from the imperial treasury.

Persecution for righteousness' sake once was their portion, now promotion and enrichment. Once shame and reproach, now pride and exaltation. Crosses, once for crucifixion and self-denial, were now glittering ornaments.

The world, formerly the church's savage enemy, now reclined comfortably in her bosom. Thus, though outwardly Christianity had converted the world, the world in turn was rapidly converting the church. The devil, who has come only to steal and destroy, has more than one masquerade to achieve his ends. The roaring lion of Diocletian knew how to quickly slide into his subtle serpent's dress during the reign of Constantine and seduce the church into his coils. What he did not achieve through fire, he managed to do by friendship.

The following are highlights of how the leaven spread throughout the whole until it all became leavened.

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PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD

Around 300 AD, prayers for the dead began to be made in various places. John Chrysostom [c.450 AD] urged all his listeners to pray to dead saints who, when they show the marks of their martyrdom in heaven, “they can persuade the King to do anything.”

Stop and think: What change can take place in a person’s condition after death? [Heb.9:27; Lk.16:22-26]. To whom do we pray? [Mt.6:9]. Do the wounds of martyrs persuade God to grant their requests? [Rev.6:9-11].

ARIAN HERESY

During the reign of Constantine, many of the bishops believed the heresy set forth by Arius. The essence of this error was that the Son of God was the first and highest of all created beings; neither God nor man, but mediator between the two.

Arius popularized and spread his deadly doctrine by putting the teaching into verse that was enjoyed and sung by the wayward church. This false teaching, which continued for nearly three centuries, is found even today in religions such as Jehovah’s Witnesses and Mormons.

Stop and think: What difference does it make whether we believe one thing or another about Jesus? [Mt.16:13-17; 2 Jn.9-11; Col.2:8-10].

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FLATTERY OF EUSEBIUS

Eusebius, an Arian bishop and close advisor to and historian under Constantine, spoke these flattering words about his ruler after the Emperor had assumed leadership of the church: “His character is formed after the Divine original of the Supreme Sovereign, and whose mind reflects, as in a mirror, the radiance of His virtues. Hence is our Emperor perfect in prudence, in goodness, in justice...in devotion to God.”

Stop and think: How should Eusebius’ conduct be seen in light of Prov.26:28; Job 32:21,22; and Ps.12:1-3?

MONASTICISM

In reaction to the corruption and worldliness spreading through the visible Catholic church, about 251 AD a number of hermits [people who lived apart from others] began to isolate themselves from people and the church into religious solitude. As their fame for devotion spread, others followed, eventually forming monasteries [religious groups living together by themselves bound by rules of their abbot/leader].

Many imagined to drive sinful desires from themselves by fasting, prayer vigils, toil, and self-inflicted torture; the body itself being seen as evil rather than its deeds. Even one hermit, Simon Stelites, lived on top of a pole for several years trying to “deny” the flesh thereby.

Some monastic orders [groups] were noted for their study and copying of manuscripts within their compounds which served to preserve reading and the Scriptures during the darkness of the Middle Ages. Others wandered from place to place, teaching and

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helping the poor while begging for their food. There were even monasteries [convents] for women who called themselves nuns.

These very monasteries that were established for deliverance from sin and worldliness, eventually became breeding grounds for the very evils they were designed to overcome. As early as 450 AD, Augustine said that he found among the monks and nuns both the best and worst of humanity. During the 1200's up until the 1500's, they were infamous as dens of iniquity, and many served as some of the fiercest persecutors in behalf of Romanism against the true believers of Christ.

Stop and think: How did Jesus relate to the evils encountered in His day; how did the Essenes? Which is our pattern?

UNGODLINESS

Augustine of Hippo in North Africa [354-430 AD] said about the church in his day, "The man who enters is bound to see drunkards, misers, tricksters, gamblers, adulterers, fornicators, people wearing amulets, clients of sorcerers, astrologers...He must be warned that the same crowds that press into the churches on Christian festivals, also fill the theatres on pagan holidays."

WORSHIP OF MARY

Though the veneration of angels, dead saints, and images was present for some time, by about 431 AD, the exaltation of Mary as the "Mother of God" became officially recognized. In both the Eastern and Western church she was hailed as "the queen of heaven, the dwelling place of the Holy Trinity, the bridge from God to man, through whom the nations are converted, and the fallen creature

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raised to heaven.”

Rapidly during the fifth century, many churches were dedicated to the “holy Mother of God, the perpetual Virgin.” In 608 AD, Pope Boniface IV turned the Pantheon in Rome [the temple dedicated for the worship of all pagan gods] into a temple of Mary and the martyrs.

By the 1200's, she was firmly exalted in the eyes of the common people as being the co-mediator between God and man; the one who would intercede with her Son, Jesus, in behalf of sinners. The worship of Mary turned their religion of terror into one of mercy and love.

Perhaps the harsh, unreasonable, and torturous cruelty of the Inquisition was what led multitudes to seek the compassion and tenderness of a Mother-goddess to appeal to her angry and terrible Son. At least this was how the Popes, the false visible representatives of Christ, had made Him to appear.

Stop and think: See John 2:3-5. Who obeys whom? Does Jesus accept the appeals of His mother as a mediator between men and Himself? Who is mediator and whose name saves? [I Tim.2:5; Acts 4:12].

INFANT BAPTISM

One of the most popular preachers of his day, John Chrysostom, taught in about 450 AD, “We baptize infants also that there may be added to them saintship, righteousness, adoption, brotherhood with Christ, and to be made members with Him.”

Stop and think: If baptism saves, why did Christ not send Paul to baptize? [I Cor.1:17,18].

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TRADITION

Archbishop Hilary [c.440 AD] said, “The heretics all cite the Scriptures, but without the sense of the Scriptures; for those who are outside the Church can have no understanding of the Word of God.” On this subject, the monk, Vicentius [c.450 AD], stated what became the standard in the Roman church, declaring, “We must hold what has been everywhere, always, and by all believed.”

Stop and think: How do these ideas relate to Acts 17:11; I Cor.10:15; 14:29; and I Thess.5:21?

MOHAMMAD

As the professed church proceeded in its idolatry and immorality, the God of heaven allowed the deceiver, Mohammad [c.570 -632 AD], to arise and punish this wayward harlot of a “church.” His fierce insistence upon monotheism unleashed his sword upon all who did not worship the one true God, Allah, alone. So far had the church corrupted itself in the worship of Mary, that Mohammad’s *Quran* portrays the trinity as “the Father, the Son, and Mary” [see Appendix 3 *Islam and Christianity*].

PURGATORY

The doctrine of Purgatory was established by Pope Gregory I in 593 AD. Purgatory [to purge/cleanse] is an imaginary place where baptized Catholics who have not been good enough to enter directly into heaven must go after death. There, it is supposed, they

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will suffer for their own sins for a time before being released into heaven.

This teaching became a source of great wealth to the Roman church. It was proclaimed as an official doctrine by the Council of Florence in 1438 AD. The living were told that the buying of indulgences or paying for Masses to be said for the dead would release their departed loved ones sooner from Purgatory's torments.

Stop and think: How does Lk.16:22-26 relate to Purgatory?

POPE AS A TITLE

The title of Pope [Papa/Universal Bishop] was given to Boniface III by Emperor Phocas in the year 607 AD.

Stop and think: What titles did Jesus authorize? [Mt.23:6-12].

HERETICAL POPE

Pope Honorius I [625-638 AD], was condemned as a heretic by the Sixth Ecumenical [general/world-wide] Council in 678-687 AD. For centuries afterwards, each Pope had to swear by oath that he was rightly judged by that Council as heretical. Until now, he remains on the official list of Popes as one of Peter's "infallible" successors.

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CORRUPT PRIESTS

St. Boniface wrote to Pope Zachary [741-752 AD], “Young men who spent their youth in rape and adultery were rising in the ranks of the clergy. They were spending their nights in bed with four or five women, then getting up in the morning to celebrate the Mass!”

PSEUDO-ISADORIAN DECRETALS

About the middle of the 800's, one of the greatest forgeries of all history appeared in the form of a document called, *The Pseudo-Isadorian Decretals* [false statements of Isadore, who died in c.636 AD]. In it were a vast number of “official” declarations of Popes and Councils from Clement of Rome [c.63 AD], to Gregory II [c.731 AD].

Binding regulations with respect to all manner of practices about worship, feasts and fasts, costumes, and sacraments [religious ceremonies believed to be means of divine grace] were listed. In it, the Popes and the Roman Catholic priesthood were said to be the one mediator between God and men. To sin against the priesthood was to sin against God.

Therein the Pope was set forth as the fountain of all power and authority; subject to no questioning and being the ultimate decider of all controversy. Its genuineness was not doubted throughout all the Middle Ages and served to establish the papal claims as authentic.

Its forgery was later exposed and denounced by all historians, Roman Catholic as well as Protestant. Yet the effect it had upon the development of papal tyranny and church doctrine up until

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the present could not be reversed. Though the human author is still unknown, undoubtedly the collection and contents of the Decretals can be traced to the father of lies.

Stop and think: Relate the Decretals to Isa.8:20 and Mt.7:15-20.

IMAGE WORSHIP

Through deceit and treachery, the reigning Patriarch [similar in office to the Pope] of the Eastern Orthodox Church was banished and tortured by those who insisted on worshiping images. Bishops trembled and agreed to erect images or were thrown out while the people rejoiced.

Thus in Constantinople in 842 AD, anathemas [delivering over to eternal judgment by the church] were pronounced upon all who reject traditions and worship of images of Christ, Mary, and the saints. By decree from Empress Theodora, systematic slaughter, beheading, burning, and drowning of believers refusing image worship raged as a result. An estimated 100,000 souls perished between 842 and 867 AD.

POLITICAL POWER OF POPES

Pope Nicholas I [858-867 AD] arrogantly warned the world, "Fear, then, our wrath and the thunders of our vengeance; for Jesus Christ has appointed us [Popes] with His own mouth [as] absolute judges of all men; and kings themselves are submitted to our authority."

As his forces defeated the Holy Roman Emperor, King of Germany and Italy, Pope Alexander III [1159-1181 AD] declared,

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“The power of Popes is superior to that of Princes.”

Stop and think: In what way is this following the Pattern of Christ? [Lk.12:13-15; Jn.3:17; 8:15; 12:47,48].

FORGIVENESS FOR SLAUGHTER

Pope John VIII [872-882 AD] promised to soldiers fighting bravely against the pagans, the rest of eternal life and forgiveness of sins.

Stop and think: Was this Jesus' method and promise to His followers? [Jn.18:36; Mt.26:51,52].

MULTIPLIED WICKEDNESS

In eight short years between 896 and 904 AD, ten Popes occupied the chair of St. Peter in Rome. At least one was strangled to death while two others were murdered in prison by a rival Pope.

It became the custom of the common people, whenever a Pope died, to raid the palace, stealing whatever of value they could lay hands on. It was an almost indescribably wicked and depraved period.

PORNOCRACY

Thus began one of the darkest periods in the history of the Roman Catholic church known as the Pornocracy [rule by harlots]. The Popes, through fear, ruled kingdoms by the sword of Emperors on the battlefields of the world. At the same time, Theodora and her daughters, through lust, ruled Popes with their harlotry in the bedrooms of palaces.

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Sergius III [904-911 AD], after murdering two preceding Popes, obtained his title by relying on the support of the most powerful political and military clan among the Roman nobility. Theodora, the harlot wife of the clan head, was the most influential of all among them.

Her daughter, Marozia, though married and a mother, became Sergius' whore through whom he bore a son that later would become a Pope.

Pope John X [914-928 AD], adulterous lover of Theodora, tried to assert his authority over the Roman nobility who had put him into power. But he was no match for the wicked cunning of these women.

Marozia had his own brother slain before his very eyes and then threw the Pope into the dungeon where he was smothered to death. She thereby became the undisputed mistress of Rome, maneuvering two Popes into power in three years, before making her own bastard son through harlotry with Pope Sergius the new Pope.

He assumed the title, John XI [931-936 AD]. Marozia, to gain yet further power, offered her love to the step-brother of her conveniently late second husband. Alberic, her son by harlotry through her first "husband," revolted against the couple and locked his mother up for the rest of her days.

Alberic sponsored several Popes of his own and shortly before his death had the Romans elect his own teenage son [Marozia's grandson] as the next Pope.

This eighteen year old took the name of Pope John XII [955-963 AD] and reigned as a depraved monster of iniquity. No woman was safe in the papal halls. A Roman Synod [an assembly of religious leaders] had him removed from his office. The charges?

"Pope John XII has mutilated a priest, set houses on fire,

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committed murder and adultery, has violated virgins and widows, lived with his father's mistress, converted the papal palace to a brothel, drunk to the health of the devil, and invoked the names of Jupiter and Venus and other heathen demons while gambling.”

Before he could be sentenced, he was murdered by an enraged husband who found the Pope in bed with his wife.

SIMONY

[Buying and selling religious position and influence]

At the age of about twelve years, Benedict IX [1033-1045 AD] was made Pope by purchasing the position. He ruled as a captain of thieves who murdered and stole from pilgrims on the graves of martyrs, even slaying his victims and committing adultery in broad day-light. After stealing the papal treasury of everything of value, he sold his office for one or two thousand pounds of silver to the next Pope.

CELIBACY

About 1079 AD, The celibacy [forbidding of marriage] of the priesthood was decreed by Pope Gregory VII. The two main reasons for this demonic doctrine [I Tim.4:1-5] and unnatural arrangement contrary to God's created order were these:

[1] Priests, Bishops, and Popes must not have families to leave their wealth to after their deaths. All must go into the treasury of Rome.

[2] The rulers of the Roman Catholic Church were to be without the natural loving loyalty to wife and family so that they might be wholly devoted to the will of the Popes.

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Thus, marriage itself became a sin for the priesthood, but not fornication, adultery, or homosexuality. Mistresses, prostitutes, and sodomites, though officially condemned, were tolerated as long as the priests did not marry.

Pope Honorius II [1124-1130 AD] forbid the clergy of England to marry, yet cardinals and clerics alike lay with prostitutes almost without exception.

Stop and think: Did Jesus support or disapprove of marriage among His followers? [I Cor.9:5; Mt.19:4-6; Heb.13:4; I Tim.4:1-5].

THIEVERY

Gregory VII [1073-1085 AD] was the first Pope to literally dethrone kings by decree. He proclaimed that the power to bind and loose granted by Christ to Peter gave the Popes “the right to make and unmake kings” and to set up and bring down governments, seize lands and properties and “bestow it upon those who would hold it subject to papal authority.”

Stop and think: What was Jesus’ political involvement and which lands did He seize for His use and that of His followers?

ROSARY

Between c.1090-1150 AD, praying with Rosary beads [reciting fifteen *Pater Nosters* {our Father} and one hundred and fifty *Ave Marias* {hail Mary}] was begun by pilgrims and Crusaders, adopted by Dominican monks, and thereafter widely accepted throughout the entire Roman Church and practiced worldwide up to today.

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Stop and think: How did Jesus teach us to pray? [Mt.6:5-7].

CRUSADES

Between the years of 1095 and 1270 AD there took place seven Crusades promoted and funded by the Roman Catholic Church. The Crusades were armed pilgrimages to Jerusalem under the banner of the cross in order to reclaim the “Holy Land” from the hands of the Muslims.

The highest and best participated. Kings and emperors, women of nobility and queens, priests and high ranking churchmen swelled the ranks. So did the worst of humanity; thieves, murderers, liars, and rogues of all classes.

These “holy” warriors were promised cancellation of all debts and forgiveness of any and all sins committed in the course of their divine mission. Bernard of Clairvaux [c.1146 AD] led the second Crusade and declared, “The righteous fear no sin in killing the enemy of Christ. When he slays, it profits Christ. The Christian exults in the death of the pagan because Christ is glorified thereby.”

He later saw the folly of such thinking and practice, but this expresses the fervency and excesses of the times. He continued, however, in his intolerance against the true believers. Those who did not have Peter as their apostolic founder, he said, had demons as their origin.

The Holy Land, in the minds of the Crusaders, was a land of wonders filled with the divine presence of Christ. As such, it could never be fitting for it to be held in the hands of Muslims. It must be reclaimed.

And so Jerusalem was conquered in 1099 but lost again in

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1187; reconquered in 1229 and lost once more in 1244. But Christ wasn't there. He had risen and ascended over one thousand years before.

The chaplain of the archbishop during the third Crusade [c.1190 AD], was made sick unto death by what he witnessed among the "holy" Crusaders. He reports, "The army is altogether dissolute [completely wicked] and given up to drinking, women, and dice [gambling]. The Lord is not in the camp."

Rape was common, even forceful orgies in convents of women dedicated to the church, such as occurred in the fourth Crusade. Yet they were granted an unlimited Indulgence [forgiveness of sin] by Popes for their service to this "holy" cause.

It is estimated that more than a million souls perished during these years of religious wickedness. Even one of the Crusades was made up of tens of thousands of children between the ages of ten and twelve.

Based upon a vision of one youth in 1213 AD, they marched to conquer the Muslims armed only with the singing of hymns and prayers as their weapons. Many simply died of starvation and weakness along the way while others were captured or deceived and sold into slavery.

Stop and think: What means did Jesus use to influence the world?

INQUISITION

The Inquisition, referred to as the "Holy Office," was instituted by the Synod of Tours and the Council of Verona between 1163 and 1184 AD. The Inquisition [a seeking of

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truth/information] was a thoroughly papal institution established to discover, root out, and destroy all heretics [i.e. anyone who did not openly agree with and practice Roman Catholicism]. It lasted into the 1800's.

Civil authorities were authorized and commanded to seize property, imprison, enslave, and execute all heretics. Those who would not, had their kingdoms taken from them and came under suspicion of heresy themselves.

Bishops were required to appoint a priest and a layman to enter private homes in order to “inquire” after heretics. Boys above fourteen years old and girls older than twelve were forced to report any heretics to church authorities or suffer their own cruel punishments.

Torture became a regular part of the process in order to extract “confessions.” The methods employed were of evil genius, exceeding even those of the pagan Roman empire in the early centuries.

Women of 86 years and girls of 13 were stripped to the waist and publicly whipped. Foreheads were branded with an image of a fox by hot irons. Others were sold as slaves to row in galley ships.

Eyes were gouged out to scoff at their “blindness” to the “truth.” Thousands, after a mockery of a church trial, were burned alive at the stake. Countless hundreds of thousands of innocent citizens and true believers perished during this reign of terror.

Not satisfied with merely the murder of “heretics,” the Scriptures themselves became the object of their hatred. The Word of God itself was officially forbidden to the laity and placed on the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* [List of Forbidden Books] at the Council of Toulouse in 1229. The reading of the Bible was punishable by death.

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Pope Gregory IX [1227-41 AD] appointed Dominican monks to enforce the Inquisition even against Bishops and thundered that the Pope was “Lord and master of everyone and everything.” With his approval, his Inquisitors burned or buried alive countless hundreds of Christians.

Reading or possessing the Bible, along with any literature that did not meet with their approval, was mercilessly punished. In Spain, all copies of the Scriptures were seized and burnt beginning in the middle 1500's and continued to be completely forbidden up into the 1800's.

Stop and think: What is the difference between the Inquisition and true church discipline? [Mt.18:15-20; Rom.15:14; 2 Thess.3:14.15].

RELICS

Though the worship of Relics [sacred objects believed to possess spiritual power to bless and heal] had been practiced from as early as the 300's AD, the return of the Crusaders from the Holy Land raised this form of idolatry to new heights. Great sums of money were paid by eager churches for all manner of “holy” objects recovered in the divine wars.

Noah's beard, Christ's tears, Thomas' finger that was thrust in Jesus' side, milk from Mary's breast, John the Baptist's head, the spear still fresh with Christ's blood, thorns from Christ's crown, straw from Bethlehem's manger and countless other frauds were sold to the highest bidders and enshrined upon church altars.

Three times complete corpses, all claiming to be that of Mary Magdalene, were bought by different churches. So many pieces, and even complete versions, of the original cross of Christ were sold that

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it was believed that the wood had the power to miraculously multiply itself. All became the holiest objects of adoration in this dismal time of darkness.

Stop and think: What is the danger of such religious objects? [Ex.32:1-8; Jud.8:27; 2 K.18:4].

INDULGENCES

Indulgences gained official approval at the beginning of the 1200's AD. An Indulgence is the power of the Pope to release people from sin and its punishment by drawing upon the Treasury of Merit.

This Treasury is the stored up good works of Mary and the Saints that are so abundant that they can pay off all moral debts of the living. The Pope, since he stands in the place of Christ, can distribute this merit and release sinners from punishment, even as Christ did to the woman caught in adultery.

How can an Indulgence be obtained? By contributing to the support of the Roman Church, either by certain good works, but most especially, by paying money into the church's earthly treasury.

As if this filthy lucre was insufficient, Pope Sixtus IV [1471-1484 AD] also provided that indulgences could be sold for the dead to free them from Purgatory. Pope John XXII [1316-1334 AD] even published a list of prices to sell forgiveness for every conceivable sin, from murder to incest to sodomy. Nothing became too shameful for the "church" in order to collect money from the living for their deceptive and evil purposes.

Stop and think: On what basis are sins forgiven? [Ps.32:1-7; Mk.2:5-10; I Jn.1:9].

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BLASPHEMY AND PERSECUTION

Pope Innocent III [1198-1216 AD] gathered all of his cardinals, archbishops, and bishops upon his ordination and applied the words about Christ to himself in this way: “Am I not the bridegroom, and every one of you a friend of the bridegroom? Yea, I am the bridegroom; for I have the noble, rich, and highly exalted, yea, the honorable, pure, gracious, and holy Roman Church for my bride, who, by the ordinance of God, is the mother of all the faithful, and the supreme mistress over all the churches.”

He declared that all who “blaspheme God and God’s Son” [by not following the Pope and Roman Catholicism] should be “punished with death and confiscation [seizing] of goods.” On one occasion, some four hundred true believers were committed to the flames at once. He says, “An Emperor is simply the arm of the Universal Church that wields the sword.”

Besides those against the Muslims, several Crusades were instituted by him against the brethren, the Albiginses. Promise of entrance into the heavenly kingdom was given for all who will “oppose the agents of anti-Christ and fight against the servants of the old serpent.” Nearly twenty thousand were slain in one city alone; men, women, and children alike.

At this time, Emperor Frederick II, who carried out the Pope’s decrees for the Inquisition, labeled heretics [the true believers] as “fierce wolves, most wicked angels, and serpents vomiting out poison.” Their punishment was to have their tongues torn out of their mouths, be publicly burnt alive, or perish by the sword of his raiding soldiers.

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THE MASS AND IDOLATRY

At the Lateran Council in 1215 AD, Transubstantiation and Auricular Confession were adopted as official doctrines of the church. Transubstantiation is the doctrine that the bread and cup at the Lord's supper become the literal flesh and blood of Christ by the "miracle" of the Mass performed as a sacrifice by the priest, "outside of which there is no possibility of salvation."

Auricular Confession required the confession of one's sins to a priest instead of to God. Adoration [worship] of the Host [communion wafer] became official doctrine under Pope Honorius III [1216-1227 AD].

Stop and think: How often has Christ been sacrificed? [Heb.9:26-28; 10:10-14]. To whom do we confess our sins? [Ps.32:5,6; 1 Jn.1:9].

HARLOTRY

In the 1200's, St. Bonaventure, cardinal and general of the Franciscans [a group of Roman Catholic monks], said that Rome was just like the harlot of the book of Revelation [Rev.17].

The papal court of Innocent IV [1243-1254 AD] was described by a Roman Catholic cardinal as "one brothel that extends from the West to the East gate."

Pope Boniface VIII [1294-1303 AD] had both a mother and her daughter as his mistresses together.

During the reign of Pope John XXII [1316-1334 AD], he had one of his illegitimate sons raised to the rank of cardinal. Rome had the infamous reputation of having more harlots than any other city in the world during the days of Pope Sixtus IV [1471-1484 AD]. He

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took full advantage of this situation by imposing a church tax upon the earnings of all harlots and a separate tax upon all mistresses kept by the priests.

The magnificent artwork on the ceiling of the Pope's private Sistine Chapel in Rome painted by Michelangelo was commissioned by Pope Julius II [1503-1513 AD]. This man bought his position as Pope for a fortune and had countless fornicating women who bore him numerous illegitimate sons.

THREE POPES

Pope John XXIII [1410-1415 AD] had the godly John Huss and Jerome of Prague condemned and burned at the stake at the Council of Constance. It was also at this time that the cup was forbidden to the laity during the communion.

Later, that same council condemned this same John XXIII, one of the three rival Popes at the time, "for being a mass-murderer, mass-fornicator, a pirate, rapist, and sodomite," decreeing that no Pope is above the authority of a duly gathered ecumenical council. After spending three years in prison, he was released and promoted as a cardinal by his successor, Pope Martin V.

This same Martin V [1417-1431 AD], wrote to the king of Poland to utterly exterminate the followers of John Huss. His letter commands, "Make it a duty to exterminate the Hussites. Remember that these impious persons dare proclaim principles of equality; they maintain that all Christians are brethren...they call the people to liberty...While there is still time, then, turn your forces against Bohemia; burn, massacre, and make deserts everywhere, for nothing could be more agreeable to God." He also reversed the decision of the Council that appointed him, saying that the Pope is subject to no

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council.

SOCIETY OF JESUS OR JESUITS

About the year 1534 AD, the Society of Jesus, or the Jesuit order, was founded by Ignatius Loyola. Its pledged purpose was to “serve the Roman vicar” [the Pope as the personal representative of Christ on earth] and to “execute immediately and without hesitation or excuse all that the reigning Pope or his successors may enjoin upon them.” Absolute obedience to Loyola, its general, and, in turn, to the Pope was mandatory.

Though approving of the Inquisition, they proceeded to advance Roman Catholicism by strict disciplined educational and moral means. He wrote “The Book of Exercises” that taught men how to obtain their own conversion. It was claimed that it “was truly written by the finger of God, and delivered to Ignatius by the Holy Mother of God.” They became one of history’s most powerful promoters of Roman Catholicism.

TRADITION AND APOCRYPHA “INSPIRED”

At the Council of Trent [c.1545 AD], Tradition [the practices and decisions of the Roman Catholic Church throughout the centuries], was decreed to be of equal authority with the Bible along with the Apocrypha [the false fourteen books written between the time of Malachi in 400 BC and the coming of Christ].

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INFALLIBILITY OF POPES

The Syllabus of Errors, proclaimed by Pope Pius IX [1846-1870 AD] and incorporated into the Vatican I document, condemned freedom of religion, conscience, speech, press, and scientific discoveries which are disapproved by the Roman Catholic Church. The Pope's infallibility in matters of faith and morals and temporal authority over all civil rulers was made official doctrine.

ECUMENISM

Pope John Paul II [1978 to present] gathered one hundred and thirty of the world's religious leaders to Assisi, Italy, for a day of prayer for world peace. Praying together were snake worshipers, spiritists, animists, North American witch doctors, Buddhists, Muslims, and Hindus, as well as representatives of major Christian denominations and Roman Catholics. The Pope declared that all were "praying to the same God," each according to his tradition and understanding.

Stop and think: Whom did Jesus join together with in prayer? [2 Cor.6:14 - 7:1].

Thus we will close this wearying chapter and thankfully turn to a survey of those faithful brethren who neither loved this vile world, the empty and wicked religion of men, nor their own souls, even unto death.

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7

REMNANT

**Though the number of the sons of Israel be like the sand of the sea,
it is the remnant that will be saved [Rom.9:27].**

SPONTANEOUS EXPANSION

There was nothing artificial about the beginnings of Christianity. The church received her life from the Holy Spirit of God and this became their testimony both by word and deed. The progress of the kingdom of heaven was due to the efforts of spiritual common believers and not from “professional” preachers [Acts 8:4; 11:19; I Thess.1:6-8].

Apart from organized campaigns and without exhortations to do so, simple Christians spread the Word of life throughout the known world. The church in Rome began and developed this way without Apostolic presence. The NT pages are refreshingly free from the appeals for funds and pleas for laborers so prevalent in our day.

Spontaneous expansion begins with the joy of a new found love and purity in the light. It breaks out in a spiritually instinctive desire to help and bless others. Love must have an outlet, for it can

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only but extinguish if expended upon self.

Purity's radiance cannot be hid. Truth's compelling persuasion to the soul swells within seeking to vent its internal pressure. These are the deep well springs of an unrestrained expansion of true faith.

Yet means of expansion such as these are distrusted and avoided by the heart of man. Unspiritual man wants to control his religion. An uncontrolled force, capable of sweeping away both the man and his carefully invented channels of restraint, is instinctively feared by him.

We fear this surging power of God in two ways. We first of all imagine that it must necessarily be disorderly and thus undesirably evil. And secondly, we are terrified of where it might take us.

But these fears are spiritually ungrounded. Our God is a God of order, not of confusion [I Cor.14:33,40]. And, the mighty flow of God from the throne only brings blessing and healing wherever it goes [Ezek.47:1-12]. It is not the Spirit of God that breeds fear, disorder, or evil, it is the spirit of pride and human control.

Nevertheless, the carnal imagine that their exercise of authority and establishment of laws and institutions are the safer and preferable course to take. Thus the Spirit of God is quenched and grieved [I Thess.5:19; Eph.4:30], while men carefully manage and direct their own religious affairs; maintaining a form of godliness, void of its power.

The early Christians feared the human inventions of learned "wise" men. They maintained and advanced the purity of Christ's doctrine by simple faith and love with clear explanation to the common people. The wayward Church distrusts and opposes any but their self-appointed ruling clergy to instruct men in the Word of God.

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In the histories of this expansion, often the only records we have of faithful brethren are preserved in the writings of their enemies. These accounts were regularly falsified in order to justify the execution of the “heretics,” while the original writings were destroyed by their persecutors.

For this reason, there regularly exist gaps in the historical account. Even so, the very things said about them by their opponents give evidence that their “heresies” and Christian character actually agreed with the Scriptures.

Names of these various groups frequently were given to them in hateful mockery by their foes and did not represent how the brethren identified themselves. Usually they simply referred to themselves by descriptions such as, “brothers,” “friends of God,” “disciples,” “Christians,” or other similar biblical terms.

Following are representative individuals and groups who, in one way or another, maintained devotion to Christ in the midst of crooked and perverted generations. In some, wheat and chaff can be seen mixed together in one individual or movement. Let us ever remember that Christ alone is the Pattern for His people.

JUSTIN MARTYR c.100 - 166 AD

Justin writes thus in defense of Christianity: [Selected Portions]

They think us senseless because we worship this Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, as God next to the Father. But they would not say so, if they knew the mystery of the cross. By its fruits they may know it.

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We who once lived in debauchery, now study chastity; we, who dealt in sorceries, have consecrated ourselves to the good, the uncreated God; we who loved money and possessions above all things else, now devote our property freely to the general good and give to every needy one; we who fought and killed each other, now pray for our enemies; those who persecute us in hatred, we kindly try to appease, in the hope that they may share the same blessings which we enjoy.

EPISTLE TO DIOGNETUS c.160 AD [Selected Portions]

Christians are not distinguished from the rest of mankind either in locality or in speech or in customs. For they do not dwell somewhere in cities of their own. Neither do they use some different language nor practice an extraordinary kind of life.

They dwell in cities of Greeks and barbarians and follow the native customs in dress and food and the other arrangements of life. Yet the constitution [manner of life] of their own citizenship is marvelous.

They dwell in their own countries, but only as sojourners [temporary residents]. Every foreign country is a fatherland to them, and every fatherland is foreign. They marry like all other men and they beget children, but they do not cast away their offspring.

They have their meals in common, but not their wives. They find themselves in the flesh, and yet they do not live according to the flesh. Their existence is on earth, but their citizenship is in heaven.

They obey the established laws, and they surpass the laws in their

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own lives. They love all men, and they are persecuted by all. They are put to death, and they are endued [filled with] life.

They are in beggary [poor], yet they make many rich. They are in want [lack] of all things, and yet they abound in all things. They are dishonored, and yet they are glorified in their dishonor.

They are evil spoken of, and yet they are vindicated [shown to be in the right]. They are reviled, and they bless; they are insulted, and they respect. Doing good, they are punished as evil-doers; being punished they rejoice, as if they were thereby made alive.

War is waged against them as aliens by the Jews, and persecution is carried on against them by the Greeks. Yet those who hate them cannot tell the reason for their hostility against them.

MONTANISTS c.156 - 500's AD

As the Catholic church moved more and more towards formalism with authority increasingly in the hands of the bishop, a movement began led by Montanus which emphasized the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Prophecy was prominent in contrast to the increasing ceremonies of the Catholic church.

As earnestness and standards of godliness were declining in the traditional church, the Montanists exhibited a warmth of fellowship, zeal for the Lord, spiritual enthusiasm, and moral conviction. After a time, this "new wine" could no longer be contained in the old skins of the Catholic church and so new congregations were formed.

There were excessive reactions among some of them against the developing formal trends of the Church. Unbalanced and highly

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emotional extremes with wild speaking in “tongues” characterized some of their meetings. Nevertheless, a much needed call to the life of the Spirit in true devotion to Christ was raised.

Few lapsed from their ranks. There were notable martyrs among them such as Perpetua and Felicitas previously mentioned. The godly and influential Tertullian identified with them in the 200's.

The last of the Montanists were persecuted and brought to an end by the Emperor Justinian I [527-565 AD]. He had dedicated his throne under special protection of the Virgin Mary and thus purged the land of “heretics” who would not bow before either her or the Church.

TERTULLIAN c.150 - 220 AD

Tertullian was a mighty rushing torrent of a man. Between the ages of thirty and forty, he was deeply convicted of his immorality and spiritual blindness and turned wholeheartedly to the Lord Jesus.

When converted, he hurled all of his intensity into strict godly living and the defense of Christianity against paganism as well as rebuking the wayward church. His keen legal mind, sharp wit, and fiery zeal were all employed, by both pen and tongue, in a single-minded devotion to the cause of Christ.

From his primary sphere of ministry in Carthage, North Africa, he exhorted the church against the worldliness of the Roman games. “What a man should not say, he should not hear. All licentious [lawless and evil] speech, nay every idle word is condemned by God. The things which defile a man in going out of his mouth, defile him also when they go in at his eyes and ears.”

Religious rulers envied, feared, and insulted him for his

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upright insistence upon worship in Spirit and truth. However, he was not intimidated by man. Of the lax bishop of Rome he said, “He has executed in Rome two works of the devil: He has driven out prophesy and brought in heresy; has turned off the Holy Spirit and crucified the Father” [referring to the Pope’s error that the Father died for our sins].

Taking Paul’s words in Col.2:8 and I Tim.6:20,21 to heart, he rejected the influence of philosophy as useless and dangerous to the spiritual life. He said:

It is this philosophy which is the subject-matter of this world’s wisdom. In fact, heresies themselves are prompted by philosophy. It is ever handling questions but never settling anything.

What is there in common between Athens [the center of Greek philosophy] and Jerusalem [where the message of Christ first went forth]? What between the Academy and the Church? What between heretics and Christians? Away with all projects for a [philosophic] Christianity! After Christ Jesus, we desire no subtle theories.

ATHANASIUS c.303 - 373 AD

Against all the spiritual and temporal powers of the world he stood without shaking. To the Emperor Constantine and the Arian bishops at the Council of Nicea, he thundered with unanswerable Scriptural evidence that both shamed and confounded his opponents. The Lord used him to save the church from plunging headlong into this serious error about the person of Christ.

Both political and religious hatred was aroused against him because of the truth he fearlessly proclaimed. He was condemned by

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imperial power five times to be cast out of his native Alexandria. Though slandered, brought before tribunals, and taking his refuge in the desert, nothing shook his testimony to the truth of the blessed Redeemer.

The Emperor, Julian the Apostate, who rejected his ceremonial Catholic upbringing for pagan occultist witchcraft, invited Athanasius back to Alexandria, hoping that he would politically serve his purposes against his enemies. He was to be greatly disappointed. Athanasius gladly returned from exile but rather devoted himself to extensive evangelism for some time before Julian again banished him.

At one time he was rebuked with the warning, "Athanasius, don't you know that the whole world is against you?" His reply? "Then I am against the whole world."

PRICILLIANISTS c.354 - 554 AD

Around the year 354, a remarkable move to return to complete dependence upon the Word of God alone began in Spain, spreading eventually to both France and Portugal. The Lord raised up a Spaniard named Pricillian as His chosen vessel to bring many to the light of the gospel.

Sincere and practical expositions of the Scriptures attracted multitudes who put their trust in Christ. His godly character and popularity among the then enlightened common people, inflamed the malice of the Roman clergy against him.

They falsely charged him with heresy in 380 of which he was shown to be innocent. The attack was renewed by the envious and hateful priests in 384 and this time, the Emperor granted permission

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to execute him and several of the brethren on the charges of “heresy, immorality, and sorcery.”

In reality, the Roman church could not tolerate any who did not subject themselves to their authority and doctrine. As a result, Pricillian was beheaded and his numerous writings were searched out and destroyed, led by the evil Bishop Ithacus. This was the first execution of Christians by the Church itself.

However, in the year 1886, eleven of his writings were discovered in Germany, which give glowing testimony to his upright character, loving devotion to the Lord Jesus and the people of God, and soundness of his doctrine. Everything he taught was shown to be squarely based upon the Word of God which he said was the only valid rule for faith and practice.

He taught that Christians are called to a holy life which is the result of communion with Christ through love and faith alone. All believers are brethren, with no distinction between clergy and laity. All believers alike partake of the Holy Spirit who instructs them through the Word. Therefore, the teaching of the Word is open to all according to the Spirit’s good pleasure and is not dependent upon a designated leader.

By faith, one’s entire being, body, soul, and spirit, becomes the habitation of the Spirit by union with Christ. This is rest in Christ, the experience of divine love and leading, and the fount of incorruptible blessing.

The contrast between this brother’s simple explanation of the plain meaning of the Word itself cut to the heart of the Roman Catholic system. Because this move of God was not based upon a man, but rather upon true fellowship with Christ Himself through His Word, it continued for some two centuries after Pricillian’s death.

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AUGUSTINE c.354 - 430 AD

Augustine was the son of a vulgar, sensual, and rough man who encouraged his son in the same. His mother, Monica, however, was an ideal Christian woman. She prayed, wept, and exhorted her son to turn from his evil ways to true faith in Christ. This he refused for many years.

Forsaking all his good training at home, he went to Carthage for studies while living with a prostitute for fourteen years. During that time he fathered a son whom he named *Adeodatus*, Not Given of God.

Monica would faithfully visit him from time to time and plead with him to repent of his ways. His soul began to be troubled about his immoral life. The writings of some philosophers made him begin to question the wasting of his life in that way.

He explored the teachings of some false religions but found no satisfaction in their shallow answers to the deep issues of life. During this time of unrest, he heard Ambrose preach and his messages began to deeply trouble his soul.

Thinking to settle him by a change of scenery, one of his friends invited him to come and visit for awhile. As he was there, his friends began discussing about two coarse army men who became converted to Christ, dropped their evil habits, and studied the Scriptures together.

Augustine thought within himself, "Here I am, supposed to be educated and cultured, yet my life is still a rotten mess." This testimony greatly convicted him and he withdrew to the far side of the garden where, in his own words:

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I flung myself down under a fig tree, giving free course to my tears.

I sent up these sorrowful cries, ‘How long, how long? Why is there not this hour an end to my uncleanness?’ I was saying these things and weeping in the most bitter contrition of my heart, I heard the voice as of a boy or girl, coming from a neighboring house, ‘Take up and read! Take up and read!’

I rose up, interpreting it no other way than as a command to me from Heaven to open the book [Bible], and to read the first chapter I should light upon: **Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts** [Rom.13:13,14].

This was as the light of heaven to his darkened soul. He gave himself wholly to the Lord Jesus Christ and was converted on the spot. Immediately he informed his friends of the miraculous cleansing of his heart by the grace of Christ through faith alone. This became one of the major themes of his important writings that influenced men unto true salvation down through the centuries.

Ambrose, the Bishop of Milan whose preaching had initially impressed him, baptized Augustine on Easter day. His mother Monica’s joy was unbounded. About one year later, as he and his saintly mother were about to board a ship on the Mediterranean Sea, she passed into the arms of Jesus, believing that her work on earth had been done.

Few men in the history of the church have had a more profound contribution to the course of Christendom than Augustine. On the one hand, his writings about the depravity of man’s sin and salvation by grace through faith alone were a strength

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to the Reformation. However, his doctrine about the visible church being the only means of salvation, fueled the fires of persecution and untold evils in the hands of Roman Catholics throughout the ages.

PATRICK c.440 - 493 AD

Patrick was captured by pirates and enslaved in their galley ships during his youth. The Lord allowed him to escape after years of earnest prayer. After that he saw in a dream a man who handed him countless letters from Ireland, begging him to come over and help them.

He responded, and for the rest of his days, Patrick devoted himself to tireless missionary work in obedience to the heavenly vision. Many thousands were baptized by him making him justly deserving of the designation, "The Apostle of Ireland."

In his own words he relates, "I am greatly a debtor to God, who has bestowed His grace so largely upon me, that multitudes were born again to God through me. The Irish, who never had the knowledge of God and worshiped only idols and unclean things, have lately become the people of the Lord, and are called sons of God."

COLUMBA c. 521 - ? AD

One of the most powerful movements to stem the tide of paganism through the British Isles and eventually into Europe, began with Columba. A native of Ireland, he spread the gospel in that land before establishing a center in Iona, a small island belonging to Scotland. From there he made numerous trips to the main body of land that forms the countries of Scotland and England.

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He gathered twelve disciples about him, trained them, and they went forth with the light of the gospel. Fearing no danger or hardship, their love for Christ spread throughout those regions.

Their method was to establish a missionary village with a simple wooden church building in the center surrounded by classrooms and huts for the monks. There they learned the Scriptures, the language of the people, and translated portions of the Word of God and hymns into the local dialects.

New converts who proved faithful were taught how to teach the Word as well as some trade, so that they might carry on the work of the gospel among their own people. Rather than attacking the errors of the pagans, they preached the truth to enlighten with the Scriptures as their only source of faith and life. Justification by faith was preached and no appeals were made to the state for funding.

Columba was both a man filled with the love of Christ but, at the same time, a man of great physical strength mixed with a hot temper. This quality led him into numerous quarrels and even into a battle. In that conflict, he was responsible for the deaths of between three and five thousand lives. After that tragic war, he immediately departed to Iona in 563, vowing in true repentance to convert as many souls as had fallen on the battlefield.

His biographer relates how the Lord demonstrated through Columba His own superiority of power over the works of darkness. Spiritist Druids who inhabited those lands, confronted Columba and the gospel workers with their own miraculous signs, even as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses in Pharaoh's court [2 Tim.3:8,9]. And as was the case with those two, they made no further progress and the Lord exposed their folly before all.

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PAULICIANS / ARMENIANS c.650 - 850 AD

These devoted and simple brethren bore a strong witness for Christ in contrast to the corrupt Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Church of the time. With a firm commitment to the Scriptures alone, they testified to NT doctrine and godly living, both by word and deed.

With no central authority and apart from a controlling creed, each assembly looked to Christ as their Head while maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Teachers gifted by the Holy Spirit moved from place to place to encourage, edify, and admonish the brethren similar to Paul's methods in the book of Acts.

A book by an unknown brother among them, *The Key of Truth*, was written to give the new converts "the holy milk whereby they may be nourished in the faith." The teaching of this book is most revealing about their doctrine and practice.

It states that our Lord asks first for repentance and faith and then gives baptism [showing the folly of baptizing infants and the unrepentant]. When anyone is baptized, it should be at his or her earnest request. Baptism should be in rivers, or other water in the open air.

The one to be baptized should, on his knees in the midst of the water, confess his faith before the congregation present, with great love and tears. When a child is born, he should not be baptized, but rather the elders of the church should give counsel to the parents that they may train the child in godliness and faith.

Regarding ordaining an elder, great care is to be taken lest anyone unworthy be chosen. He is to be a man of perfect wisdom, love [which is the chief of all], gentleness, humility, justice, courage,

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sobriety, and eloquence [able to express truth well].

With prayer and the reading of suitable Scriptures he is asked, “Are you then able to drink the cup which I am about to drink?” And the reply is,

I take on myself scourging, imprisonment, tortures, reproaches, crosses, blows, tribulation, and all temptations of the world, which our Lord and Intercessor and the Universal and Apostolic Holy Church [not the Orthodox Church, nor their own denomination, but the one true church which Jesus is building] took upon themselves and lovingly accepted them. So even do I, an unworthy servant of Jesus Christ, with great love and ready will, take upon myself all these until the hour of my death.

With respect to image worship and the use of relics, the author says, “In this matter some have denied the precious mediation and intercession of the beloved Son of God, and have followed after dead things, especially images, crosses, waters, and all other vain things. As they worship them they offer incense and candles, and offer victims, all of which are contrary to the Godhead.”

Between 715-775 there was no persecution and their numbers greatly increased. But by 780, an imperial edict was issued forbidding the practice of their “heresy.” During those sixty years of rest from the sword, spiritual devotion had declined among many and others joined them with little spiritual understanding and commitment. These were willing to fight back with the sword.

This provoked Empress Theodora, a fanatical image worshiper who had restored this idolatry in the churches throughout the Eastern empire in 842. She then ordered the massacre of 100,000 of them which occurred with brutal slaughter between the years of 842 and 867.

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In retaliation, numbers of Paulicians allied themselves with Muslims against their common enemy, the corrupt Roman Church. In league with the Muslim Caliph, they defeated the Emperor Michael the Drunkard, son of Theodora, capturing cities as far as Ephesus. Images were destroyed in the captured cathedrals whose sanctuaries were used as horse stables in contempt of the statues and relics contained therein.

But such fleshly recourse and momentary victory proved to be in vain, both spiritually and militarily. Having taken up the sword, they perished by the same, were finally crushed by the Emperor's forces, and thus came to a shameful and tragic end.

As for the persecuting Orthodox Church, this systematic murder of the Paulicians so weakened the empire that the way was open for the eventual Muslim destruction of Constantinople in 1453, the capital of the Eastern kingdom, thereafter named Istanbul in Turkey of today.

CONSTANTINE SILVANUS c.653 - 684 AD

One of the notable men among the Paulicians was Constantine Silvanus, a man of passionate devotion to Christ. His conversion came about after he had graciously entertained a traveling Armenian in his home who had escaped from Muslim captivity. It was in the year 653 that this persecuted brother explained the gospel to Constantine Silvanus.

His visitor recognized that his host was a man of unusual capabilities and was led of the Lord to leave him with a gift of incalculable value, a hand-written manuscript containing the Gospels and Paul's epistles. Perhaps never was a gift put to better use.

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The entrance of the Word through the illumination and conviction of the Spirit of God brought the light of salvation to his soul. He began testifying of the gospel and soon found a group of brethren who shared his love for the Lord Jesus and met together in simplicity according to the Pattern as it is in Christ.

Constantine changed his name to Silvanus, the companion and fellow-worker of the Apostle Paul, and devoted the rest of his days into similar traveling preaching and teaching. Along the Euphrates valley in the east, and into Asia Minor in the west he was used of the Lord in the conversion of multitudes of Catholics and pagans alike.

So influential was his ministry that in 684, the Emperor issued a decree against the Paulicians and Silvanus himself. An officer from Constantinople, Simeon, was sent into Armenia to enforce it. Simeon placed stones in the hands of Silvanus' friends and ordered them to stone the teacher whom they had so long loved and honored.

At the risk of their own lives, they dropped the stones, refusing to have a hand in such evil betrayal of innocent blood. However, a young man named Justus, whom Silvanus had adopted as his son and brought up with tender care, hurled a stone at his aged father and benefactor, killing him on the spot. Simeon praised him, comparing the deed with that of David slaying Goliath.

SIMEON

But this is not the end of the story. Simeon was highly impressed by the calm strength of Silvanus and the other brethren that suffered under his hands. He made serious inquiry from the Paulician believers about their doctrine and manner of life.

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After returning to the Emperor, he spent three years with a tormented conscience before he at last became converted. Very soon afterwards, he took up preaching the same gospel that he had been sent to destroy. Such a testimony has great power [Acts 9:21; Gal.1:23].

Simeon found that as a Christian, he could no longer perform service for the Emperor and was required to flee Constantinople. He then took the name Titus, and for two additional years continued the gospel work of Silvanus who had testified the good confession to his soul. But like Judas Iscariot, this same Justus told the Bishop where Simeon Titus could be found. The Bishop informed the Emperor who then sent and had him captured and burnt him to death along with a large number of these dear brethren who did not love their own souls, even unto death.

SERGIUS c.800 - 834 AD

It was a simple question raised by a godly sister that led to Sergius' salvation. "Why do you not read the Gospels?" He replied that only the priests might do that, and not the laity. She replied, "God is no respecter of persons, but desires that all be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. It is a trick of the priests to deprive the people of their share in the Gospels."

It dawned on him that the Word of God was meant for all and not merely for the Romish priests. Through reading of the Scriptures then, he became born again, filled with burning zeal for the truth, and transformed in heart and life.

Sergius labored with his own hands, supporting himself as a carpenter, as he traveled far and wide preaching and teaching the truth, as he said, "until my knees were weary." His numerous letters

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were widely circulated among the churches and used of God to both instruct and heal many problems that inevitably arise among brethren. His testimony was such that he could ask from those who knew him if he had ever taken advantage of any, or ever lorded it over anyone.

But his ministry did not go unnoticed by the organized Church. They persecuted this devoted and useful brother unto death. In 834 he fell asleep in Jesus, having been cut in two with an axe at the hands of his pursuers.

CLAUDIUS c.814 - 839 AD

This brother stood against the prevailing image worship that was throughout the Italian churches. He insisted that, "We must worship the Creator, not the creature. Whoever seeks from any creature in heaven or on earth the salvation which he should seek from God alone, is an idolater."

He strongly attacked the superstitious use of the sign of the cross. He argued, "If we worship the cross because Christ suffered on it, we might also worship every manger because He was laid in a manger, or worship every donkey because He rode into Jerusalem on one. We should bear the cross, not adore it."

Pictures, crosses, and crucifixes were banished from the churches under his urging as the only way to purge these superstitions. He was reprovved by Popes and Bishops, and found no sympathy among the people, becoming an object of scorn even to his neighbors.

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BOGOMILS "FRIENDS OF GOD" c.850 - 1463 AD

Through the sympathy of the Emperor Constantine V who also opposed images, some Paulicians had emigrated to Constantinople in the middle 800's. From there they spread to other areas, preaching the gospel and many churches were established.

Life begets life and is not dependent upon particular men or institutions to reproduce the Pattern of Christ. His indwelling presence in obedience to His Word is sufficient to keep and extend His church despite any power of earth or hell against it. If the church is put to death in one area, it will only resurrect vibrantly in another.

These Friends of God gave no special honor to Mary, crosses, or other relics. They maintained that the Roman Church celebrated the Lord's Supper superstitiously and not according to the Scriptures. Rome's priests were held in contempt because of their notorious corruption.

It is not amazing then that they were persecuted. Some of their foes charged them with immorality in a similar way that pagan Rome had done in the first century. Others freely recognized their high standard of life and morals, their love and grace, and humility and simplicity of life. But they claimed that they only behaved this way in order to deceive the people into their heresies.

Homes or simple structures were their places of meeting. They adorned them with no crosses, altars, bells, and candles. Plural elders provided spiritual leadership with all believers recognized as priests. Money was given freely to support the poor and sick along with teaching brethren who were devoted to moving from group to group to encourage the assemblies.

Catholicism had lost its hold upon the land of Bosnia by the end of the 1100's. Multiplied thousands of Bogomils filled the

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country with their testimony of truth and godliness, even among their Bans [rulers].

With the help of the King of Hungary in 1203, Pope Innocent III pressured the Bosnian leaders into once again adopting Roman Catholic practices in the churches. But the godly common people would not be so easily won over.

They had tasted the blessed life of freedom in Christ through the Word of God which was not dependent upon their Bans. They therefore peaceably resisted and refused to submit to Rome's decrees now accepted by their Ban. In response, Rome launched repeated and violent persecutions.

When these failed to persuade them to abandon the faith once for all delivered to the saints, the furious Pope ordered the Hungarian king to invade Bosnia and destroy the heretics. Years of war ensued which ravaged and devastated the land.

In the year 1291, to Rome's cup of iniquity was added the terror of the Inquisition with its torture and murder of the brethren. This continued for over one hundred and fifty years until the Muslim Turks invaded and conquered Bosnia in 1463. The harassed Bosnians made no resistance, Islam being perhaps the lesser of the two evils to them than that of the "Christian" Inquisition.

But under the new rule, the bright witness of the Friends of God waned and finally extinguished. Bosnia entered a four hundred year period of spiritual darkness and stagnation under Islamic rule.

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BASIL c.1070 -1119 AD

Supporting himself as a physician, this faithful brother tirelessly preached and taught the Word of God for forty years. His good example of diligence in labor rebuked the lazy lives of those who made religion an excuse for begging.

After these long years of spotless and fruitful testimony, the Emperor Alexius himself summoned Basil to the palace. The invitation stated that he admired Basil's character, and wished a serious explanation of his doctrines because he desired to be converted to the true way.

Basil was entertained at the Emperor's table as he spoke to Alexius earnestly about the doctrines of the Scriptures. After some time, suddenly the Emperor threw aside a curtain, revealing a scribe who had taken down in writing every word of the conversation.

Servants were ordered to put Basil in chains and then to be thrown in prison where he was kept for four miserable years. Seeing that he would not abandon the truth for Orthodoxy, his words at the Emperor's table that night were used as evidence to condemn him. Basil, along with other faithful Friends of God, were led to the Hippodrome [arena] in Constantinople and publicly burned to death as heretics.

CATHARS c.1100 -1250 AD

Catholics complained that groups of heretics were to be found everywhere from the Black Sea to the Atlantic. Indeed, brethren who shared simply in the common life of Christ as their Pattern abounded. In northern Italy and southern France were

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brethren similar to the Bogomils that their enemies called “Cathars” [Puritans].

Peter of Brueys and Henry of Cluny were noteworthy as fearless preachers of the scriptural gospel of salvation. Many were led to true life in Christ and saw the error of Romanism. Peter was eventually arrested and burned by the Church in 1226.

One of the remarkable aspects during this period was a conference for teachers of the Word held in 1167. Elders from many countries, all from independent groups of believers with no denominational ties, gathered in France from as far away as Constantinople in Turkey. Such loving devotion and unity of the Spirit based upon devotion to the truth as it is in Christ alone, bears witness to the widespread blessing of fellowship apart from organizational association and central control.

WALDENSES / ALBIGENSES c.70 - 1700's AD

WALDENSES: BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

There is no accurate record of the origins of these brethren. They themselves traced their beginnings back to apostolic times. They claimed that the faith of the NT had been handed down from father to son over the centuries. They were not reformers, but rather had simply held to the Pattern of Christ over the centuries.

In the Taurus Mountains and Alpine valleys of Europe, were found multitudes of quiet settlements of true believers. These brethren were characterized by their notable reverence for the Word of God which they embraced as their only valid source for godly living and doctrine.

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Following Christ was their chief theme and aim by obeying His words and imitating His example in dependence upon the Holy Spirit. They believed that it is only Christ through His Spirit that can give understanding to His words.

The foundational clearly revealed truths of the Word were held by one and all apart from any formal creed and organizational ties. Wide liberty was allowed in those disputed and unclear aspects of Christian practice that were not directed by command and precept in the Scriptures.

No authority of any man was allowed to set aside the authority of the Bible, no matter how prominent or gifted he may be. Practical holiness of life was expected of and evident among them all. They opposed the use of force in matters of faith and did not approve of the shedding of blood, though many allowed self-defense.

Salvation was by faith alone and evidenced by the fruit of love, apart from the Church of Rome or any other systems and creeds. The true church, they believed, has always been in existence as a testimony of Christ in every generation [Mt.16:18; Eph.3:21].

Churches and elders accepted their God-given responsibilities with fear and godly seriousness. In all matters concerning the church, including discipline, all the believers took part [Mt.18:17; Acts 6:5; 15:22]. Poor and aged were cared for by each assembly. The Lord's Supper was not a sacrifice, but a remembrance for all true believers of Christ's redemptive death as well as a strong exhortation to yield themselves wholly and be broken in humility of spirit for His sake.

Baptism was only for true believers and not for infants and little children. They simply cited our Lord's words in Mk.16:16 in response to their critics. "**He that believes and is baptized shall be saved,**" they said, "but a child does not yet believe."

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“Apostles” among the Waldenses traveled continually, visiting and building up the churches. They had no property, goods, homes, or families; if they had these, they left them [Mk.10:28-31]. Their life was one of utmost simplicity, self-denial, hardship, and danger. They went forth without money or a second change of clothes, trusting the Lord to supply their needs through the brethren to whom they ministered.

When they went forth, they always traveled two by two as the Lord had sent out his own Apostles. Due to the dangers of moving about as missionaries because of the Roman Church, they often traveled as businessmen, carrying small items for sale, such as knives, needles, etc. Begging they never did and some undertook serious medical studies in order to be of help to the sick they met along the way.

Great care was taken in commending men to this work. It was believed that one genuine devoted man was of more value than a hundred who were less consecrated and prepared. Education as well as spirituality was valued among them so as to devote all of one’s abilities to the service of God; to love Him with all of the mind, as well as the heart and body.

Regular individual reading of the Scriptures along with family worship and frequent conferences were the most highly prized means of maintaining spiritual life among them.

Participation in the governments of this world was not their practice. They reasoned that, “The Apostles of our Lord were often brought before tribunals, but it is never said that they sat there as judges.”

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WALDENSES: PETER WALDO

The name “Waldenses” came to be applied to them by their enemies due to the fame of one of their leading teachers. While discussing with other prominent citizens of Lyons, France, in about 1160, one of these leaders suddenly fell to the ground and died. Fear naturally gripped every heart, but especially that of a wealthy businessman, Peter Waldo. He was convicted that this was a sign of coming wrath upon his own life.

This was the circumstance that led to the conversion of one of the great teachers of the Word of God during the Middle Ages. He resolved to repent and to live soberly and righteously in the fear of God for the good of others and unto the glory of Christ. Soon thereafter, he began to give for the blessing of the poor, and to instruct and admonish others to repent as well. And so by word and deed, his testimony became established.

More and more came to him to learn from the Words of life that he read and explained in their own native French dialect. This, of course, attracted the attention of the Bishop of the Roman Church who, though having the key of knowledge in his hand, neither entered in himself nor allowed any others to do so [Lk.11:52].

Not to be easily intimidated by threats from official religious authority, brother Waldo continued to teach the people who eagerly pressed to his door daily to hear the true Word of God. The Light from heaven exposed the folly, corruption, and man-made traditions of the Church, and the people rejoiced in the liberty of sins forgiven.

After some time, Waldo and many of those whom he taught were forcibly driven out of Lyons. But this only served to further spread the doctrine of God throughout many lands. After making

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ample provision for his wife and family and giving the rest to the poor, he departed to devote the rest of his days to preaching and teaching the Word of God. Waldo died in Bohemia in the year 1217.

Mockingly and in hatred, they became known as Waldenses as well as by many other names. They were called “The Poor Men of Lyons” because of being driven out of that city with next to nothing. In England, Germany, and other places they called them “Lollards,” [Babbler /Weed] since Rome said they should be rooted out from the true corn of God.

Italians referred to them as *Fratricellii* [Little Brothers]. Some parts of Germany tagged them *Gazares* [Accursed/Abominable]. Those in Flanders were designated *Turilupini* [Dwellers with Wolves].

WALDENSES: THEIR “CRIMES”

Reinerius, a Dominican priest and Inquisitor writing sometime in the middle 1200's, catalogs their “crimes” according to the Roman Catholic assessment:

Among all the sects that ever were, there is none more pernicious [destructive, deadly, evil] than the Lyonists [Waldenses], and this for three reasons. Firstly, because it is the most ancient, for some say it has existed from the time of the Apostles. Secondly, because there is no country where this sect is not found. Thirdly, because this sect has a great semblance [appearance] of godliness, because they lead a godly life before men, and have a true belief in all things concerning God, only they condemn the Roman Church and the clergy.

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This is what the Roman Catholics themselves said about these brethren. The following are some of the charges against them which led to their persecution unto death, also written by the Inquisitor, Reinerius.

He represents the Waldenses as saying:

That the Church of Rome is not the church of Christ, is full of all sins and defects, and is the whore described in John's Revelation. That the Pope is the head of all errors. That the prelates [Roman clergy] are scribes, Pharisees, and murderers. That only God is to be obeyed, not prelates. That all human rules are Pharisaical institutions. That no one is greater than another, but all are brethren. That no titles such as Pope or Bishop should be used. That no one may bow his knees before the priest. That men should not give tithes to the clergy. That no force should be used to compel any to the faith.

Thus from the writings of their enemies themselves, there has been preserved a testimony to their simplicity in following the Pattern of Christ. This is further seen in the next quote that was written about fifty years after those mentioned above.

Pope John XXII issued a decree against apostates in 1315 in which he accused the Waldenses in this manner:

They assert that there were two churches; the one, carnal, abounding in riches, luxuries and lusts of this world, polluted with all manner of sin and shame, and governed by the Pope of Rome. The other [is] spiritual, temperate, pure, virtuous, honorable, and poor; to which they and their adherents [followers] alone belong.

Throughout all of Europe, in Eastern realms, and in parts of

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the Mediterranean their influence was felt. Their simplicity of devotion to the Pattern of Christ was paving the way for the world to be loosed from the oppressive bondage of Rome; whose lies and murders had led more than a million souls to cruel deaths. But more horrific than this carnage, are the countless other millions of Catholics led to eternal doom by their deadly doctrines.

JOHN WYCLIFFE c.1324 - 1384 AD

WYCLIFFE: BELIEFS

Called the “Morning Star of the Reformation,” John Wycliffe had profound effect upon all of Europe. A professor at Oxford University by age twenty five, he was used of the Lord to powerfully confront his generation with simple biblical truth.

Fearlessly he pointed out how the Roman clergy had kept the truth of the Scriptures from the people. In his book, *Of the Truth of Holy Scripture*, he repeatedly proclaimed that the Bible is the final and only authority for faith and life. He says its interpretation is not in the hands of a man or an organization. The Holy spirit makes clear its meaning to any person who will seek God for understanding in humility and trust.

Christ Himself is found in the Scriptures; to be ignorant of them is to be ignorant of Him. The Word of God is infallible [without error] and to place human tradition and ordinances alongside of it is blind presumption.

Scripture is to be interpreted by Scripture, not as tearing verses out of context as do heretics. The primary and literal sense of

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a passage is to be first considered, then its further figurative or secondary sense. Paul was very careful in his use of words, it is therefore important to pay close attention to the exact words of the Bible.

Though he was a priest of the Roman Catholic Church until the day of his death, he did not hold to their superstitions, traditions, and errors. He clearly taught that the church was not a visible religious organization with the Pope as its head. Rather, Christ's church is made up of all of God's chosen true believers, whose only Head is the Lord Jesus. Its only recognized leaders are elders and deacons and all believers are priests with equal access to the throne of grace.

To him, salvation is by grace through faith alone, but true saving faith will assuredly issue in a holy life. Transubstantiation is a blasphemous deceit and superstitious ritual void of any miraculous power of priests. This, in particular, struck at the root of Roman domination over the souls of men and resulted in even his supporters and university forsaking him.

WYCLIFFE: WORKS

Wycliffe wrote numerous tracts that were distributed far and wide. Perhaps his greatest work was the first English translation of the Latin Vulgate Bible, which had been the standard "inspired" version of the Scriptures throughout the Roman Catholic Church since the time of Jerome in 400 AD.

Until then, the Latin Bible was in the possession of the Roman clergy alone, a language that none of the common people understood. Now, hand copied portions, complete New Testaments,

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and whole English Bibles shed their life-giving beams into the darkened corners of the English speaking world.

The Word of God is what sets men free from the systems of men. This, the Pope realized all too well. And so, in 1377 he excommunicated Wycliffe from the Church, banishing him to eternal destruction.

The Lord used two things to protect His servant from the wrath of Rome. King Edward III of England was determined that he would be sovereign over his own country, and not Rome, and thus refused to act upon the Pope's order against Wycliffe.

Secondly, in less than a year, the excommunicating Pope had died and the Roman Catholic Church was split in one of the greatest scandals of its history. For nearly forty years the Great Schism [division] continued, with one set of popes in Rome and another group of popes in Avignon, both claiming to be the true successors of Peter.

The Catholic nations were divided, some siding with the "Pope" in Rome, and some with the one in Avignon, and so were confused and distracted from pursuing the "heretics" for a season.

Thus, while the rival "heads" of Christendom hurled anathemas at each other, the true Head of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ, protected His servants and brought many souls to Himself through their preaching. When his life work was finished, Wycliffe peacefully passed into the presence of the Lord in 1384, having righteously served his generation and countless generations to come.

WYCLIFFE: LEGACY

He trained and sent out a number of young men as preachers who were received by both rich and poor, illiterate and

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educated alike. Their message was no mere condemnation of Rome's folly. But rather, they proclaimed the gospel of grace through Christ as the liberating power of God unto salvation.

All were persecuted by Rome as "Lollards," and had to flee from place to place. But the light of the Word they brought remained and endured in the hearts and lives of multitudes. So widespread had the influence of the gospel gone, that it became a common saying, "If you meet two men upon the road, you might be sure that one was a Lollard."

At the Council of Constance in 1414, because the effects of his life and teaching continued to speak though he was dead, Wycliffe and his doctrine were condemned as heretical. Furious Roman Catholics dug up his remains, burned them to cinders, and cast the ashes into the river. But the living legacy of the Word of God could not be silenced and disposed of, despite all the rage of Hell's gates put together.

JOHN HUSS c.1369 - 1415 AD

Jerome of Prague had come under the influence of Wycliffe's teaching while he was at Oxford, and returned to preach in his city with great zeal for the truth of God. One upon whom his words fell with power and conviction was John Huss.

Huss was from a peasant family, but rose to become rector of one of the leading universities in Europe, simply because of his outstanding abilities. There at the University of Prague, his fiery preaching of the truth and fearless rebuke of the corruption of the Roman clergy won many to the way of Christ and aroused the wrath of the Pope.

He ordered the writings of Wycliffe, the root of the "heresy,"

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publicly burned, as well as excommunicating Huss from the Church. Cast out of Prague, he wandered through the fields of Bohemia, often with large crowds attentive to his teaching. He may justly be called the “John the Baptist of the Reformation.”

On such an occasion he cried out with a loud voice, “The wicked have begun by preparing a treacherous snare for the goose [Huss means goose in his language]. But even if the goose has broken through their toils [snares], other birds, soaring more boldly towards the sky, will break through them with still greater force. Instead of a feeble goose, the truth will send forth eagles.” This prediction was fulfilled by the Reformers of the next century.

Believing that it was his duty to bear witness to the truth of Christ, he was invited and traveled to attend the Council of Constance. The Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Sigismund, promised that he would be granted safety to and from the gathering. Huss took this as the Lord’s opening to present the truth of the Scriptures before one of the largest gatherings of Church dignitaries ever assembled.

He was wickedly betrayed. Upon arrival, he was immediately and “safely” conducted directly into a dismal and stinking prison. The Council declared that they had received an infallible revelation from the Holy Spirit that was forever binding, saying, “No Council is bound to keep faith [fulfill a promise] with a heretic.” Meanwhile, the city itself was the scene of extravagant luxurious entertainment, shameless wickedness, and unrestrained immorality among the assembled prelates of Rome.

In prison, he was subjected to every type of ill-treatment in order to persuade him to denounce his teachings, the “leprous infection of the Waldenses,” that he was accused of. This he refused to do, and when brought before the Council, they mocked his speech

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and despised his person. He simply replied, "I am ready to retract anything that I have taught, provided it can be shown from Scripture wherein I have been in error."

He was escorted back to his miserable cell while his judgment was being determined. Two weeks before his death he wrote to some faithful brethren from his cheerless confinement:

I am greatly consoled by that saying of Christ, 'Blessed are you when men shall hate you.' [This is] the best of greetings, but difficult, to live up to, for it bids us rejoice in these tribulations.

Even that bravest Soldier, though He knew that He should rise again on the third day, after supper was depressed in spirit. On this account the soldiers of Christ, looking to their Leader, the King of Glory, have passed through fire and water, yet have not perished.

But [they] have received the crown of life, that glorious crown which the Lord, I firmly believe, will grant to me - to you also, earnest defenders of the truth, and to all who steadfastly love the Lord Jesus.

O most Holy Christ, draw me, weak as I am, after Yourself, for if You do not draw us we cannot follow You. Strengthen my spirit, that it may be willing. If the flesh is weak, let Your grace precede us; come between and follow, for without You we cannot go for Your sake to a cruel death.

Give me a fearless heart, a right faith, a firm hope, a perfect love, that for Your sake I may lay down my life with patience and joy. Amen. Written from prison, in chains.

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On his fateful final day, he was brought once again before the Council. There they condemned him to be burned to death, stripped him of his priestly robe, and placed a paper crown upon his head which was painted with devils along with the words, “A ringleader of heretics.”

When he saw it, he said, “My Lord Jesus Christ, for my sake, did wear a crown of thorns; why should not I then, for His sake, wear this light crown, be it ever so ignominious [shameful]?”

As it was set upon his head the Bishop proclaimed, “Now we commit your soul to the devil!”

Huss lifted his eyes towards heaven and said, “But I commend into Your hands, O Lord Jesus Christ, my spirit which You have redeemed!”

When chained to the stake and the wood was piled up to his neck, he said to the executioner, “You are now going to burn a goose, but in a century you will have a swan [a large white goose-like bird] which you can neither roast nor boil.”

And this prophetic word was indeed fulfilled one hundred years later when Martin Luther arose and shook the known world with the truths that Huss had lived and died for. The symbol of Luther’s family clan was the swan, and though hunted and persecuted throughout his life, Luther died in peace at the end of his days.

WILLIAM TYNDALE c.1494 - 1536 AD

TYNDALE: EARLY DAYS IN ENGLAND

At Oxford University, William Tyndale was a fellow student of Erasmus, who had compiled and published the first Greek New

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Testament. Through the study of the NT in the original Greek, light flooded his soul and transformed his life.

From there he moved to Cambridge for further studies, after which he came to live in the home of an influential knight as tutor of his children. Since Sir John Walsh, his employer, regularly entertained the learned and high ranking prelates of the Church, Tyndale constantly was engaging them in discourses upon the Scriptures.

Tyndale's knowledge of the Word exposed the ignorance and folly of Roman tradition. In one conversation, a Reverend Doctor burst out with these blasphemous words, "We would be better to be without God's laws than the Pope's!"

Full of godly zeal, Tyndale retorted, "I defy the Pope and all his laws!" adding, "If God spares my life, before many years I will cause the boy that ploughs the field to know more of the Scriptures than you do!"

Already, seven brethren had recently been burnt to death by the Roman Church for the "crime" of teaching their children the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments in English. This mounting persecution forced him to flee to London where he stayed for one year with Humphrey Mummuth, the mayor's assistant.

There he studied night and day, preparing his great work of translating the first NT from the original Greek into English. While residing in London, he gained firsthand exposure to the pomp, pride, and wickedness of the clergy which fired his righteous soul yet even more.

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TYNDALE: FLEES PERSECUTION

Persecution by the ambitious and evil Cardinal Wolsey, a hater of the Bible who hoped to become the next Pope, forced him to depart from England altogether. He never again set foot on English soil. Traveling to Germany, he was able to meet and discuss with Martin Luther, though he still was required to remain in hiding. Secretly, he moved from place to place, always hiding his precious manuscripts from which his translation of the NT was done.

Tyndale was thoroughly convinced, and rightly so, that without the Scriptures in the hands of the people, the enemies of the truth would quench, pervert, and replace the message with their own wicked doctrine and traditions. The lack of the Word available to the common man he saw to be the chief cause of all the evils in the Church.

By 1525, unlike Wycliffe's hand-copied versions, his first edition was printed by the thousands, and many copies were smuggled into England at great risk of life. The Bishop of London and Sir Thomas More did all that they could to discredit and destroy the New Testaments that were coming into the land. They called the NT of Tyndale, "a pestiferous [deadly infectious] and most pernicious [wicked] poison."

Such was the blind hatred of the light, that More said his NT was so full of errors that "to tell all would be to rehearse the whole book...to search for one fault [alone] would be like studying where to find water in the sea." Yet the exacting diligence and godly fear of Tyndale in the accuracy of his translation was vindicated at last, as are all of wisdom's deeds. The King James translation of 1611 adopted his wording, almost without change, so excellent was his work.

Meanwhile, the light of the Word in the language of the

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people was greatly blessed of God throughout England to the salvation and liberty of multitudes from Rome's yoke. But the Bishop of London did not remain inactive. He threatened excommunication of any who had a copy in his possession. Many were put to death for owning or distributing the NT in English.

The Bishop offered large sums of money to buy copies of the New Testaments in order to publicly burn them and thus purge England from their "evil and heretical" effects. But, unknown to the Bishop, the merchant he bought numerous copies from at a very high price, was a Christian and friend of Tyndale. All money was sent to Tyndale in Germany and there printed three times the number of copies that the Bishop had bought! All were sent to England and distributed throughout the land.

Later, when Sir Thomas More had apprehended this same merchant, he demanded that he betray the ones who were funding Tyndale's work. Brother Packington truthfully replied, "My lord, I will tell you truly, it is the Bishop of London who has helped us. He has bestowed among us a great deal of money upon New Testaments to burn them. That has been, and still is, our only help and comfort."

The work proceeded with great danger through many obstacles. On one journey from the Netherlands to Germany, the vessel he was on suffered shipwreck on the coast of Holland and he lost all of his books and writings. The manuscript of his translation of Genesis through Deuteronomy perished in the sea. What did he do? He started all over again and the Lord sent the able encouragement and help of Miles Coverdale to assist in the translation of the OT.

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TYNDALE: PRISON AND DEATH

It was while he was thus engaged that a spy from the English clergy came to his residence in Belgium, pretending to be a merchant and in agreement with Scriptural teaching. After some time, Tyndale was arrested and imprisoned for eighteen months awaiting his execution.

During that time, his godly character and words of truth were used of the Lord to convert the jailor, his daughter, and other members of the household. His testimony throughout the castle was such that even the unbelievers said, "If he is not a good Christian man, then we know not whom we might take to be one."

In the year 1536, he was tied to a stake, strangled, and then burned to ashes. His last cry with loud voice from fervent lips was, "Lord! Open the king of England's eyes!" Unknown to Tyndale, his beloved co-worker, Miles Coverdale, had completed and printed the first entire English Bible the year before which were already in circulation at the time of his death.

By 1538, just two years after his martyrdom, Bibles were to be found in every church in England. By royal decree from King Henry VIII, the very king Tyndale had prayed for, copies of Coverdale's Bible containing Tyndale's NT were placed in every church for the edification of all who desired to read.

He who goes forth and weeps, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him [Ps.126:6].

Thus did William Tyndale, who laid down his life for the sake of his nation, that the gospel might burst the darkened dungeon of religious bondage and set the captives free. In commenting upon his translation in a letter to brother Frith, he declared, "I call God to

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record against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus, that I never altered one syllable of God's Word against my conscience, nor would do this day, if all that is in earth, whether it be honor, pleasure, or riches, might be given me."

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8

THE LIGHT DAWNS

REFORMATION OF THE 1500'S

In the year of Martin Luther's birth, 1483, a remarkable prophecy was uttered. The Inquisitor, Henry Institoris, who had condemned a Roman Catholic Cardinal to imprisonment and death because of his rebukes against the evil lives and doctrines of Rome, said this:

“There is no human power that can reform the Church. The Most High will find other means, which are at present unknown to us, although they may be at our very doors, to bring back the Church to its pristine [uncorrupted] condition.” More than one Caiaphas has unknowingly spoken forth truth from his own wicked lips [Jn.11:49-51].

Dispersed from the babel of Romanism, emerged a multiplicity of Christian groups, each speaking its own language and adhering to its own customs. The Reformation thus scattered the Babylonian-like uniformity of the popes, and halted the erection of that monstrous tower against heaven.

Yet, as in the days of Nimrod, the resultant groups carried with them many of the same customs and orientations derived from their center in the spiritual plains of Shinar. Brick was still used for

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stone and slime for mortar. Human substitutes for God-given materials and methods characterized most. Rome lived on in her rebellious sons.

Nimrod's mighty hunting before the Lord was continued by the emergent Protestant churches who persecuted and even put to death those who deviated from their new found truth. Conscience continued to be enforced by the sword by the recently born and now-reigning state churches of Europe.

Lutherans fought Zwingli and his followers. Zwingli and his band fought Catholics on the battlefield and executed Anabaptists in their cities. Calvin ordered Servetus burnt to death for heresy. Anglicans persecuted, drove out, and had Puritans and non-conformists put to death.

Paul's questions to the Galatians may well be asked to the reformers: **Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected in the flesh? You were running well, who hindered you from obeying the truth?** [Gal.3:3; 5:7].

Though there is much to be commended in the Reformation, there is also much to be lamented. It has not been observed in the history of the church that any system has been reformed from within. God separates His people from corruption and brings to the established order from without, a fresh, vital, and transforming power; that is, should they be willing to receive it.

It was so with the Lord Jesus. He forged no alliance with Jerusalem's status quo [existing condition]. He came, bringing new wine in its necessary new wine skin.

It is here that the reformers fell short of the Pattern of Christ. Luther, for example, wished to hold onto all from the Roman Catholic system that was not positively forbidden in the Word. He even longed to eventually see a merger of his "new"

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doctrine with the existing Church order.

That was doomed from the outset. A little leaven, leavens the whole lump, and so it came to pass. It is not Christ's Pattern. But, we are anticipating what is yet to be described. Let us return to the preparations for this remarkable period of man's history.

PREPARATIONS

As was true before the momentous event of Christ's birth, God had prepared the world for His coming. And He did so at the time of the Reformation as well.

Reformation cannot thrive in ignorance. The dismal bondage of humanity's mind during the Dark Ages must come to an end. The Lord wants the common man to know the truth that he might be set free.

And so it was that a wonderful invention was perfected that forever after completely transformed the lives of men and the history of the world. In 1456 Gutenberg had perfected the first printing press with movable type. His initial production was two hundred copies of the Word of God printed in Latin.

By 1483, numerous printing presses throughout Europe were producing many different books in a wide range of languages. Printing and literature in the hands of the literate cannot be underestimated in the progress of reformation.

God is literate. He not only speaks, He writes. Paul commands that his letters be read to all the brethren [1 Thess.5:27; Col.4:16]. Common men are commanded to read and reason from the written Word of God for themselves [Isa.34:16]; even children are to gain their doctrine from the Scriptures directly [2 Tim.3:15].

When asked, **What must I do to inherit eternal life?**, Jesus

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replied, **What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?** [Lk.10:25,26]. A thrice repeated, **It is written** [Mt.4:4,6,10] effectively silenced the oral assaults of the devil.

Literacy transports a man beyond the narrow circle of his immediate environment and the smallness of his own thoughts. By writing, the living thought is captured as a word and imprisoned on paper and continues to live therein.

Thus the printed page provides an unchanging reference point for repeated reflection. By it, thoughts and convictions can span generations. Thereby waywardness can be arrested by bringing original declarations into present circumstances [Isa.30:8].

Though Revelation and Inspiration ceased with the Apostles, understanding and apprehension continues and develops. We can expound upon but not add to the Revelation of God's Word. But we need not be able to read them in their original Hebrew and Greek languages to do so.

The truth of the Scriptures can be expressed in writing in other languages outside those of the original written revelation. This is shown by the NT's use of the *LXX*, the Greek translation of the OT [c. 225 BC], which was the same common language of the people of the first century. And thus by the NT's use of the *LXX* OT, the Bible itself prepared the way for its translation into the language of all peoples. Gutenberg and those after him were granted wisdom and skill to print the Word in durable quantities so that its blessed light might radiate into the hearts of the world's millions.

John Reuchlin [1455-1522 AD] of Germany traveled to the University of Paris [c.1473] where he studied Greek and Hebrew brought to the West by scholars from Constantinople. He became the foremost Hebrew scholar of the OT Scriptures. This arrival of

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the Hebrew OT and the Greek NT was the fount of an ever increasing enlightenment of the Word of God throughout Europe.

Since as early as 1397, there had been a steady migration of learned Greeks from the capital of Byzantium into Italy and France, bringing their precious manuscripts with them. By 1453, Constantinople [modern day Istanbul, Turkey] had fallen to the invading Muslim Turks. This rising threat of Islam caused the flow of ancient literature and knowledge into the West. It also fueled the Renaissance [rebirth] of culture and signaled the end of the Middle Ages.

ERASMUS 1466 - 1536 AD

Erasmus distinguished himself as the most learned and able Greek scholar of his day. He wrote an immensely popular satire and attack on the abuses and evils of the monks, clergy, and popes entitled, *In Praise of Folly*. It was translated into every European language and probably did as much as nearly any other single contribution to arouse popular discontent against Roman Catholicism.

His greatest work, which was mightily used of the Lord in establishing the truth, was his publishing of the Greek NT in the year 1516. This was the Greek text of Tyndale's translation for the English speaking world and of Luther's to the Germans. It was a giant step forward in the discovery of new spiritual worlds, far more significant than Columbus' discovery of America.

He insisted that students in the universities study the Scriptures themselves, and not merely the writings of Catholic churchmen. Reuchlin and Erasmus were used of the Lord to bring the Scriptures in their original languages to the learned; Luther and

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Tyndale, to the multitudes in their own native tongues.

By Erasmus' restoration of the NT, he restored what that revelation taught. His object in publishing his NT was to "obtain a knowledge of the pure and simple Christianity of the Bible."

Yet he was not the kind of man that reformations are made of. Luther said of him, "Erasmus is very capable of exposing error, but he does not know how to teach the truth. I fear that Erasmus knows little of the grace of God." He was a man of learning first and foremost, and only a Christian secondarily. His character was one of timid caution rather than determination and courage.

Hesitatingly, he advocated moderation and shifted between the two camps, that of Rome and that of the Reformers. He thus compromised the very blazing light that he had put into the hands of men and was unwilling to abide by the consequences of doing so. He feared where the mighty tide of truth might take them and was not willing to launch forth from shores of security, sand though they were.

Both Rome and the Reformers caused him to tremble. "It is dangerous to speak," said he, "and it is dangerous to be silent." Finally, out of his unwillingness to displease any, he offended all. He recanted [publicly withdrew] his opposition to Rome, but the furious prelates and monks would not forgive. And at the same time, by recanting, he lost all trust and respect from those who willingly chose to lay down their lives for the sake of the truth.

Stop and think: What results from compromise?

The Reformers themselves were not notable men. God's way is to effect great things through small means. Not many mighty, noble, and wise according to the flesh have ever filled the ranks of God's chosen vessels. **Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?**

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[Jn.1:46] echoes this Pattern throughout the ages.

And so it was with the Reformers. Luther came from the cottage of a poor miner; Zwingli from a shepherd's hut; and Melancthon emerged from a metal-working shop. Thus the power that toppled the empire of Rome was made perfect in vessels of weakness.

REFORMATION IN GERMANY

MARTIN LUTHER c.1483 - 1546 AD

LUTHER: HIS EARLY DAYS c.1500 - 1517 AD

Son of a miner, his father had ambitions for Martin to become a lawyer. He therefore studied law at age eighteen at the University of Erfurth in the year 1501. Blessed with a fruitful memory, strong imagination, and quick mind, he soon excelled.

But weighing upon him heavily was the concern for the salvation of his own soul. In the library of the university, he discovered, held, and read with great excitement for the first time, a copy of the Bible.

That Book, hidden on darkened shelves and closed for so long, was soon to become opened for the nation and the world through the hands of that young man.

On returning one evening from a visit to his parents, a fierce and sudden storm came upon him. A fearful bolt of lightening with its deafening clap of thunder blazed and boomed at his feet. Luther threw himself upon his knees, with terrifying thoughts of final judgment flashing through his horrified mind.

Amid trembling thoughts of death, he vowed that if the Lord

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spared his life, he would abandon the world and devote himself entirely unto God. But how could he stand before the judgment of the living God, the all-consuming fire, in his present condition?

He must become holy. But how? He resolved to withdraw from the university and enter an Augustinian monastery, hoping to be relieved of his terror of judgment, burden of guilt, and obtain the holiness he lacked.

Through prayers, fasting, and severe treatment of his body, he discovered no peace within, but rather matters grew worse. His superior, Johan Staupitz, counseled him to read the Scriptures, and pointed him directly to Christ as the only means of salvation and peace with God.

Though he often read and reflected upon the one chained Bible present in the monastery, his heart remained chained in its dungeon of sin and despair. The gospel's blessed light had not yet burst his bonds.

After three years as a monk, Staupitz arranged to have him appointed as a lecturer at the University of Wittenberg in 1508. There, through the study of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, finally, glad light entered Luther's heart; he had found that **the just shall live by faith** [Rom.1:17]. "Justification by faith alone" became his theme and the burning passion of his preaching thereafter.

Persuaded by Staupitz, he took up preaching at the old and battered chapel of Wittenberg, a small decaying wood structure measuring twenty by thirty feet. In this wretched place, reminding one of the crude manger-birth of the Son of God, the preaching of the Reformation was born.

Never had such preaching been heard. Before then, preachers had sought to amuse or impress their hearers, not bring the conviction unto eternal life. Multitudes flocked to hear him, for he

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spoke with authority, and not as their scribes. Soon the little chapel could not contain them.

But his lecturing and preaching were interrupted by a necessity laid upon him to represent the Augustinian monks in Rome itself. It was God's preparation for his servant to witness firsthand the luxury, decay, and evils of the center of Christendom.

When the city of seven hills first came into sight, he fell to his knees with this exclamation, "Holy Rome, I salute thee!" He was to be shockingly disappointed when he saw her naked before him, stripped of her legendary fame. He too soon learned why men used the popular proverb, "If there is a hell, Rome is built over it; it is an abyss from which issues every kind of sin."

Luther returned to Wittenberg sobered and with a deeper sense of the wonders of the just living by faith, and not by the vanity of religious works. There, he obtained his doctorate in divinity and continued to proclaim the Word of God to the blessing of many.

LUTHER AND TETZEL

Since the year 1502, an infamous inquisitor named Tetzel had been unashamedly selling indulgences for forgiveness of sins. Found guilty of adultery by the Emperor Maximilian, he was condemned to be put in a sack and thrown into the river to drown.

Only through the intervention of Frederick, the Elector of Saxony, was his life spared. Even so, he did not fear or repent, but proceeded all the more in his wicked trade of lying deceit.

Solemn processions into every town with ringing bells, lighted candles, and incense announced the arrival of the sellers of indulgences. Tetzel, with red cross in hand upon which the Pope's sign was shown, captivated his audiences with dramatic and

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emotionally moving sermons in the public squares.

Alternately he would plead and then bellow, move to pity and then thunder against the illiterate and astonished crowds. With great power, words such as these convinced multitudes to part with their money.

Indulgences are the most precious and noble of God's gifts. This red cross has as much efficacy [power to effect results] as the very cross of Jesus Christ. The Lord our God no longer reigns. He has resigned all power to the Pope!

I would not change my privileges for those of St. Peter in heaven; for I have saved more souls by my indulgences than the Apostle by his sermons! There is no sin so great, that an indulgence cannot forgive! Come, and I will give you letters by which even the sins that you intend to commit may be pardoned!

But more than this, indulgences are effective not only for the living, but for the dead. Priest! Noble! Merchant! Wife! Youth! Maiden! Do you not hear your parents and your friends who are dead, and who cry from the bottom of the abyss: 'We are suffering horrible torments! Only some small coins will deliver us; you can give it, and you will not!'

O stupid and beastly people, who do not understand the grace so richly offered! Now you can ransom so many souls! Stiff-necked and thoughtless man! With twelve coins you can deliver your father from Purgatory, and you are ungrateful enough not to save him!

Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see: For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things

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which you see, and have not seen them!

Bring! Bring! Bring! As soon as the money in the coffer [box] rings, the soul from Purgatory's fire springs!

The effect that such preaching had upon the superstitious and ignorant masses can easily be imagined. The people pressed forward eagerly to purchase such wondrous provision. The poor borrowed in order to not miss out on this rare privilege.

Yet not all were deceived by such imposture. One knight purchased from him at a costly price, an indulgence for a sin he had not yet committed. Later, this same knight attacked Tetzel along the roadside and stole all his indulgence money.

When Tetzel protested, the knight replied, "You should not be so quick to sell forgiveness for sins not yet committed." And so, according to that true Word, **evil men and imposters will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived** [2 Tim.3:13].

LUTHER: NINETY - FIVE THESES 1517 AD

This wanton deception of the indulgence trade was the final provocation to Martin Luther. On October 31, 1517, he posted his ninety-five theses [arguments] for the reform of this evil upon the door of the palace chapel in Wittenberg for all to read.

The news spread like wildfire. By two weeks later, all over Germany copies of his bold declarations were hailed as the words of a liberator from the shackles of Rome. As if borne upon angels' wings, within four weeks, the hammer blows that posted the Theses were ringing in the ears of all of Christendom and in the papal palace of Rome itself.

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Selected portions of the statements from the monk who shook the world are listed below:

27. They preach mere human follies who maintain, that as soon as the money rattles in the box, the soul flies out of Purgatory.
28. This is certain, that as soon as the money tinkles, avarice [greed] and love of gain arrive, increase, and multiply.
32. Those who imagine themselves sure of salvation by indulgences will go to perdition [eternal ruin] along with those who teach them so.
36. Every Christian who truly repents of his sins, enjoys an entire remission both of the penalty and of the guilt, without any need of indulgences.
37. Every true Christian, whether dead or alive, participates in all the blessings of Christ or of the Church, by God's gift, and without a letter of indulgence.
43. We should teach Christians that he who gives to the poor, or lends to the needy, does better than he who purchases an indulgence.
45. We should teach Christians that whoever sees his neighbor in need, and yet buys an indulgence, does not buy the Pope's indulgence, but incurs God's anger.
52. To hope to be saved by indulgences, is a lying and an empty hope; though even the Pope himself should pledge his soul to guarantee it.

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53. They are enemies of Jesus Christ who, by reason of the preaching of indulgences, forbid the preaching of the Word of God.

62. The true and precious treasure of the Church is the Holy gospel of the glory and grace of God.

76. The indulgence of the Pope cannot take away the smallest daily sin, as far as regards the guilt or the offense.

79. It is blasphemy to say that the red cross adorned with the emblem of the Pope is as effectual as the cross of Christ.

92. Would that we were rid of all these preachers who say to the Church: Peace! Peace! And there is no peace.

94. We should exhort Christians to diligence in following Christ, her Head, through crosses [self-denial], death and hell.

95. For it is far better to enter into the kingdom of heaven through much tribulation, than to acquire a carnal security by the consolations of a false peace.

Thus was the axe laid at the root of the tree. Though indulgences were the primary focus of the Theses, the principle of full and free justification of sins by grace through faith alone shone through. And it was this that spelled the demise of the whole Roman system.

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PHILIP MELANCTHON 1518 AD

One of the most remarkable associations of all time came into being at the University of Wittenberg in 1518. As a student of the learned Reuchlin, Melancthon rapidly rose above his fellows in academic excellence. Shy, calm, yet brilliant in mind, Melancthon was immediately attracted to Luther and placed his scholarship in Greek at his disposal.

Though two more opposite personalities could not be imagined, yet they both had a deep love and respect for the other that lasted throughout their lifetime. Luther was full of zeal and strength, and his companion was known for calm determination and discretion.

Without Luther, the re-discovered truths of the Scriptures would not have reached the multitudes. Without Melancthon, they could not have captured the scholars of Germany. Both were needed in the providence of God.

Luther himself described their differences in this way. "I am rough, stormy, and altogether warlike. I am born to fight against innumerable monsters and devils. I must remove stumps and stones, cut away thistles and thorns, and clear wild forests.

"But Master Philip comes along softly and gently, sowing and watering with joy, according to the gifts which God has abundantly bestowed upon him."

Melancthon's encouragement and help on the translation of the Scriptures into German cannot be overestimated. Luther shared his knowledge of the Word with him while Melancthon tutored him on fine points of Greek. Truly they loved each other as did David and Jonathan, and the Lord used this fellowship of kindred minds for the blessing of the German people and of the world at large.

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LUTHER: LEIPZIG DEBATE 1519 AD

It was not Luther who separated from Rome; it was Rome who separated from him, and set aside the ancient faith of the Apostolic church which Luther now represented. Dr. Eck, the foremost disputant of Rome, arrogantly imagined to entrap and defeat Luther and his influence at this debate. The key issues were rationalism [man's thinking] and hierarchy [men as ruling authorities]. Both issues were essential to the existence of Romanism.

Luther maintained that the Papacy is a human institution and is not necessary to the church. The church's Head is Christ Himself, not the Pope. Popes are by human appointment. "It is not in the power of Roman popes to make new articles of faith. The Christian believer acknowledges no other authority than Holy Scripture."

"Both Wycliffe and Huss proclaimed doctrine that is thoroughly Christian," said Luther, "when they maintained that, 'There is but one universal church,' and, 'It is not necessary for salvation to believe that the Roman Church is superior to all others.'" Luther boldly told the assembly, "It is of little consequence to me whether these things were said by Wycliffe or by Huss; they are truth."

This caused an uproar, that a simple monk would dare to call into question the determination of an official Church Council that had condemned both Wycliffe and Huss. The students of the Leipzig University followed the debate closely and recognized the superiority of Luther's replies. He appealed to the Word of God as his authority while Eck relied upon his own trickery of human

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wisdom, philosophy, and tradition. After the debate, the students fled Leipzig where Eck taught for other universities, especially Luther's Wittenberg where the enrollment nearly doubled.

The result of the debate for Luther personally, was that he saw that appealing to the Roman hierarchy was futile. He described it as his "moment of emancipation from the papal yoke." During this year he published his commentary on Galatians in which he fully set forth his teaching of justification by faith.

The debate caused him to write the tract, *An Address to the Christian Nobles of the German Nation*. This was an exhortation for them to end the tyranny of papal rule in civil life and be active in the reform of the Church themselves. In it he rejected any special priesthood as in the Roman system; affirming that all believers are priests of God, can understand the Scriptures, and have direct access to God apart from human mediators.

He attacked the "Three Walls" of the Roman Catholic system by which they dominate men: [1] That the popes and prelates alone can interpret the Scriptures [2] That their spiritual power is claimed to be above the temporal governing powers of kings [3] That only the popes and their representatives can call a general council of the Church.

LUTHER: WITTENBERG BONFIRE 1520 AD

Rome responded to the debate by issuing a Bull [letter from the Pope] of Excommunication against Luther. Luther replied to this by building a bonfire in the public place of Wittenberg and casting copies of the Bull, the Pseudo-Isadorian Decretals, and Catholic Canon law into the flames. Both citizens and students looked on with hearty approval.

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LUTHER: DIET OF WORMS 1521 AD

Summoned to the Diet [formal public assembly] in the city of Worms by the Emperor in 1521, Luther proceeded as if on a march of triumph. Friends and foes alike, however, scattered clouds of warning about the outcome.

Luther replied to all of these threats, real and imagined, saying, “You may expect everything from me except fear or recantation. I shall not flee, still less recant. May the Lord Jesus strengthen me. I am more afraid of my own heart than of the Pope and all the Cardinals. I have within me the great Pope Self.”

He told his life-long co-laborer, Melancthon, “If I do not return and my enemies murder me, I solemnly charge you, dear brother, to persevere in teaching the truth. Do my work during my absence: You can do it better than I. If you remain, I can well be spared. In you, the Lord has a more learned champion.”

Before his arrival, the Emperor issued a decree in Worms forbidding the sale of any of his books, and that any already in possession should be seized. Timid friends reminded him of the fate of John Huss when he attended a similar assemblage. Luther replied, “Though Huss was burned, the truth was not burned, and Christ still lives. I shall go to Worms, though there were as many devils there as tiles on the roofs.”

Upon his arrival, the watchman atop the cathedral tower announced his presence with the blowing of a horn. Thousands of people gathered to gaze at the “heretic” who attracted more interest than even the Emperor himself. That evening, he stood before the newly appointed Emperor, his ministers of state, the Pope’s representatives, archbishops, princes, and ambassadors of foreign

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governments.

There he was confronted with a pile of his publications and asked whether he acknowledged them all. "Do or do you not repudiate your books and the errors they contain?" His first answer echoed that of Christ, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, then why do you strike me? If you can convict me of error by the Scriptures, I will revoke my books, and be the first to commit them to the flames."

He concluded his first defense with a warning to the Emperor not to begin his reign by condemning the Word of God, reminding him of the judgments upon Pharaoh, the king of Babylon, and the ungodly kings of Israel. The assembled dignitaries were offended and refused to answer him, saying that such heresies as taught by Wycliffe and Huss had already been condemned by the Council of Constance. A straightforward answer was demanded from him.

His reply became the memorable declaration of freedom of conscience recorded in the histories of religious liberty. With clear firm voice heard by all in the overcrowded hall, he declared:

"Unless I am convicted by testimony of Sacred Scripture or by plain reason [I do not accept the authority of popes or councils, for they have often erred and contradicted each other], my conscience is captive to the Word of God.

"I cannot and will not recant anything, for to go against my conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. God help me! Amen."

Luther was dismissed in the care of Frederick, Elector [one of six high-ranking princes in Germany] of Saxony while the Diet decided on his case. They published their verdict after some days, charging Luther with all manner of outlandish and false allegations,

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which only served to expose their own malice and folly before all generations to come. They claimed:

This devil [Luther] has brought together ancient errors into one stinking puddle, and has invented new ones. His teaching makes for rebellion, division, war, murder, robbery, arson, and the collapse of Christendom.

He lives the life of a beast. We have labored with him, but he recognizes only the authority of the Scripture, which he interprets in his own sense. His followers also are to be condemned. His books are to be eradicated from the memory of man.

LUTHER: CASTLE OF WARTBURG 1521 - 1522 AD

As Luther was escorted away from the Diet, he was waylaid by a group of horsemen and kidnaped. Their captive was taken to a castle in Wartburg where he remained for one year.

It was later discovered that Elector Frederick had ordered the apparent “murder” of Luther in order to protect him from the storm of Rome that he knew would surely come upon him. There in his kindly “prison,” perhaps his greatest work was accomplished; the translation of the NT Scriptures into German, and from then forward, the light broke forth radiantly upon the common man.

LUTHER: PEASANT’S REVOLT 1524 - 1525 AD

Carlstadt, a reformer, advocated the complete overthrow of civil power. Luther, on biblical grounds [Rm.13:1-7], was absolutely opposed to this. But as mobs are generally ruled by their passions

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and not their reason, they were stirred into violent revolt, and Luther's doctrine was blamed. Though he tried to mediate and settle matters peacefully, his efforts proved fruitless.

As the revolt worsened, Luther wrote a fiery pamphlet to Frederick, Elector of Saxony, and the other German princes, to crush the peasants unmercifully. Thus, urged on by Luther's awful foolishness, the uprising was drowned in a frightful bloodbath that Luther ever after deeply regretted.

LUTHER: DIET OF SPEIER 1526 - 1529 AD

At the first gathering, it was decreed that each of the ruling princes of each German state could order and arrange the religious affairs of his own domain. However, at the second convention in 1529, the Catholic majority ordered that no further religious changes could be made in the states. Catholic regions must remain so without influence from the new Lutheran teaching.

The evangelical minority in the Diet objected to restricting the progress of the truth. It is from this protest that the term Protestant came into being. As a result, the Protestant Princes formed a league as did the Catholics, each ready to advance or defend their territories by the sword.

LUTHER: LEAGUE OF SMALCALD 1531 AD

This became the final stage in the developing state Lutheran Church. There, nine princes and eleven free cities bound themselves together as Protestant powers in Germany, both religiously and politically.

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LUTHER: COMPROMISE

Luther had been brought into sympathy with the Brethren [those faithful believers through the centuries as noted in Chapter 7] by his early influence from Staupitz. But as the conflict with Rome developed, he increasingly took refuge in the protection of the Princes of Germany.

This association gradually led to the formation of the Lutheran Church. The simple Pattern of Christ that he knew was correct, was slowly abandoned as the new state Church under his name emerged.

Alongside the revival of much Scriptural truth about individual salvation, was an inclusion of many aspects of the Roman system. The baptism of infants was kept along with the idea that baptism somehow is the means of regeneration [new birth].

He kept the Roman system of parishes merged with the union of church and state administered by a clergy over a nation considered to be Christianized. The sword of the state was accepted as a proper means of converting or punishing those who did not follow the new Church system.

His emphasis upon the lack of man's free choice in conversion, and the insistence that salvation is by the grace of God alone, led to the neglect of godly living among many.

Staupitz, his beloved and aged spiritual guide, warned Luther of this tendency. He admonished him, "May Christ help us that we may live according to the gospel which now sounds in our ears and which many have on their lips. For I see that multitudes misuse the gospel to give liberty to the flesh."

But his appeals were not well heeded. Eventually, Staupitz

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saw that their paths were taking different directions and wrote to Luther about the growing number of nominal Christians in the church, saying,

It is the fashion now to separate faith from evangelical [godly] life, as though it were possible to have real faith in Christ and yet remain unlike Him in life. Oh, the cunning of the foe! Oh, misleading of the people!

Hear the speech of fools: "Whoever believes in Christ requires no works." Listen to the saying of truth: "Let him who serves Me, follow Me."

The evil spirit tells his fleshly "Christians" that a man is justified without works and that Paul preached this. This is false. He did indeed speak against those works of law and outward observances in which men put their trust for salvation. But he never thought evil of or did anything but praise those works which are the fruit of faith and love and obedience to the heavenly commandments.

Luther knew this by his own admission, but he did not follow the conviction of his conscience in this. He compromised in allowing and encouraging the National Lutheran Church to come into existence.

See the contrast between what he knew was true and what he actually did. In 1526 he wrote:

The right kind of evangelical order cannot be exhibited among all sorts of people [the Church at large]. Those who are seriously determined to be Christians and [obey] the gospel must meet apart, in one house, for prayer, reading, to baptize, to take the Lord's Supper, and exercise other Christian works.

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With such order it would be possible for those who did not behave in a Christian manner to be known, reprov'd, restored, or excluded, according to the rule of Christ [Mt.18:15]. Here also they could, in common, willingly give and distribute alms [charitable gifts] among the poor according to the example of Paul [2 Cor.9:1-12].

Here it would not be necessary to have much or fine singing. Here a short and simple way of baptism and the Lord's Supper could be practiced, and all would be according to the Word and in love.

But I cannot yet order and establish such an assembly, for I have not yet the right people for it.

Thus did he very excellently set forth the simplicity of following the Pattern of Christ. But he turned aside from this in pursuit of what became the state Church of Germany even though he knew very well that there were many "right people" for it; those whom he himself described as "true, godly, holy children of God."

Yet he did not view the Lutheran Church as being the best form of religion. He rather lamented what he saw, admonishing them in these words:

If we look aright at what people now do who reckon themselves as Evangelical and know how to talk much about Christ, there is nothing behind it. Most of them deceive themselves.

They learn indeed to speak words, as a parrot repeats what people say, but their hearts do not experience them. They remain just as they are; they neither taste nor feel how true and faithful God is.

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They boast much of the gospel and at first seek it earnestly, yet afterwards nothing remains; for they do what they like, follow their lusts, become worse than they were before. Peasants, citizens, nobles, all are more covetous and undisciplined than they were under the Papacy.

Ah, Lord God, if we only practiced this doctrine aright, then at last we would become a Christian assembly, where now we are almost utter heathen with the name of Christian. Then we could separate from ourselves those of whom we know by their works that they never believed and never had life, a thing that now is impossible to us.

The Church, once joined to the power of the state, could not be retrieved. Luther referred to the Protestant Princes who governed the Church as “Makeshift [temporary solution] Bishops,” but they actually became their permanent fixtures.

He often expressed his regret for the loss of liberty of the individual Christians and congregations that had once been his aim. There were now two state-church systems, that of Rome and the other of Luther. The brethren who desired to maintain simple conformity to the Pattern of Christ, now found themselves between the swords of both.

LUTHER AND ZWINGLI

The cities of Wittenberg, Zurich, Geneva, and Canterbury were sisters, not mother and daughters. It was not Luther that gave birth to the Reformation in Switzerland, France, and England; God fathered the return to His Scriptures and His family independent of each other.

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The term Reformation best describes what took place in Germany in the Lutheran church that emerged there. The movements headed by Zwingli, Calvin, and Knox are aptly referred to as Reformed. To the Anabaptists, Restored best expresses their practice of holding to the simple Pattern of Christ.

Luther desired to maintain in the Church all that was not expressly contrary to the Scriptures. Zwingli purposed to abolish all that could not be proved by them.

Lutheranism claimed the priesthood of all believers, but only in theory. Still, everything proceeded from, and nothing was counted valid in that Church system that did not proceed from the pastor/priest. This was not true in Switzerland.

There, the brethren were encouraged to judge all things by the Word of God that was in their hands. It was their emphasis that the spirit of faith, wisdom, comfort, and light is not bestowed upon a pastor only, but every man is called upon to employ his gift for the profit of all. Thus the passive state of the Church was changed into one of general activity and spiritual responsibility in the Reformed churches, in contrast to the generally compliant and subservient congregations under the Lutheran clergy.

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THE REFORMATION IN SWITZERLAND

ULRICH ZWINGLI 1484 - 1531 AD

ZWINGLI: EARLY DAYS

Zwingli had no communication with Luther at the beginning and did not receive his gospel from him. "I began to preach the gospel," says Zwingli, "in the year of grace, 1516. It is not from Luther that I learned the doctrine of Christ, but from the Word of God. If Luther preaches Christ, he does what I am doing; and that is all."

Many were the leaders of the Swiss reform scattered in the various democratic canton [district/states] valleys separated by the mountain peaks of the Alps. Among these, Zwingli towered aloft in influence upon his nation and generation.

Deriving his doctrine entirely from the study of the Word, the gradually increasing illumination of the Scriptures to him became Switzerland's first steps toward Reform. "I began to earnestly entreat the Lord to grant me His light. Though I read the Scriptures only, they became clearer to me than if I had read all the commentators."

His early preaching, in contrast to Luther's thunderous denouncing of Rome's abuses and sins, instead attempted to impart truth to the hearts of the people. He reasoned, "The spring is the season for sowing. If the people understand what is true, they will soon discern what is false."

But needed reform cannot be achieved or sustained by this alone. There necessarily is required a season of boldly pointing out error as well. Thus was Christ a controversialist, and overseers must

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be able both to instruct as well as refute and silence those who contradict [Tit.1:9-11].

Zwingli's day came. In 1518, at the annual pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Einsidlen, he startled the multitudes. Inside the "holy place," a carefully preserved image of the Virgin was believed to dispense miracles and forgiveness for any and all sins. Boldly he cried:

"Do not imagine that God is in this temple more than in any other part of creation. Can pilgrimages, images, or the invocation of the Virgin secure for you the grace of God? Christ, who was once offered upon the cross, is the sacrifice that has made satisfaction for the sins of believers to all eternity."

All were astonished. Some fled in horror at the "heresy." Others hesitated, while many came to Jesus and carried away their candles that they had thought to bring to the Virgin. Crowds returned to their homes, everywhere proclaiming, "Christ alone saves, and He saves everywhere!"

Often whole groups turned back and did not even complete their pilgrimage to the shrine. Mary's worshipers dwindled daily.

Such preaching and the resultant loss of pilgrim's offerings could not go unnoticed by Rome. But, unlike the threats of excommunication hurled against Luther, the Church offered instead her favors and rewards to Zwingli. They were merely two means to the same end. Neither were effective. Cardinal Pucci arranged to have Zwingli nominated as acolyte [assistant] to the Pope. He declined the offer.

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ZWINGLI: INDULGENCES

That same year, a Franciscan seller of Indulgences, Samson by name, came to Zwingli's canton proclaiming, "Heaven and hell are subject to my power; and I sell the merits of Christ to any who will purchase them by buying an indulgence for money!"

Zwingli's zeal took fire as he heard the imposter. With energy and indignation he preached, "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has said, **Come unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.** Is it not then the greatest folly and rash senseless boldness to declare: 'Buy letters of Indulgence! Hasten to Rome! Give to the monks! Sacrifice to the priests!' Jesus Christ is the only sacrifice; the only Way!"

Soon, throughout the canton, Samson was called a cheat and a seducer and he was forced to slink away in disgrace. Almost immediately upon his departure, a citizen of the place became suddenly impoverished. He appealed to brother Zwingli for assistance, and daily for some time, he and his family were blessed out of his loving generosity. The people witnessed that the brethren would give while Rome would take.

ZWINGLI: IN ZURICH

As the Lord would have it, Zwingli was appointed as teacher at the College of Canons in Zurich. His enemies were alarmed and tried to impress upon him the responsibility that he had to collect tithes, offerings, and payments of levies from one and all. His reply was to simply state that, "The life of Christ has been too long hidden from the people. I shall preach upon the whole of the Gospel of Matthew, chapter after chapter, according to the inspiration of the

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Holy Spirit, without human commentaries, drawing solely from the fountains of Scripture.

“It is to God’s glory, to the praise of His only Son, to the real salvation of souls, and to their edification in the true faith, that I shall consecrate my ministry.”

Such language and approach to instruction made a deep impression upon his superiors, some with horror, others with joy. And when his first message was spoken, the people marveled, exclaiming, “We never heard the likes of this before!” Thus began the Reform in the most influential city of Switzerland.

Many stopped attending the regular services of the Catholic churches. Fusslin, poet, historian, and councilor of state said, “I obtain no instruction from the sermons of these priests. They do not preach the things belonging to salvation, because they do not understand them. I can see in these men nothing but greed and wickedness.”

Henry Rauschlin, treasurer of state, remarked, “The priests met in thousands at the Council of Constance [where John Huss and Jerome of Prague were martyred] to burn the best of them all.” Thereafter, these two became some of his closest friends. Rauschlin remarked, “This man [Zwingli] is a preacher of the truth. He will be our Moses to lead us forth from this Egyptian darkness.”

The monks renewed their attacks against him and his doctrine. But this did not turn him aside from the Lord and His truth. Zwingli was known to say frequently, “If we desire to gain over [to win] the wicked to Jesus Christ, we must shut our eyes against many things,” meaning, that one must not take offence against, but rather forgive the insults and hatred of men. It was sound advice [Prov.10:12].

He continued to preach the love of Christ as the all effective

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power of godliness. He says, "The Christian delivered from the law, depends entirely upon Jesus Christ. Christ is his reason, his counsel, his righteousness, and his whole salvation. Christ lives and acts in him. Christ alone is his leader, and he needs no other guide.

"What other power could implant righteousness, truth, and love among men? O God, most gracious, with what love you have embraced us, Your enemies! You will, by this unspeakable love, to constrain us to return love to You, because of Your love to us!"

ZWINGLI: THE ZURICH COUNCIL

The year 1523 found him before a great council in Zurich, called to examine, correct, and refute his doctrines. Some six hundred clergy from the canton and other distant parts, along with many citizens, scholars, and men of rank thronged the conference hall.

Though repeatedly asked to do so, none of his opponents had a word to say against him. It is often the case that those who most loudly slander and accuse in private, stubbornly and shamefully have nothing to say in public [Mk.3:4-6].

The result was that the president of the council decreed that, since Master Zwingli had repeatedly challenged his adversaries to refute his doctrines by Scriptural proofs and had failed to do so, "He should continue to announce and preach the Word of God, just as he has been doing up until now.

"Likewise, all other ministers of religion, should stop teaching anything that they could not prove from Scripture. Furthermore, they should stop making charges of heresy and other scandalous allegations, on pain of severe punishment."

This was decreed from the civil magistrate, and, like Luther's

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Germany, the state took over the church. This was to have disastrous results though it initially furthered the spread of the gospel in the various cantons.

Most of the priests accepted the Council's orders, as those who did so were assured a salary from the state. Constantine's leaven continued to produce its same results, in Switzerland then, as it yet does up to today.

The Catholics refused and established their own League of five cantons to suppress all Hussites, Lutherans, and followers of Zwingli. Thus the country was divided, religiously and politically.

By 1524, in Zurich, both civil and church authority was merged into one Council with Zwingli as its unofficial head. As with Calvin later, the OT ideal of the prophet guiding the state was realized.

Zwingli increasingly devoted himself to writing on a variety of subjects to set forth the teaching of the Bible while tensions mounted between the Catholics and the Reformed brethren. The year 1529 brought significant events that signaled the approaching end.

ZWINGLI AND THE SWORD

While the Council deliberated about whether the Mass should be forbidden, eight hundred impatient extremists stormed into the Catholic churches in Basel with hammers and axes, destroying all images and paintings. Three months later, a Protestant missionary from Zurich was burned at the stake in the Catholic city of Schwyz.

War was declared. Throughout his life, Zwingli clung to a deep patriotism which led him more than once into armed combat.

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The conflict that he led on this occasion never actually came to blows, but it foreshadowed what was soon to come.

This willingness to take up of the sword became, in a very solemn and literal sense, the cause of his downfall according to the Word of Christ. **All who take up the sword, shall perish by the sword** [Mt.26:52].

ZWINGLI AND LUTHER ON THE LORD'S SUPPER

Six months later found him and Oecolampadius [House light], his learned and mild companion, along with other Swiss reformers, face to face with Luther, Melancthon, and other German Protestants. Discussion was centered around various doctrines of the faith. On fourteen issues they all signed an agreement, except on the meaning of the Lord's Supper.

Zwingli rightly held that the bread and cup are symbols only. Luther stubbornly refused to listen to sound Scriptural reason. He insisted fiercely that Christ's words, *Hoc est corpus Meum* [This is My body], was literal: Christ is actually present in the bread and cup.

On the last day of the conference, Zwingli approached Luther with hand outstretched and tears in his eyes. Luther refused to shake Zwingli's hand, saying, "Your spirit is not our spirit. I am astonished that you wish to consider me as your brother. It shows clearly that you do not attach much importance to your doctrine."

Then, turning to the Swiss brethren, those from Germany said, "You do not belong to the communion of the Christian Church. We cannot acknowledge you as brethren." They were only willing to include them in that universal charity which is owed to enemies even though they were in absolute agreement on the doctrines of the Trinity, the person of Christ, His death and

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resurrection, original sin, justification by faith, and the Holy Spirit's work. The Roman Catholics delighted in the schism.

This was devastating to Zwingli. He returned to Zurich and faced the growing political, religious, and social unrest there. His sermons lost much of their conviction and weight, being clogged with earthly political concerns.

ZWINGLI'S END

In 1531 it was determined that the Catholic cantons should be compelled to allow freedom of Reformed preaching in their areas. Zwingli proposed war and the council decided to stop all exports of wheat, salt, and wine to the Catholics.

This provoked the Catholics to actual conflict. Eight thousand troops met Zwingli's 1,500 soldiers at Cappel, and the Catholics prevailed. Five hundred fell on the field from Zurich, never to rise again.

Zwingli was among them. His body was cut into four pieces, burned upon pile of dung, his ashes mixed with those of swine, and scattered to the four winds of heaven. His last words were, "What matters this misfortune? They may kill the body, but they cannot kill the soul."

THE REFORMATION IN FRANCE

JACQUES LEFEVRE c.1455 - 1536 AD

LeFevre's lectures on the Word of God were instrumental in the conversion of two key men who influenced the Reformation in France. Through him, William Farel was raised up by the Lord to

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thunder the gospel message far and wide. One with quite a different sphere of influence was also touched with the gospel truth. Brissonnet, bishop of the palace, put the Word of God into the hands of King Francis I and Margaret, Queen of Navarre, his sister.

The king hardened his heart against it and finally became a persecutor of the brethren. Margaret, on the other hand, received its blessed light and sheltered the brethren at peril to her own life, often rescuing them from the hand of her own brother.

Together with Brissonnet, LeFevre translated the Scriptures into French with the whole NT being published in 1524. In the city of Meaux where they now labored, Brissonnet taught and put the Word into the hands of the common man along with free copies given to the poor. It was daily read in private homes and workshops, rapidly becoming the talk of everyone and the blessing of many.

The simple people quickly became better instructed than the Franciscan monks. From Meaux arose the first Protestant church in France. So profound had the transformation been because of the gospel truth, that throughout France their witness became proverbial. Whenever someone believed the gospel, it was said, "He has drunk at the well of Meaux."

As is always the case when light shines in the darkness, there was reaction from the Prince of darkness through his servants. The monks traveled to Paris with the charge of heresy which fanned into flame the fires of persecution.

Brissonnet himself turned back. He was intimidated by threats of imprisonment and death to deny the faith and re-establish public prayers to the Virgin Mary and the saints. He also agreed to destroy Protestant writings and punish any who possessed them.

The city of Meaux was dismayed. LeFevre and other faithful leaders were forced to flee with heavy hearts. Farel made his way to

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Switzerland where he was greatly used of the Lord. Lefevre died peacefully in his ninety second year under the protection of Margaret.

GUILLAUME [WILLIAM] FAREL c.1489 - 1565AD

William Farel is called the Elijah of the French Reformation and the “scourge of the priests.” He viewed the Pope as the Antichrist, the Mass as idolatry, and pictures, images, and relics as pagan idols to be destroyed.

He never used violence himself though he was regularly assaulted with firearms and clubs wielded by the priests. The sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, was his only weapon.

His fiery preaching of the gospel in French-speaking Geneva, Switzerland, brought many to the Lord though he was fiercely assailed by the Catholics. He thus served as the forerunner to Calvin’s coming with his profound influence upon that society.

JOHN CALVIN c.1509 - 1564 AD

If Luther emphasized forgiveness through justification by faith, Calvin was the champion of God in His overall sovereignty. His greatest contribution to the Reformed faith was his book, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*. This was a defense of Protestantism to King Francis I of France in which he set forth the essentials of the faith in a systematic manner. It established the standard of basing practice upon doctrine with God at its center.

Farel compelled Calvin to dwell at Geneva with threats of God’s judgment if he did not. Calvin conceded. He remained and threw himself into teaching and administration of the city’s citizens.

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Geneva was consciously considered to be the new Israel of God. They stood for the purity of the worship of Jehovah against all the seductions of the Baals of Rome and the threats of the political Moabites and Amalekites surrounding them.

Strict discipline prevailed inside the city. Fines were imposed for making noise in church. Nuns were offered the option of marrying or leaving Geneva. Denying the doctrine of predestination meant banishment, and rejecting that of the Trinity resulted in death, as in the case of Servetus. Catholics were eventually forced out of the city.

The object was to create a select community of the elect, ruled by God according to OT law. But nothing in true godliness is brought about by force or threats. A state-church system of outward enforcement of spiritual principles was doomed to failure from the outset. Only a form of godliness can be achieved thereby, but its power can never be secured by such means.

JOHN LECLERC

Other brethren scattered from Meaux, like those of Jerusalem at the time of Stephen's persecution, went everywhere in France, preaching the Word [Acts 8:4]. The common poor people who could not flee, were left to face the storm. Among them was John LeClerc, who collected and hand processed the wool of sheep as his means of livelihood. Without formal education or man's ordination, he was well grounded in eternal truth, and used of the Lord to greatly encourage the brethren.

The frenzied monks seized upon him, led him bound throughout the streets of Meaux, whipping him for three days.

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Finally, they branded “Heretic” on his forehead with a red-hot iron.

In the midst of the raging crowd, a woman’s voice rang out, “Glory to Jesus Christ and His witnesses!” It was his mother. The astonished and now awestruck mob gave way for this daughter of Sarah to pass through their midst unmolested.

Her son was banished from Meaux and eventually was mutilated and roasted to death in Metz by Rome’s fury. His fate was sealed when he, Gideon like, tore down their shrine and image of Mary on the eve of their pilgrimage to obtain from her forgiveness of their sins.

LOUIS BERQUIN

Louis Berquin, an officer of the king’s bodyguard, became a notable witness for the cause of Christ in France. Had Francis I been to him as Elector Frederick was to Luther, France would have had another Luther on its own soil.

He was honest, forthright, and compassionate to the poor. He employed his learning in translating the works of Luther and Melancthon into French which greatly furthered the dawning of the light and return to the Scriptures.

Berquin was arrested and imprisoned on four occasions, being rescued each time by the appeals of Margaret to her brother, the king. Finally, Romish spies reported him as saying, “It is the Holy Spirit that is to be invoked before the sermon, not the Virgin.” Like the Sanhedrin, Rome needed no further testimony.

Dressed in his noble attire, he was led to the place of execution. When he tried to speak of the Lord Jesus to the poor multitudes gathered at the spectacle, the priests raged and shouted so

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he could not be heard. The fire was lit, the brother was reduced to ash, yet his death spoke to all France in tones that no priest could silence.

PLACARDS

These examples of the numerous horrors unleashed against the brethren show the hostility of Rome against peasant and prince alike. Yet this did not halt the progress of the light.

A protest against the abuses of Rome was written, some say by Farel, and distributed throughout the country. It was a thunderbolt, flashing with fearful power into the darkness of Catholic tradition. The night of October 18, 1534 was chosen to post its message across the land.

Placards [public posters] containing the same message were prepared and fixed to the doors of Catholic chapels and schools during the night. One was even attached to the very door of the King's chamber. Popes, cardinals, bishops, monks, and every tenet of Romish belief were sharply attacked in its long indictment.

Bold letters headed the startling announcements, "True articles on the horrible, great and intolerable abuses of the Popish Mass; invented in direct opposition to the holy supper of our Lord and only Mediator and Savior, Jesus Christ."

It ended with, "In conclusion, Truth has deserted them, Truth threatens them, Truth chases them, Truth fills them with fear; by all of which, shall their reign be shortly destroyed forever."

No language can describe the one universal cry of rage and disturbance of mind which rang throughout all of France on the morning of the 19th. The priests stirred up the mentality of the mobs, saying that the Lutherans were plotting the burning of churches,

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overthrowing towns, and massacring everyone.

“Death! Death to the heretics!” resounded everywhere. And so the frightful storm broke in its awful unreasoning fury. Francis I, incited by advisors, trembled with wrath and proclaimed, “Let all be seized, and let Lutheranism be totally exterminated!”

Wanton slaughter by torturous means followed in the streets of Paris. Even Margaret was summoned to appear before the king. Her pleadings with him, however, secured her own safety and that of three preachers, but did not stem the tide of destruction.

She withdrew from Paris and her brother into her own domain of Bearn, an ancient province of France. Many preachers of the truth and notable men of France found safety under the protection of her realm. There she passed into glory in the year of 1549, having suffered for the truth and provided refuge for the afflicted in the name of Christ.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI AND THE HUGUENOTS

Francis had died two years before and was succeeded by his son, Henry II. He became the husband of the notorious Catherine de Medici, an unparalleled Jezebel against the true saints of God. Like Ahab of old, he was inflamed against truth and righteousness by his crafty wife, and so continued the persecutions. But, as God sets up and dethrones kings [Dan.2:21], he died in a sporting accident.

His son, Frances II, only sixteen years old, reigned in his place for less than eighteen months. Upon his death, Catherine placed her next son, Charles IX, a mere lad of nine years, upon the throne of France. She assumed guardianship of the king and this Italian mother became the undisputed power in the nation of

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France. Some years passed while her devilish ambition formulated one of the most ghastly intrigues in all of history.

In the meantime, true faith continued to spread despite the persecutions of the French Catholics. Farel and other French exiles in Switzerland, flooded France with religious books and Bibles from Geneva. These were distributed by peddlers who traveled from place to place at great risk to their lives.

Among the many disciples were a growing number of men of high rank and nobility. Kings, dukes, generals, governors, and princes swelled their ranks as well as an increasing number of educated and talented citizens. By 1559, there were over one thousand Calvinistic congregations distributed across the land.

They determined to unite together in a general Synod [assembly] which took place in that year. Here the basis of French Protestantism was laid in the establishing of four levels of power, or church courts; the individual churches' leaders, the district level, the provincial [state] synod, and the national assembly.

Over time, these began to wield political and military authority beyond simply religious influence, as did those of Germany and Switzerland. Mixed with the true believers were a growing number of liberal minded individuals who did not support Rome. All were accounted "Huguenots," a term applied to any who did not favor the papacy.

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ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY MASSACRE

Several battles had taken place between the forces of the French Catholics and the Protestant Huguenots in which the Catholics could not obtain a victory. And thus a plot, like an adder's egg, was hatched between Catherine, the queen-mother, King Charles IX, her son, and Pope Pius V.

Charles had been convinced by the treachery of the Pope that God had placed him as king over France, like Saul had been made king of Israel. It was his duty, therefore, to kill all of the unbelieving Amalekites and spare not one according to the word of the Lord. Failure to do this would result, as it did for Saul, in the loss of his kingdom and of his life.

Thus was Charles manipulated by the Pope's perversion of Scripture to lend his hand in the horrific plot. Charles pretended an earnest desire for establishing a lasting peace between the Catholics and Huguenots. Therefore, a marriage was proposed between his own sister and the young king Henry of Navarre, the leader of the Protestants.

To entice them to gather in Paris for the grand celebration, Charles declared that he was giving in marriage his sister, not only to the prince, but to the whole Huguenot people. Admiral Coligny, a true Christian and godly man and the most skilled leader of their armies, allowed himself to be deceived. He thought that the word of the king should be trusted.

Arrangements were made. Protestants by the thousands gathered to Paris for the marriage amid great festivities and hypocritical affection. The mother of King Henry, Jeanne d' Albret, the godly daughter of Margaret, was received with tender caresses by Catherine, the queen-mother. Charles called her, "My great aunt,

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my all, and best-beloved.”

Admiral Coligny kneeled before King Charles, but the king raised him up, embraced him three times, saying, “My father, you must stay with us now. This is the happiest day of my life!” The deception was complete.

Thus the marriage took place outside the great cathedral of Notre Dame on August 18, 1572. Days of feasting and rejoicing followed for the assembled Catholics and Protestants. All were hopeful for an end to the civil strife and bloodshed that had plagued them for so long.

But at the height of the gaiety and celebration, Charles and Catherine had arranged a predetermined signal to launch their wholesale slaughter of the Protestants. In the dead of night on the eve of the feast of St. Bartholomew, the great bell of St. Germain’s cathedral rang out. Soon every bell in Paris sounded the note.

Thousands of rogues, priests, soldiers, and Catholic citizens stormed through the streets with white crosses upon their hats to distinguish them from the hunted. Chaos prevailed. Gunshots, screams, bells, cursing, howling of murderers, “Kill them all! Kill the heretics!” filled the thick darkness.

Priests ran through the streets holding crucifixes; shouting, raging, urging on the vast carnage. Blood flowed in the streets of Paris. Few escaped, thousands perished. The corpses of the Huguenot leaders, specially invited by Charles and hosted like royalty, lay scattered like dung in the mire or floated down the river Seine.

All over Paris, any who did not have the white cross displayed were dragged out of their homes and butchered; men, women, and children alike. The carnage went on for four days. Priests, ankle deep in blood, celebrated with extraordinary gladness.

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In Rome the news was received with jubilation. The bearer of the glad tidings was presented with a thousand pieces of gold. The Pope proclaimed a jubilee and made a medal with the inscription, "Godliness has awakened Justice."

The slaughter extended to the provinces throughout France against the now defenseless Huguenots. In many cities, every Protestant perished in the most barbarous manner. Estimates vary on the extent of the slaughter. At least 30,000 souls, some claim up to 70,000 or more, perished in this holocaust, qualifying it as the single greatest and darkest crime in the records of Christendom.

THE REFORMATION IN SCOTLAND

JOHN KNOX c.1505 - 1572 AD

Knox who had spent over a year and a half as a galley slave aboard a French ship, escaped, and later was trained under Calvin. Returning to Scotland, he shook his native land with his fiery preaching. Justification by faith alone along with severe rejection of the Pope as the antichrist and the Roman Church as the "Congregation of Satan" were his themes.

Under his leadership, the Scottish "Reformation Parliament" of 1560 officially abolished Catholicism, and established Calvinist Protestantism as the state religion. Knox and his followers drew up the *Book of Discipline* that defined their doctrine and purposes by which Scotland was now ruled. The Mass was abolished.

He wrote many tracts, among which was, *The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment [rule] of Women*. In it he denounced all female sovereigns, aiming at Mary Tudor of England

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[Bloody Mary] and Catherine de Medici in France. He argued that women rulers are contrary to nature, as well as to God and His Word [Isa.3:12].

Mary, Queen of Scots, a Romanist, was offended and held a series of private interviews with Knox to try and get him to retract his views on Rome and women. Knox fearlessly rebuked the Catholic Queen, calling her receiving of Mass idolatry, while openly referring to her as a whore due to her immoral intimacy with her advisor, Bothwell.

In one such interview, Mary asked Knox if he thought subjects might resist their princes. "If their princes exceed their bounds, Madam, it is no doubt that they may be resisted even by power." When Mary protested that the Apostles did not resist their persecutors with force, Knox replied, "The reason for this was solely due to their lack of funds."

Knox thundered from the pulpit the doctrines of Calvin and followed them up with political force in Parliament. Mary eventually was forced to flee to England due to her own lusts, intrigue, and disfavor with the Scottish people. There Queen Elizabeth, her rival to the English throne, had her imprisoned for nineteen years and eventually beheaded for her part in a plot to assassinate Elizabeth.

ARE WE LIKE CHRIST?

THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND

THE RESULT OF THE SCRIPTURES

The true cause of the Reformation in England resulted essentially from the effect of the Scriptures in the hands of the people. The efforts of Wycliffe, Tyndale, and those with them in this regard have already been noted. No single man blazed the trail as was true in Germany, Switzerland, France, or Scotland: No Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, or Knox stood head and shoulders above the English host of individual reformers.

True reform is not dependent upon man. It is the result of the activity of God through the agency of His Word by the power of the gospel embraced and preached by thousands of common men.

While great upheavals took place in international politics during this period, the work of the Spirit of God in England was not dependent upon such. The personal and political intrigues of King Henry VIII did not account for the spiritual transformation of England.

At the time of Henry's first blows against the authority of the Pope in Rome, was also the same time in which he began to shed the blood of the disciples of the Lord. Rejection of evil does not mean righteousness is embraced. Refusing Rome is not receiving Christ.

It is not to Henry VIII nor to the councils of Parliament that we must look to discover the true children of the Reformation. We rather must go to the Lollards' towers [prisons] and the bishop's cellars where they were found chained, tortured on the rack, and burned at the stake.

There one will find the godly who called upon the sole intercession of Jesus Christ, the only Head of His people. Others

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were forced to wander from place to place, deprived of everything, and scoffed at, scourged, and afflicted. But you will find them, like their Master, enduring all patiently and graciously with faces set like flint towards their Jerusalems of sorrow.

These were the disciples of the Reformation in England. The purest church is the one found under the cross, not in the palace of kings. No, Henry was not the father of this church in England; he was its executioner. The Father of this church was in heaven, not in London.

Nevertheless, the events of his reign must be described in order to understand what took place in this land that so mightily affected the expansion of Christianity thereafter on a global scale. God's time to break Rome's iron yoke upon the nations had come.

HENRY VIII 1491 - 1547 AD

Henry was a Roman Catholic in religion, immoral in his person, and a politician foremost of all. Circumstances prevailed at the time to effect an outward change in the church in England.

Charles V, in 1527, was at once both the King of Spain as well as Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. His troops had just recently taken control of Rome itself, and the Pope was under his control.

Henry VIII happened to be married to Charles' aunt, yet all five children she had borne him had died, except one, Mary. Catherine, his wife, was now over forty and unlikely to provide him with a male heir to the throne.

Though Henry already had an illegitimate son born ten years after his wedding to Catherine, he could never be his heir, having not

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been born by the queen. And Mary, as a girl at that time in England, would never be considered for the throne.

What to do in order to get an heir? Divorce was out of the question due to Catholic doctrine and the personal and political fury this would arouse against him from the powerful Charles V.

A crafty solution was invented by Henry. Have the Pope annul his marriage to Catherine since he “unlawfully” married her according to Henry’s convenient interpretation of Lev.20:21, **If a man take his brother’s wife it is an unclean thing. They shall be childless.**

At age sixteen, Catherine had been married to Henry’s brother, Arthur, aged fourteen. He died six month’s later. Henry’s father betrothed her to Henry [only ten at the time of Arthur’s death], having obtained a special permission from Pope Julius II to do so. Thus in 1503 when Henry was twelve years old, the marriage was announced though not officially joined until 1509 when he was eighteen, the year he assumed the throne of England.

HENRY’S “DIVORCE”

About the year 1514, Henry began considering an annulment after the death of four of his children. Beginning in 1518, he took at least two mistresses up until around the time of 1527 when his lust focused upon Anne Boleyn, maid to Catherine.

So now, reasoned Henry, why not have Pope Clement VII set aside Pope Julius’ permission as invalid since it was contrary to the Scriptures? The Pope at first suggested that Henry merely take another wife alongside of Catherine to solve his dilemma of a “lawful” heir.

Actually, the Pope was reluctant on two accounts to annul

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the marriage. First, it would be embarrassing to revoke the decision of his previous “infallible” predecessor. Secondly, it wouldn’t be safe: Catherine was the aunt of the Emperor who had just defeated him in battle.

Like Pilate sending Jesus to Herod for judgment, the Pope referred the decision to the English court. They tried to get Catherine to agree and become a nun. She refused, saying that the English court had no jurisdiction over her, and that her marriage to Arthur had never been consummated. Therefore, no violation of Leviticus existed.

Under directives from the Pope, the court stalled for time; and continued to do so for several years! Henry, under increasing pressures, not the least of which was his growing desire for Anne, decided to take matters into his own hands.

In 1531, he abandoned Catherine, never to see her again. Her royal jewels were promptly handed over to Anne. In 1532 he managed to convince Parliament that it was unlawful and improper to transfer English funds to the Papacy. Henceforth, all revenue for the bishops and the church in England would be paid from state English funds, not from Rome. The bishops, happy that their authority and purses would remain undisturbed, agreed.

By February, 1533, Parliament passed legislation that all matters formerly sent to Rome for judgment would now be decided in the “spiritual and temporal courts” of England. Events were racing in rapid succession now. They had to be.

ANNE BOLEYN

In January, 1533, Henry had married Anne who was already four months pregnant. Quickly following the February legislation,

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on May 23, 1533, Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, pronounced his marriage to Catherine as null and void; and on May 28th, pronounced Henry and Anne as lawfully wedded.

Three days later, Anne, crowned with royal robes and jewels, rode to her coronation as Queen of England in a magnificent pageant. The disapproving crowd stared in silence. In July, Pope Clement decreed Henry's marriage to Anne unlawful, all future offspring illegitimate, and excommunicated the King.

This did not halt Henry or the English Parliament. In 1534 the King, with their approval, announced himself as "Supreme head on earth of the English Church." The breach with Rome was complete.

Thus it was that Henry VIII gave birth, not to the Reformation, but to the Anglican Church, while his Anne gave birth to Elizabeth on September 7, 1533.

Yet in the following years, she produced no male heir to the throne. This, along with her increasingly arrogant demands and hot temper, wearied the king, who turned his attention to her maid, Jane Seymour. By 1536, Henry had devised a means to obtain her as his new wife; have Anne executed for adultery.

She was beheaded on May 19, 1536 and Henry and Jane were betrothed the next day, with the official wedding following ten days later. On the fourth of June she was crowned Queen. Four days later Parliament decreed that both Elizabeth and Mary were illegitimate and not rightful heirs to the throne.

HENRY'S HEIR AND AUTHORITY

Finally, on October 17, 1537, a male heir to the throne was born, Edward VI. The unfortunate new Queen, however, died

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twelve days afterwards due to complications in the delivery of the child.

Before his break with the authority of the Rome, Henry had been awarded the title, “Defender of the Faith,” by the Pope for his resistance of Luther’s “new” doctrine and his persecution of those who held it. He faithfully continued to attend Mass as a dutiful son of the Church. He was a political Protestant though Romanist at heart.

Catholic citizens were now required to confess Henry as the Supreme earthly head of the Church of England rather than the Pope; and this was demanded on political grounds, not religious. They had escaped from the hands of an “infallible” Pope into the arms of an absolute monarch.

Sir Thomas More, the King’s minister of state and chief persecutor of the brethren, was beheaded for treason because, as a true Catholic, he still confessed the Pope as his spiritual sovereign. A wave of terror then passed through England and a shudder of horror throughout Europe as they realized the merciless ambition of the King. The year was 1535.

HENRY’S LAST DAYS

By 1540, in order to fill the bankrupt treasury of England, all 578 Catholic monasteries were forcibly closed and their riches and relics seized. The monks and nuns were out of business and the King was wealthy once again. Such were Henry’s means to his end.

Thankfully, God’s work was not dependent upon the likes of Henry VIII of whom one English historian said, “There was no Tudor king more hated than him.” Nevertheless, these ambitious and bold moves against the Papacy paved the way to an eventual

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casting off of Rome's yoke altogether.

As we have seen, in 1538 in answer to Tyndale's dying prayer, Henry had placed a copy of the English Scriptures in every church building in the realm. Perhaps this was the single greatest spiritual contribution that Henry made to the liberation of countless souls from the shackles of Rome.

When Henry was laid in the grave in 1547, the reign passed to Edward VI, though just nine years old. Advisors seized the opportunity and promoted legislation favoring Protestantism; Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer being prominent. The gospel flourished for a season, but young Edward only lived to his fifteenth year.

"BLOODY" MARY 1516 - 1558 AD

Upon his death, the Romanists maneuvered Henry's daughter, Mary, onto the throne as England's first Queen. Parliament reversed their former decree of illegitimacy and now proclaimed that she was the rightful heir to royalty. Politicians are loyal to power and purse; not to principle.

Her reign began gently and cautiously. Gradually however, Roman Catholicism was first allowed, then encouraged, and finally in 1544, completely re-instated. Protestantism and other "heresies" were made illegal and all such preaching or publications were prohibited.

Now at thirty-seven years old in 1554, Mary was faced with the same dilemma of lacking an heir to the throne as had her father, Henry. Where might she obtain a husband?

Emperor Charles V conveniently offered his son, Philip, as the preferred choice. He would even offer a life-long pension to

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Mary should she accept. Mary was delighted and England was horrified.

Troops were gathered in order to de-throne her and promote Elizabeth in her place. The revolt was defeated, heads rolled, and Mary from then on was no more gentle. From 1554 to 1558 “Bloody Mary” reigned.

The marriage took place and Philip remained with her for thirteen months without her conceiving a child. On a pretense, he left her, departing to another European country in order to assist his father. Mary now turned her attention to re-establishing her beloved Roman religion.

With renewed threats of insurrection and even assassination of the Queen herself, she gave permission for the reign of terror to begin. Up until the time of her death in 1558, countless men and women were burned for their “heresies.”

The leading advisors to her half-brother Edward were notable. In 1555, Ridley and Latimer were burnt for their faith. They knelt together and prayed in front of the place of execution.

Then, chained to the posts with bags of gunpowder around their necks, the wood was kindled. The eighty year-old Latimer turned to his beloved brother with these words, “Be of good cheer, Master Ridley, play the man; we shall this day light such a candle, by God’s grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out!”: Noble words that the Lord honored in the coming centuries for the testimony that went out from that land.

Mary condoned the persecutions until the day of her death. Childless, perhaps insane, she passed the crown jewels to her rival, Elizabeth, on the 6th of November. Early on the morning of the 17th she heard Mass for the last time and died before dawn that same day.

Her final years of brutality did as much to alienate the

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English people from Rome as did her father's purposeful political manipulations. England was weary and ready for a change.

ELIZABETH 1533 - 1603 AD

That change came under the reign of Elizabeth who was instrumental in the final triumph of Protestantism over Catholicism in England. She sided with the Protestants out of necessity: The Pope had decreed her illegitimate.

She had nowhere else to turn. England itself and its Queen were politically Protestant while the true work of God went on unaided by recourse to this political arm of the flesh.

Parliament approved *The Thirty-Nine Articles* as the creed of the Anglican Church in 1563. The Anglican system expressed therein borrowed elements from the hierarchy of Rome and merged these with gleanings from Lutheranism along with a sprinkling of Calvin and Zwingli. It was truly an unhappy mixture of light and darkness put down on paper.

REFORMATION AND THE ANABAPTISTS

Anabaptists [to baptize again] were given their name for their insistence that only born-again adults should be baptized. They themselves did not accept the name given to them by their enemies, for they did not consider baptism of infants as being baptism at all.

This struck at the foundation of both Catholic and Protestant state churches. Their teaching that only repentant believers make up the true church along with their doctrine of the state and church being separate, undermined the whole fabric of medieval society. This was the real reason for their persecution,

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banishment, and execution by Catholics and Protestants alike.

The church, they said, is a voluntary fellowship of purified believers only. The church is a sacrificial body made up of suffering, cross-bearing members.

A strong sense of brotherhood along with strict discipline pervaded their ranks. Refusal to persecute or take part in war along with complete separation of church and state were their general beliefs.

Nine fundamental characteristics were held in common by the different groups known as Anabaptists though not stated as such in any formal code. [1] Brotherhood and self-denial; holding possessions subject to the need of others or even actual communal living among several groups. [2] Christ's church is comprised of born again members only.

[3] They rejected infant baptism as a chief cause of corruption in the church. [4] The church and state are separate, with many believing that all forms of government are evil. [5] Christians should not be in political positions, take oaths, pay tithes, serve in military, or be an executioner in capital punishment.

[6] The individual has freedom of will to choose God; good works testify whether one is a Christian, not because parents are or by baptism as an infant. [7] Solemnity of Lord's Supper in which each individual judges self and renews consecration to Christ. [8] Separation from all worldliness whether secular or religious. [9] Interdependence of churches with itinerant ministry.

Many were godly and simple earnest Christians. Zwingli, who persecuted them, had to admit, "At first contact their conduct appears irreproachable, godly; their lives are excellent."

A Catholic observed in them, "no lying, deception, swearing, strife, harsh language, but rather humility, patience, uprightness,

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meeekness, honesty in such measure that one would suppose they had the Holy Spirit of God.”

However, others were fanatical and wicked in their “spiritual” excesses. With shouts of, “The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life!,” the NT was burned at the hands of some. Others fell into convulsions under their “revelations” from the Holy Spirit. One man even beheaded his own blood-brother under “inspiration” received as if it were the will of the Father. The civil authorities executed him as a murderer.

In certain other of the groups, multiple wives were taken by leading “prophets” and polygamy was practiced in some of the communes. In Holland, there were those who ran about naked in imitation of Isaiah the prophet [Isa.20:2,3]. Though most were pacifists, other groups among them took to the sword to establish and defend their “New Jerusalem” upon earth.

They were utterly exterminated or driven out of Germany and survived only in small persecuted groups in Holland and Switzerland. Persecution forced them to flee to Poland, Hungary, Moravia, and Russia.

Menno Simons, one of the most exemplary among them, sets forth the true Pattern of Christ when he says that true Christians must, “crucify the flesh and its desires and lusts, prune the heart, mouth and the whole body with the knife of the divine Word from all unclean thoughts, unbecoming words, and actions.”

An anonymous Anabaptist statement of a Swiss brother in about 1525 shows the true understanding of the Pattern of Christ that many held to and practiced.

Obedience is of two kinds, servile [like a slave] and filial [like a child]. The filial has its source in the love of the Father, even

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though no other reward should follow. The servile has its source in a love of reward or of oneself. The filial ever does as much as possible, apart from any command; the servile does as little as possible, yea, nothing except by command. The filial is never able to do enough for Him; but he who renders servile obedience thinks he is constantly doing too much for Him. The filial rejoices in the chastisement of the Father; the servile wishes to be without chastisement although he may do nothing right.

The filial remains in the house and inherits all the Father has; the servile wishes to reject this and receive his lawful reward. The servile looks to the external; the filial is concerned about the inner witness and the Spirit. The servile is Moses and produces Pharisees and scribes; the filial is Christ and makes children of God. The servile is either occupied with the ceremonies which Moses commanded or with those which people themselves have invented.

The filial is active in the love of God and one's neighbor; yet he also submits himself to the ceremonies for the sake of the servants that he may instruct them in that which is better and lead them to sonship. The servile produces self-willed and vindictive people; the filial creates peaceable and mild-natured persons. The servile is severe and gladly arrives quickly at the end of the work; the filial is light and directs its gaze to that which endures. The servile is malevolent [wishing evil] and wishes no one well but himself; the filial would gladly have all men to be as himself.

The servile is the Old Covenant, and had the promise of temporal happiness; the filial is the New Covenant, and has the promise of eternal happiness, namely, the Creator Himself. The servile endured for a time; the filial will last forever. The servile was a figure and shadow; the filial is the body and truth.

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The servile was established to reveal and increase sin; the filial follows to do away with it. For if a man wishes to escape from sin he must first hate it, and if he would hate it he must first know it, and if he would know it there must be something to stir up and make known his hidden sin. Now it is Law or Scripture which does this. Moreover, the law gives occasion to people to depart farther from God, not because of itself [for it is good] but because of the sin which is in man. This is also the reason why Paul says that the law was given that it might increase sin, that sin might thereby become known. Yea, the law is the strength of sin and therefore it is just like the servile obedience, that is, obedience to law, which leads people into the most intense hatred of God and of one's neighbor.

Therefore filial obedience is a certain way through which man escapes from such hatred and receives the love of God and of one's neighbor. Therefore as one administers death, the other administers life. The one is the Old Testament; the other, the New. According to the OT, only he who murdered was guilty of judgment; but in the NT, he also who is angry with his brother. The OT gave permission for a man to separate from his wife for every reason; but not at all in the NT, except for adultery. The Old permitted swearing if one swore truly, but the New will know of no swearing. The Old has its stipulated punishment, but the New does not resist evil. The Old permitted hatred for the enemy; the New loves him who hates, blesses him who curses, prays for those who wish one evil; gives alms in this manner that the left hand does not know what the right has done; says his prayer secretly without evident and excessive babbling of mouth; judges and condemns no one; takes the mote out of the eye of one's brother after having first cast the beam out of one's own eye; fasts without any outward pomp and show; is like a light which is set on a

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candlestick and lightens everyone in the house; is like a city built on a hill, being everywhere visible; is like good salt that does not become tasteless, being pleasing not to man but to God alone; is like a good eye which illuminates the whole body; takes no anxious thought about clothing or food, but performs his daily and upright tasks; does not cast pearls before swine, nor that which is holy before dogs; seeks, asks, and knocks; finding, receiving and having the door opened for him; enters through the narrow way and the small gate; guards himself from the Pharisees and scribes as from false prophets; is a good tree and brings forth good fruit; does the will of his Father, hearing what he should do, and then doing it.

The church of true believers is built upon Christ the Chief Cornerstone; stands against all the gates of hell, that is, against the wrathful judgment of the Pharisees, of the mighty ones of earth, and of the scribes; is a house and a temple of God, against which no wind and no water may do anything, standing secure, so that everything else which withstands the teaching which proceeds from it, denying its truth, may itself finally give evidence that it is a dwelling of God – although it is now maligned by the Pharisees and scribes as a habitation of the devil:

Yea, they shall finally hear, **Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God** [Rev.21:3]. But of the house of the Pharisees and scribes, it shall be said, **Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird** [Rev.18:2]. But to God be all honor, praise and glory through His beloved Son, our Lord and Brother Jesus Christ, Amen.

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REFLECTIONS UPON REFORMATION CHURCH SYSTEMS

The Reformation effected a change in the prevailing doctrine of Christ along with the individual character of the believer. The failing of the movement was in the continuance of the system of Rome's hierarchy being preserved as essential in the various state churches that emerged.

The basis of the true church is spiritual life; not acknowledgment of correct but abstract concepts that have not transformed one's practice. True faith issues in a new creation [2 Cor.5:17]; Christ dwelling in the heart through faith [Eph.3:17]. And Christ so indwelling will, without fail, lead to a life of holiness and love in the truth.

Spiritual downfall resulted from the Reformation's reliance upon carnal ability to withstand persecution. It paved the way to becoming dependent upon a man and a movement developing into a denomination, rather than upon living faith in Christ and His Word.

In the Reformation churches, Christ quickly became Head in name only; not truly Head to lead, guide, and direct among all believers who are equally spiritual priests. The evil of clergy and laity distinctions were rigidly maintained. Creeds, catechisms, and councils were substituted for the Word. Vengeance was not left in the hands of the Lord, but was meted out by the sword in the hands of the Church leaders.

Only in Christ can king and priest be merged in one man righteously [Zech. 6:12,13]. Among men, evil cannot but result when the executive, legislative, and judicial powers are concentrated in one ruling authority. This is clearly seen in Diotrefes in the NT [3]n.9,10]. Here in one man, were all three functions combined; and

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it was evil.

He legislated the terms of membership in the church according to his own law. No other administrative decision-making but his own was allowed in his executive office. Any who dared depart from his rule, suffered the judicial punishment that he inflicted upon transgressors of his system. [See Appendix 1 *NT Leadership*].

While planting the seeds of salvation and reform of the church, at the same time, they planted the tares of its ruin. Baptism of infants as a sign of entering the covenant, consecrated multitudes into the churches who were strangers to the grace of God in Christ. Communion's ceremony being viewed as partaking of Christ, eroded the necessary foundation of personal living faith in Christ Himself.

With the Sword of the Spirit in one hand and the sword of the state in the other, citizens were compelled to outwardly conform to a religion that they did not embrace from the heart. Flesh was relied upon to enforce the Spirit, the sheep acted as wolves, and Calvary's cross was exchanged for the judgment hall of Pilate.

Rome's yoke had not truly been cast off. Babel's legacy of a priest, shrine, and tyranny perpetuated by the popes was yet retained by Reformation Christendom. Whereas the Catholic Church had ruled the world, the world now ruled the church through its political princes. Constantine was resurrected.

Several similar systems were substituted for the one reigning in Rome. Though the Word was placed in the hands of the people, sight was not restored when forced to view it through eyeglasses provided by Protestant priests, now also their civil lords.

An Anglican bishop under King Henry VIII exposed the nakedness of the new Protestant denominations when he said to the King, "If we allow the people to have the Scriptures in their own

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language, they will convict us all of heresy!" Rome's reign remained.

Thus as the Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, and Presbyterian denominations expanded, He who has the seven Spirits of God looked on and said, **I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead** [Rev.3:1].

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9

WOOL & LINEN

**You shall not wear a garment of different sorts,
such as wool and linen mixed together [Deut.22:11]**

MIXTURE

Linen permits priestly service to the Lord to be performed in purity [Ex.39:27-29]. Wool is refused as it causes the toiling flesh of man to sweat [Ezek.44:17,18].

Fleshly effort cannot be combined with true service to God. Such mixture corrupts all that is undertaken in the kingdom of heaven since the **flesh profits nothing** [Jn.6:63]. The weaving of Spirit and flesh into one fabric of service must be diligently guarded against if a “Well done!” will be heard at the judgment of Christ.

The centuries following the Reformation witnessed a variety of declines and revivals among the people of God. Some of the greatest movements of the Spirit of God in the history of the church came from the periods between the 1600's and the 1900's. On the other hand, some tragic departures developed when the fiber of the flesh was interwoven with the thread of the Spirit. Let us consider what took place.

John Robinson gave this charge to the Puritans who crossed

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the Atlantic in the Mayflower for the New World of America in 1620:

I charge you before God and His blessed angels, that you follow me no farther than you have seen me follow the Lord Jesus Christ. If God reveals anything to you by any other instrument [servant] of His, be as ready to receive it as you were to receive any truth by my ministry.

For I am verily persuaded that the Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of His Holy Word. For my part, I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of those Reformed Churches which will go no further than the instruments [men God has used] of their Reformation.

The Lutherans cannot be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw; whatever part of His will our God has revealed to Calvin, they [Lutherans] will rather die than embrace it. And the Calvinists, stick fast where they were left by that great man of God, who yet did not see all things. This is a misery much to be lamented, for though they were burning and shining lights in their times, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God.

Here, this brother neatly summarizes both the causes for the advance as well as the decline of the church in any era. On the one hand, there is freedom to receive from and progress by the illumination of the Word of God from anyone who is truly taught of the Spirit. On the other hand, the gathering around a man or particular emphasis of doctrine will cut oneself off from the benefit that one might otherwise obtain from all of the Lord's gifts to His church.

In the former, there is true fellowship in the Spirit around

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Christ as He is set forth in the Word. In the latter, there is the formation of sects and denominations which separate men from the unity of the body and the whole counsel of God into a narrow isolation from the fulness of Christ [Eph.4:11-16].

When independent congregations develop along a particular personality or doctrinal emphasis, denominationalism arises. This is an evil that the Scriptures have condemned as carnal [I Cor.1:10-13; 3:1-5].

Two things characterize the NT church; the Life of Christ evident in His people and their subjection to Him as Lord according to His Word. When these things are minimized or supplanted, departure from Christ sets in and an evil confusion results.

Persecution throughout the preceding centuries, by and large, prevented the rise of denominational evil. When brethren and their leaders were scattered and put to death, there was no opportunity to become attached to one man. The Word of the Lord was their only recourse, not a man or a movement, and they gladly received teaching from any who brought the true message of the Word of life to their hearts.

However, with the military strength of Protestants and in the growing toleration of post-Reformation times, groups were increasingly formed around particular men or doctrinal emphases. While Catholics had denied individuals fellowship with God, the Protestants now denied them fellowship among fellow-believers. Spiritual life faded as denominations rose and became established institutions.

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JACOB ARMINIUS 1560 - 1609 AD

Along with Calvin, whose teachings are set in opposition to his own, Arminius exercised a profound influence upon Christian thinking. A student of Calvin's, he was asked to prepare a summary of Calvin's teachings. As he studied, he discovered that a number of things he had been taught could not be supported from the Scriptures.

The main areas of difference between him and Calvin centered around the extent of God's sovereign choice of individuals for salvation or unto judgment. Arminius said that God is not the author of sin and that there are no limits to His saving grace.

Christ died for the sins of the whole world, not just for those of the elect as Calvin maintained. Man has a choice in responding to the gospel, and the offer of salvation is to be freely made to all.

Stop and think: How might have Paul's simple directive in I Cor.4:6 prevented centuries of controversy between Calvinism and Arminianism?

KING JAMES BIBLE of 1611

King James I of England, son of Mary, Queen of Scots, commissioned the translation and publishing of the Authorized Version, commonly known as the King James Version of the Bible. The translation was done by a committee of godly men, and became the standard translation of the English speaking world for centuries. Its message came with fresh power to the people and has had more influence over the civilizations of mankind than any other book in history.

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THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH

During the civil war of 1642-1646, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Independents, Puritans, and Baptists had all fought together in the struggle. Such close association for the common life-threatening cause, resulted in a new respect and toleration for divergent beliefs.

Following the conflict, Oliver Cromwell established the British Commonwealth. Liberty of conscience and worship, as well as preaching and printing was allowed as had never before been done. Romanists were excluded. It ushered in an era of greatly increased gospel preaching and an awakening to the needs of the unconverted heathen, initially in America.

Parliament constituted a corporation in 1701 for the *Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*. It was John Eliot [1604-1690 AD] who brought the needs of the pagans before the conscience of England. The closing note on his Indian grammar said, "Prayer and pains, through faith in Jesus Christ, will do anything."

He had been driven from England by persecution, preached to the Indians in America, and translated the Scriptures into their tongue along with other useful gospel materials. The Lord used him to bring about their conversion as well as many blessings in their daily manner of life.

JAN AMOS COMENIUS c.1592 - 1670 AD

Driven by persecution from place to place, Comenius faithfully served the believers known as the United Brethren. He, along with 36,000 Brethren families were forced to flee from Moravia following the "Day of Blood" in which fifteen of the Brethren were beheaded. Both his wife and his child died along the

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way from the harshness of the cold and lack of food.

As they bid farewell to Moravia, he encouraged the brethren to trust the Lord that He might preserve there a “hidden seed” which would afterwards grow to bear fruit. Years later, Zinzendorf was to be the realization of Comenius’ faith.

They found a place of refuge in Lissa, Poland in 1628. But once again, hatred of the light scattered their small band. Comenius lost everything a second time, including unpublished manuscripts that he had spent years preparing.

Though persecuted, nevertheless, the Lord used him widely, not only in spiritual blessing, but in education. His fame went forth throughout Europe as having beneficially revolutionized methods of teaching in schools that continue up to today.

Thankfully, he continued to write as well, and several of his works remain. In 1650 he wrote to counsel the preachers of the Moravian Church who were left without a circle of fellowship due to the persecutions. He exhorted them to accept invitations to teach the Word in other churches; not to flatter the listeners or encourage divisions. Rather, their aim should be to promote love and oneness of mind.

Those who were not preachers should join in fellowship in congregations where they were not forced to follow men but encouraged to follow Christ. In places where they saw the truth of the gospel of Jesus, they should pray for their peace, seek their growth and progress in godliness, and live as a shining example so that the wrath of the Almighty which is coming upon all of Christendom might at least be turned away from them.

From Amsterdam in 1660 he wrote *Voice of Mourning* where he said:

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Even our Lord who had to endure a measureless painful, shameful, and sorrowful death, comforted Himself with this: The corn of wheat, if it does not die, remains alone, but if it dies, brings forth a rich harvest.

If, therefore, out of His wounds healing has sprung up, out of His death life, out of His hell heaven and salvation, why should not we, the little grains of corn, die according to the will of God? If the blood of the martyrs and also our blood shall be the seed of the Church for the increase later of those who fear God, ah, let us, weeping, scatter the precious seed that we may bring in the sheaves with rejoicing.

God will not destroy without building again. He makes all things new. God knows what He is doing, we must trust Him to pull down and to build up as He will.

At the age of seventy-seven he wrote these memorable words contained in his publication, *One Thing Needful*:

The great number of teachers is the reason of the multitude of sects, for which we shall soon have no names left. Each church reckons itself as the true one, or at least as the purest, truest part of it, while among themselves they persecute each other with the bitterest hatred.

No reconciliation is to be hoped for between them; they meet enmity with irreconcilable enmity. Out of the Bible they forge their different creeds; these are their fortresses and bulwarks behind which they entrench themselves and resist all attacks.

I will not say that these confessions of faith are bad in themselves. They become so, however, in that they feed the fire of enmity; only

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by putting them away altogether would it be possible to set to work on healing the wounds of the Church. To this labyrinth [confusing maze] of sects and various confessions [denominations] another belongs; the love of disputation [controversy/debate].

What is attained by it? Has a single learned strife ever been settled? Never. Their number has only been increased. Satan is the greatest sophist [philosopher/false reasoner]; he has never been overcome in a strife of words. In divine service [church meetings] the words of men are usually heard more than the Word of God.

Each one chatters as he pleases, or kills time by learned disquisitions [lengthy discussions] and disproving the views of others. Of the new birth and how a man must be changed into the likeness of Christ to become partaker of the divine nature [2Pet.1:4], scarcely anything is said.

The sacraments [baptism/Lord's Supper], given as symbols of unity, of love, and of our life in Christ, have been made the occasion of bitterest conflict, a cause of mutual hatred, a center of sectarianism.

In short, Christendom has become a labyrinth. The faith has been split into a thousand little parts and you are made a heretic if there is one of them you do not accept. What can help? Only *the one thing needful*: Return to Christ, looking to Christ as the only Leader, and walking in His footsteps, setting aside all other ways until we all reach the goal, and have come to the unity of the faith [Eph.4:13].

As the heavenly Master built everything on the ground of the Scriptures, so should we leave all particularities of our special confessions and be satisfied with the revealed Word of God which

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belongs to us all. With the Bible in our hand we should cry: I believe what God has revealed in this Book; I will obediently keep His commands; I hope for that which He has promised.

Christians, give ear! There is only one Life, but Death comes to us in a thousand forms. There is only one Truth, but Error has a thousand forms. There is only one Christ, but a thousand Antichrists.

So you know, O Christendom, what is the one thing needful. Either you turn back to Christ or you go to destruction like the Antichrist. If you are wise and will live, follow the Leader of Life.

Stop and think: How did Comenius show the Pattern of Christ?

GEORGE FOX 1624 - 1691 AD

As a young man of nineteen, he left home for a period of four years, seeking spiritual enlightenment. Seeing the deadness of the professing religion about him, he sought for understanding directly from the Lord Himself based on his understanding of I Jn.2:27.

During his walks he would receive what he called “openings” from the Lord. While he held the Scriptures in high esteem, his emphasis upon “inner light” had a tendency to seek new revelation beyond that of the Scriptures.

Because of the great emphasis placed upon the internal and spiritual, the Lord’s Supper and baptism were minimized and even abandoned as being mere outward forms. Other characteristics were a refusal to bear arms or use of force in self-defense. Oaths are not

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be taken and payment of tithes refused.

He began to break into the middle of church meetings and proclaim his doctrines. A following developed and meetings of the “Friends” began in many places with a needed emphasis upon the Holy Spirit’s work in the heart of the believer. Because of their radical practices with respect to established churches, they came under the persecution of both the general populace as well as the government.

Thereafter, they began to be called “Quakers” by their enemies. Fox himself was imprisoned repeatedly as well as the Friends, though they did not resist, and bore all patiently. It was through the early and persistent influence of Quakers that major steps were taken to abolish the slave trade [see Appendix 4 *Slavery*].

Stop and think: Evaluate Fox’s emphasis and practices in light of Christ’s own Pattern. What is similar; what was different?

THE ACT OF UNIFORMITY of 1662

This legislation required every minister of every congregation to agree to all things written in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer and obtain ordination from the Church of England. Two thousand servants of God, some of the most notable and godly in the land, refused to submit and were excommunicated.

Among them was Isaac Watts [1674-1748], whose beautiful hymns such as *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*, *Joy to the World*, *O God our Help in Ages Past*, are sung to the glory of God and blessing of Christ’s church even until now.

Another outstanding brother who refused man’s constraints was John Bunyan [1628-1688], who is known worldwide for his

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marvelous work, *Pilgrim's Progress*, that has been read more than any other book besides the Bible. He wrote this during the twelve years he was cast into the prison of Bedford for refusing to stop preaching and teaching the gospel, though not ordained.

The Act divided England into clearly distinct groups; Anglicans and Nonconformists. The Nonconformists, or Puritans as they were referred to, were greatly used of the Lord to spread the gospel and teach the Word. It demonstrated once again that the Spirit of God cannot be confined to man's institutions and constraints.

JEAN DELABADIE 1610 - 1674 AD

Labadie had been ordained as a Jesuit priest at age twenty five, and continued in the Roman Church for fifteen years. He was deeply concerned about reforming the corruption in Christendom for which he labored in home Bible studies to that end.

Finally he was forced to leave the Catholics due to mounting persecution and he took refuge with the Calvinists whom he had come in contact with. He had already concluded that attempts to reform the Church of Rome were futile and that he could never be reconciled with the Catholic clergy.

In Geneva, his Bible expositions had great blessing to the congregation that was declined in spiritual fervor. Especially beneficial were his home meetings in which the Word was taught, particularly so to the young Philip Jakob Spener, later to become a notable servant of the Lord.

In the city of Middelburgh, he was invited to live and labor by a godly group of men, well known for their spiritual testimony.

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Labadie was deeply disappointed at the state of the church and their concepts of Christianity. He understood the NT to say that the church of the Lord Jesus is a company of born-again people, united and led by the Holy Spirit.

The Calvinistic state church he encountered, however, was full of Christians in name only. He introduced mutual edification of each other from the Word and praying from one's heart rather than reading a pre-written prayer. These practices were widely received by the people but led to conflict with the leaders.

If these practices were consistently followed, they reasoned, they will lead to the complete change of our whole church structure and system. Therefore, he and his followers were cast out of the Reformed Church. With about three hundred brethren, they formed a few independent congregations in the same city, but were eventually driven out altogether.

For twenty years he had attempted to effect change within the Reformed denomination, again, to no avail. From this he concluded that reform from within the established system was impossible, and that separation from these systems was the only means that biblical principles could be restored.

They found refuge in Amsterdam of the Netherlands, where they were received and found religious liberty. There the work started afresh with great blessing on simple Scriptural grounds. Many left the deadness of the institutional Reformed Church while many others were sympathetic to their teaching and life.

Leaders of the Calvinistic churches appealed to the government to outlaw them. This, however, was refused, and the brethren were allowed to continue.

When we stray from the infallible Word that is forever settled in heaven, into man's inventions upon how to improve it,

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disaster always results. It was so in Labadie's later years.

The church is not the abode of Christian perfection, it is the abode of Christ's life within the regenerate that is developing and maturing through weakness and limitation. Labadie became zealous for full spiritual maturity of the Lord's people and thought that would be best served by forming a community where all could live together for mutual edification.

A "household church" was set up in a rented house. Some of his close associates objected to the venture as not scriptural. The angry exchange between them became a blot on their testimony in Amsterdam. It was evident that a "perfect" fellowship had not been established. One calamity followed another and the un-Christlike spirit and doctrine discovered among them led to their being asked to leave the city.

They re-grouped in a neighboring town and became increasingly withdrawn into their own small circle of association. Outside the household, Labadie was hated [I Tim.3:7]; inside he was venerated as an apostle. People hung upon his every word as if they had never known true communion before apart from him.

It degenerated into a tragic sect having virtually no outside influence with the gospel, so occupied were they with themselves. Sharing of all things in common was adopted and some began ecstatically speaking in "tongues." Labadie died in 1674 and the group did not survive him but for a few years. The "household church" ended in failure as it surely must; it was not the Pattern of Christ.

Stop and think: In reacting against two authoritarian systems, Labadie eventually established his own. What was according to Christ in what he did, and where did he go wrong?

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PHILIP JAKOB SPENER 1635 - 1705 AD

As a Lutheran, Spener saw that the mere orthodox profession of faith does not save a man. Only a deep heart response of godliness will save, and such salvation issues in the transformation of the believer into Christ likeness. This emphasis is what came to be known as “Pietism”; the insistence that regeneration, sanctification, and devotion of heart become experiential realities.

Influenced by John Bunyan and others, he led in the call to return to a serious study of the Scriptures and the practical outworking of the priesthood of all believers. Meetings were held in his house in order to put into practice, “the old apostolic way of church meetings, as Paul in I Cor.14 describes it. Those who have gifts and knowledge should also speak and, without disorder and strife, express their godly thoughts on the matters in hand, and that the others might judge.”

The believers came together regularly to study and discuss the Word with the men contributing, though the sisters were welcome to attend, and did so. He objected to names for the gatherings and allowed a loving and sensible range of expressions among them without legislating each group to conform to some central standard.

His desire was expressed in his own words: “O that I knew a single assembly upright in all things, in doctrine, order, and practice. All that would make it what an apostolic Christian assembly should be.” He wasn’t expecting an assembly, as he said, “without weeds,” but one in which the men would carry out their teaching and ministry responsibilities by the leading of the Holy Spirit.

His longing was for a gathering where the greater portion of

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the brethren were dead to the world and led a godly life. What he observed among Lutherans, however, was that the majority were not born-again and the professing ministers did not know the basics of Christian doctrine.

The average Lutheran was suspicious of him, and the official Church attacked and ridiculed him, but he continued on in this way until his death. His labors were a great blessing to many, among whom was the godly August Francke who would profoundly affect Zinzendorf.

AUGUST HERMANN FRANCKE 1663 - 1727 AD

Francke carried on the Pietist tradition of Spener in Halle where he served as a Professor of Greek at the university. There he became burdened for the distressful condition of the poor and set about to assist them as he could.

He determined before God to erect a school for the poor which he did. This launched his life's work. At his death, 134 orphans were being supported in his Home for Orphans, 2,200 children and young men were being taught in his different schools, mostly without charge, hundreds of poor students were fed daily, and there were a library, printing press, and hospital established.

All of this was carried on without appealing for money and without any visible means of support. It was done, he said, "solely and simply in reliance on the living God in heaven."

There the young Zinzendorf from the ages of ten to sixteen was taught, and learned, not only academics, but personal devotedness and holiness under the influence of Francke. In his master's home he was also exposed for the first time to missionary work among the heathen, as he met and listened to the first

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missionaries among Protestants who were sent out from Halle to India in 1705.

Brother Ziegenbalg was just twenty-three when he set out with Francke's blessing from Halle to India. Faced with endless difficulties, he only survived thirteen years, but accomplished much; not only among the Tamils of India, but also through his laying down of sound principles of missionary work.

Five principles governed his work: [1] Christians must be able to read and therefore must become educated. [2] The Word of God must be made available in the local dialect. [3] Preaching the gospel must be based on an accurate knowledge of the mind and culture of the people in order to clearly communicate the Word with them. [4] The aim of preaching must be unto a definite and true spiritual conversion. [5] At as early a date as possible, an indigenous church with its own indigenous ministry must come into existence.

GOTTFRIED ARNOLD 1666 - 1714 AD

Though influenced by Spener, this brother could not abide the empty ceremonies of the Lutheran tradition which he labeled as "Babel" and incapable of being reformed. His first book, *First Love, that is a True Picture of the First Christians according to their Living Faith and Holy Life*, was a history of the Church up until Constantine. Portrayed in its pages were the evils of uniting the Church and the State.

He became increasingly impressed by the fact that, up until that time, church histories had been written by the dominant religious majority. He was therefore moved to write his most famous work, *Impartial History of the Churches and Heretics from the Beginning of the New Testament to the Year of Christ, 1688*.

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In it, he traced the spiritual history of the church scattered in the world, rather than that of the main churchly organizations. He proclaimed that the brethren who had been condemned as heretics by the Roman Catholics through the centuries were biblical and their practices godly.

It caused a great stir. Many acclaimed his writing as being one of the most profitable books of all time. Others condemned it as the most harmful book that had been written since the birth of Christ. Nevertheless, it opened the eyes of many to the spiritual continuance of the testimony of Christ over the centuries outside of the established and reigning Roman and Protestant institutions.

COUNT NICOLAS LUDWIG VON ZINZENDORF 1700 - 1760 AD
AND THE MORAVIANS

ZINZENDORF: EARLY YEARS

After the death of his father when Zinzendorf was only six weeks old, he was raised by his godly grandmother who was a beloved friend of Jakob Spener. That type of ministry, study of the Scriptures, prayer, and the singing of hymns, were what filled his early years to age ten. Then, as was noted above, he was sent to Halle to further his education under the earnest and godly August Francke.

Notes in his diary summarize how these wonderful years were used by the Lord to prepare His servant for a life of usefulness in the kingdom of heaven:

“Daily meetings in professor Francke’s house, the edifying accounts concerning the kingdom of Christ, the conversation with witnesses of the truth in distant regions, the acquaintances with several preachers, the light of different exiles and prisoners, the

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cheerfulness of that man of God in the work of the Lord, together with various trials attending it, increased my zeal for the cause of the Lord in a powerful manner.”

While at an art museum in Paris where he had gone during the course of his studies, he was arrested by the painting, *Ecce Homo* [Behold, the Man! Jn.19:5]. The artist’s rendering of Christ’s thorn-crowned brow had this phrase attached to it: “All this I have done for thee, what have you done for Me?”

He determined then and there in his twentieth year, that he would devote his life for service to the Lord Jesus, however Christ might lead him. He increasingly became noted for his deep godliness and flaming spiritual vitality.

ZINZENDORF: HERRNHUT

His grandmother’s estate was purchased by him in 1721 and he was married the following year. Romance had little to do with his choice of a bride. The idea that romantic love was the basis of a marriage relationship was the fruit of the Renaissance, not the Reformation. Rather, he desired the most godly and like-minded sister for a wife; one who would share his burden to serve the Lord Jesus with heart, soul, and body.

He found her in the person of Countess Erdmuth Dorothea von Reuss. Their thirty-four years of marriage were blessed with twelve children, only three of whom lived beyond their parents.

Only some few months after the wedding, the first group of ten persecuted refugees from Moravia arrived at their estate, led over the mountains by Christian David. The Moravians were the heirs of John Huss, known as *Unitas Fratrum* [United Brethren], that have been mentioned previously.

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This brother became one of the key contributors of the blessing to thousands that the new village community, *Herrnhut* [the Lord's Watch], became. Christian David took ten trips back to Moravia, trekking up to two hundred miles at a time, to lead groups of persecuted brethren to join the growing fellowship.

By 1726, there were some three hundred brethren from a wide variety of backgrounds living on the estate of the Count; Pietists, former Catholics, Reformed, Anabaptists, and some who could agree with no one. As surely it must be, as even among the Apostles of our Lord, conflicts arose; even bitter disputing, which threatened the unity and love of the new community.

Even some of Zinzendorf's closest brethren called him the Beast and False Prophet of Revelation. He endured all patiently, and through godly counsel and genuine love, was able to assist the brethren into harmony and fellowship.

ZINZENDORF: REVIVAL

1727 was a notable year for the brethren. On one of his travels, Zinzendorf came across a copy of Comenius' constitution of the ancient *Unitas Fratrum*. He discovered that the Moravian brethren traced their lineage of fellowship to long before the time of Luther. Most striking of all is that it was so very similar to their own *Brotherly Agreement* drawn up among themselves just a few months before this discovery. The "hidden seed" had been preserved.

In that same month of July, they formed "Bands;" groups of two, three, or more of those who shared spiritual kinship. They met privately to converse concerning the state of their hearts, for exhortation, and prayer for one another.

Brethren began to meet regularly, sometimes all night, for

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mutual encouragement and prayer. With many tears and supplications, they pledged themselves to live together in love and unity. Humility, conviction of sinfulness, and a sense of their helplessness came upon nearly one and all. Thoughts of self became lowly and those towards the brethren increased in kindliness.

The gathering of August 13, 1727 signaled what they later referred to as their “Pentecost.” The entire congregation prayed with great conviction; weeping, rejoicing, with deep humility and earnestness for one another and their still persecuted brethren in Moravia. At the Lord’s Supper, they were overcome with the love of Christ, the Lamb that was slain to take away the sins of the world.

At the close of the meeting, the whole congregation returned to their homes like “newborn children.” They were truly then, one in spirit.

ZINZENDORF: MISSIONS

Anthony, a converted slave from the West Indies [islands in the Carribean Sea], presented a moving appeal for the gospel to be brought to his people which greatly affected Zinzendorf. He was brought to *Herrnhut* by the Count where he related the plight of the slaves on the sugar plantations where the only churches were exclusively for whites.

Leonard Dober and David Nischmann were commended to the Lord by the congregation to go forth as missionaries to the slaves in the West Indies. This was the first time that a church as a whole had considered sending out missionaries as their responsibility and God-given task. Dober, a white man, pledged his willingness to even become a slave himself in order to reach Anthony’s, a black man’s, people.

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On the night of the commendation, more than one hundred hymns were sung by the fervent congregation; songs like this Moravian hymn published in the early 1700's:

Let me dwell on Golgotha, Weep and love my life away,
While I see Him on the tree, Weep and bleed and die for me!

That dear blood for sinners spilt, Shows my sin in all its guilt:
Ah, my soul, He bore thy load; Thou hast slain the Lamb of God.

Hark! His dying words: "Forgive! Father, let the sinner live;
"Sinner, wipe thy tears away; I, thy ransom freely pay."

While I hear this grace revealed, And obtain a pardon sealed,
All my soft affections move, Wakened by the force of love.

Farewell, world, thy gold is dross; Now I see the bloody cross;
Jesus died to set me free, From the law, and sin, and thee!

He has dearly bought my soul; Lord, accept and claim the whole:
To Thy will I all resign, Now no more my own, but Thine.

They left on foot in 1732 with their only earthly possessions carried on their backs, with virtually no money, looking unto the Lord to direct their way. Both were skilled tradesmen and fully intended to work for their living as the need arose while they preached the Word.

For over one hundred years, no Moravian missionary received any salary at all. They worked with their hands to meet their practical needs of life [Acts 18:3,4; 2 Thess.3:6-10].

Their approach was to anticipate meeting individuals whose hearts had been prepared by the Holy Spirit of God, such as

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Cornelius [Acts 10] and the Eunuch of Ethiopia [Acts 8:26-40]. These would be their “firstfruits.” The Holy Spirit was the true “missionary,” they were simply His agents [Jn.15:26,27; 16:7-11].

Christ was to be preached, not theology or convincing arguments. Reach the neglected people as did the Lord Jesus. These were their principles of ministry that they embraced and practiced which made them the greatest single missionary movement in the history of the church.

Many of the early brethren sent out to these tropical islands died of fever and other diseases. Nonetheless, this did not discourage the Moravian swelling tide of missionaries. Within ten years, over seventy missionaries were sent out from their fellowship of six hundred brethren. May such “tithing” be rekindled in our self-centered churches of today!

They went to Greenland, Lapland, Georgia, Surinam, Africa’s Guinea Coast, South Africa, to Jews in Amsterdam, Algeria, North American Indians, Ceylon, Romania, and Constantinople. Many were buried in the land of their labors, having laid down their lives as a glad sacrifice. In twenty years’ time, the Moravians had sent out more missionaries than all the Protestant churches combined over the previous two hundred years.

Though remaining officially a Lutheran as did Spener, Zinzendorf possessed the true life of Christ along with great zeal to proclaim the Word. He himself traveled to Holland, England, the West Indies, and the southern Colonies in America for the sake of the gospel. He oversaw the Moravian missions and maintained a vigorous correspondence of sometimes hundreds of letters per month to encourage the brethren and the new converts.

And it was through the testimony of the Moravian brethren that John Wesley came to know the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom we

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now turn.

JOHN WESLEY 1703 - 1791 AD

In Reformation England of the 1700's, unbelief and indifference to religion and morals prevailed. The upper class thought it was fashionable to be humanistic and immoral. The common people were plunged into grossest ignorance and sin. The clergy were no better.

Literature was atheistic and impure, drunkenness was not considered shameful, and violence and crime were everywhere. Excessive and brutal punishment of crime furthered the lawlessness of the people. Prison conditions were abominable and the illiterate poor and helpless multitudes were shown no mercy.

Into the home of Samuel Wesley, nineteen children were born from his one wife, Susanna. John and his brother, Charles, were among them. They were raised in strict but loving godliness by their devoted mother. Every day she set aside time with each of her children to teach them the Bible, the Anglican Prayer book, and to improve their conduct.

When they went to the university in London, she faithfully wrote to them with good advice and warnings against the snares of the world. Under the influence of his father, an Anglican minister, and his mother's teachings, John became thoroughly grounded in Anglicanism and good works as being necessary for salvation.

At his father's insistence, in 1725 he was ordained as an Anglican minister though he did not have assurance of sins forgiven or of the life of Christ within. He had not yet been born again and so, along with Charles, they sought to obtain holiness by religious devotion.

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They founded what mockingly became to be called the “Holy Club.” Discipline, prayers, Bible study, and helping the poor and in prisons became their agreed upon practices. Every minute of the day was organized so that time could be put to the best use. Some began to call them “Methodists.” Several students joined them, among whom was George Whitefield.

Radical changes were about to take place in John’s soul. Believing that the Lord had called him to missionary work among Indians in Georgia of America, he left on the ocean voyage in 1734. In conversations with his Moravian fellow-travelers, he began to realize that he did not have true saving faith. He was soon to learn that he was not ready to die.

During a terrible storm, he frantically feared for his life while he watched Moravians, men, women, and children, calmly and joyously singing hymns of praise to God. When asked how they could sing during that life-threatening tempest, one brother replied, “Because we have known the Lord, and you have not.”

His mission in America was a complete failure. His approach was to try and force a rigid discipline upon the settlers in Georgia which they resented and rejected. Forced to leave, he returned to England in great distress of heart. He wrote in his journal on the return trip, “I went to America to convert the Indians; but O, who shall convert me?”

That prayer was soon to be answered. Back in London the Lord arranged for him to meet yet another Moravian, Peter Bohler, who discussed the way of salvation with him on many occasions. He was convicted that he was an unsaved unbeliever, but could not imagine how someone could be instantly converted. Even though he had not yet experienced true saving faith, Bohler encouraged him to “Preach faith till you have it; and then because you have it, you will

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preach faith.”

The day of his deliverance came on May 24, 1738. Reluctantly, because of his Anglican heritage, he attended a Moravian meeting where Luther’s *Preface to the Epistle to the Romans* was being read. In Wesley’s own words, this is what happened:

“While he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ...an assurance was given that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.” Three days earlier, unknown to John, his brother Charles had also become born-again. The history of the world was, literally, about to be changed.

Three years before his own conversion, George Whitefield had been born again and had already begun open-air preaching with great impact. Whitefield soon drew John Wesley into this novel practice, though Wesley’s churchly devotion made him very reluctant at first. He said about himself that up until then he had been so particular about every point of “decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin, if it had not been done in a church.”

This means of preaching let loose a flood of conviction unto salvation of countless thousands throughout the British Isles. Again, contrary to his Anglicanism, Wesley had to yield to the undisputed work of the Holy Spirit who raised up numerous unordained but powerful preachers of the gospel.

While multitudes were saved, riotous mobs met them on every hand, attacking them and destroying properties. Once Wesley barely escaped with his life through a back door when he was locked in a house while the crowds pulled the building apart, piece by piece.

Charles Wesley’s hymns, more than 6,000 in number,

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beautifully and truthfully set forth the doctrine of God in Christ and the deepest longings of the spirit to love and glorify the Lord Jesus. *And Can It Be* and *Jesus Lover of My Soul* are representative of the lasting value that his deep devotion to the Savior has had for the church through the centuries up to today.

Wesley diligently organized converts into “Bands” or “Societies” as a practical means of providing continuance to the work. These were not churches per se, as he endeavored throughout his life to stay within the Anglican system. The time came, however, when he had to admit that this could not be.

The Anglicans seriously disowned and systematically opposed Wesley and the revival. When they refused to ordain his converts, Wesley was faced with the inevitable separation. Actually, what the Spirit of God was doing could not be contained in that old wineskin and had to exist apart from it.

After his death, an official “Conference” was established to try and coordinate and unify the “Methodists.” Being an institution with clergy overseeing it, the inevitable jealousy and political maneuvering set in which led to divisions among them and spiritual decline.

With “all the world as my parish,” John Wesley preached over 40,000 sermons in his lifetime. The revivals that God brought in the British Isles and America in which the Wesleys and Whitefield were prominent, prevented the horrors of the French Revolution from staining English soil with its blood. It brought spiritual life and fervor to countless thousands and paved the way for the great missionary movements that launched forth from the United Kingdom at the close of the 1700's, as well as contributing to reforms in prisons and to the abolition of slavery.

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GEORGE WHITEFIELD 1714 - 1770 AD

While a member of the “Holy Club” he attempted to obtain sanctification through fasts and other religious disciplines. His health nearly failed in the process when he turned to the Word of God in 1735. It was by the reading of the Scriptures that his soul was converted. He then confessed, “I got more true knowledge from reading the Book of God in one month than I could ever have acquired from all the writings of men.”

Whitefield preached his first sermon in 1736 with great fervor, insisting that a work of regeneration must take place in the soul. Afterwards there was a complaint to the bishop that he had driven fifteen people “mad.” They had been truly converted and the religiously dead thus began their persecution against the living light of the gospel.

In 1739 many pulpits had refused to let him preach because of his practice of teaching the Word from house to house. Then he turned to open-air preaching. This was a practice that had not been done previously. At first hundreds, and then multiplied thousands heard the true gospel of grace from his mighty and gifted voice.

The Lord greatly used him in the United Kingdom and in America. Along with Jonathan Edwards, The Great Awakening of 1740-41 was largely due to his tireless efforts in which thousands were converted unto godliness. Out of a total population of 250,000 people, 50,000 new converts were added to the churches in America during these times.

Whitefield and the Wesleys journeyed almost without ceasing, preaching the gospel. It is estimated that John Wesley alone traveled more than 250,000 miles, riding on horseback in all types of weather. His brother, Charles, wrote many of his hymns upon his

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horse while moving to their next preaching locations.

Differences on doctrine existed between him and the Wesleys, but not on the one gospel. Both preached justification by faith alone and the new birth. Whitefield's eloquent, impassioned, and dramatic preaching emphasized the predestination of believers unto salvation as had Calvin. Wesley's style was clear, logical, and expository, believing that Christ died for all and not merely for the elect. Many who listened to Whitefield found that the Lord had chosen them, while many who heard Wesley made their choice to follow the Lord; same gospel, same salvation.

Whitefield had desired that they resolve their differences privately so as not to tarnish the testimony before multitudes. When the conflict could not be resolved between them, he withdrew from the public eye, saying, "Let the name of Whitefield perish and that of Christ be glorified, and let me be but the servant of all!" When they separated, Whitefield joined with Howell Harris and was used of the Lord in Wales during the mighty revival that took place in that land.

Even with their differences, they maintained correspondence and fellowship with one another though they could not continue working side by side [Amos 3:3]. Through them both, the Lord altered the course of nations and the history of the world by the multiplied thousands who were delivered from the power of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of God and His marvelous light.

Fittingly, as a testimony to Whitefield's spiritual greatness, John Wesley spoke at his funeral. He testified to his tenderheartedness and charitableness along with his "faith in the bleeding Lord, the love of God shed abroad in his heart, filling his soul with tender, disinterested [impartial] love to every child of man."

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ROBERT [1764-1842] AND JAMES [1768-1851] HALDANE

After serving in the Scottish navy, both of these brothers were converted and devoted themselves to diligent study of the Scriptures. By the time of the Haldanes, the State church of Scotland, the heir of John Knox, had fallen into spiritual deadness and formalism. It was even a new idea to read the Word of God and pray together in one's home with the family at that time!

James began this worship in his home once per week with his family alone and in secret. He says, "I was unwilling to have it more frequently, lest I should meet with ridicule from my acquaintances. A conviction of duty at length determined me to begin to have it every morning, but I assembled the family in a back room for some time, lest anyone should come in. I gradually got over this fear of man, and began to expound the Scriptures to those who lived in my family."

Seeing the blessing that this was to his family, this greatly awakened in him the desire to preach to others. With this in mind, the brothers began to visit villages. One evening, the expected preacher did not arrive to preach at the church that was there. James therefore mounted the pulpit and preached his first gospel sermon in 1797.

This led them into speaking far and wide, in churches when they could, or schools, empty buildings, but mainly in the open air. They wrote, printed, and distributed tracts to all and the Lord drew hundreds and thousands to Himself through their earnest gospel messages.

But, as always, the Established Church reacted against them

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by passing legislation forbidding unlicensed preachers, “vagrant [idle wandering] teachers and Sunday schools, irreligion [ungodliness], and anarchy.” They further condemned missionary activity and warned their members against “attending upon, or giving countenance to [favoring], public preaching by any who are not of our communion [denomination].” Any who would do so were excommunicated.

Preaching went on, however, with often thousands in attendance in those days of spiritual barrenness. Many were converted. Since the Scriptures alone were the basis of the Haldane’s faith and practice, soon they began to see that they ought to meet together as brethren in order to remember the Lord in the breaking of bread. This they determined to do in simplicity of gathering each week, without taking up collections, and with liberty for any of the brethren to bring a teaching to the group as led by the Holy Spirit.

As they continued, the two brothers became convicted that their baptism as an infant in the Scotch Presbyterian Church had not been biblical. They therefore refused to baptize any more infants and were themselves immersed as believers. Others who also saw the same from the Word were persuaded and were also baptized. This, however, in no way constituted their basis of fellowship with the brethren; that was based on the common life of Christ received by faith, though some left them because of it.

In 1816, Robert and his wife made a significant journey to Switzerland where he had profound influence upon university students. There, in Calvin’s Geneva where Servetus had been burned for denying the Trinity, professors denied the deity of Christ and taught heathen philosophy rather than the Scriptures. The students they met there were completely ignorant of the way of salvation and had never studied the Scriptures at all. They were

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struck with the graciousness of Robert's character and astounded at his knowledge of the Scriptures and trust in them.

In their home, Robert held regular Bible studies on the book of Romans where they sat around a long table with Bibles in different languages. Haldane taught the Word and answered questions through an interpreter. Some twenty to thirty students attended, though forbidden by their professors from doing so. As a result, some were dismissed from school, thrown out of the Church, and even forced to flee the country.

Romans was expounded in detail with comparison with many other passages. At a later time, he put his teaching into a commentary that is still in use up to today. Among those who attended were Adolph Monod who brought the doctrine of God to the French speaking world and J. Merle D' Aubigne, the godly historian of the Reformation whose work has blessed multitudes and was used in the preparation of this book.

Stop and think: What can preserve the truth of God unto the next generation in any locality ? [2 Tim. 1:13,14; 2:2].

WILLIAM CAREY 1761 - 1834 AD

Son of a weaver and only educated until age twelve, William Carey labored as a gardener and later as a shoemaker. After his conversion, he taught himself NT Greek, Latin, Hebrew, French, and Dutch. During his life he learned and translated portions of the Scriptures into thirty-four other languages of India, including six complete translations of the Bible and twenty-four partially so.

How did such an impoverished shoemaker become known as "The Father of Modern Missions"? Through study of the Word he saw that the Great Commission of Matthew 28 was not for the

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Apostles alone as was popularly believed by virtually all in his day. Reading *Captain Cook's Voyages* sparked his interest in foreign lands. In his shop he pasted together a map of the world on which he wrote notes about anything he could discover about the state of men in far off lands. It became his prayer-book and subject of conversation and preaching.

At his early suggestions that missionary work should be carried on among the heathen, a Baptist minister of his denomination rose and said, "Sit down, young man. If God is pleased to convert the heathen, He will do it without your help or mine!" This did not discourage him, however, and in 1792 he published his thoughts about the necessity of converting the nations. The shorter title is, *An Inquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*. It probably had as much influence on the history of Christianity as did Luther's Ninety-five Theses.

This was followed by his famous sermon on Isa.54:2, **Enlarge the place of your tent, and let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings; Do not spare; Lengthen your cords, and strengthen your stakes.** In it he exhorted the brethren to, "Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God."

In 1793 he arrived in India with his family. Their son died of dysentery soon afterwards, and his wife, who had initially refused to go at all and regularly complained against him once there, became insane. Thomas, his co-worker, wasted all their money, and they saw not even one convert after seven years of labor.

The British East India Company were interested in their money-making ventures only and constantly tried to make life difficult for the missionaries. In 1812, a fire destroyed their print house along with several of his translation manuscripts that he had

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been working on for years.

What did he do? He lovingly cared for his unfortunate wife until her death in 1807, moved from place to place when persecuted, and, like Tyndale, began his works all over again until they were all completed.

In the town of Serampore, where he stayed for the remaining thirty-four years of his life, a harmonious fellowship was established from where their work began to reap fruit. One distinctive feature of their peaceful continued service together was the weekly meeting for prayer and discussion. All were welcome and even expected to discuss any matter that was disturbing their hearts about each other or the work. All was required to be done in love and brotherliness and it proved to be a great blessing to all.

A training school was established to equip the Indian converts to evangelize their own people and establish their own churches on biblical principles, rather than on European concepts. He also taught linguistics and was instrumental in abolishing the custom of widows being burned alive on their departed husband's funeral fire.

Perhaps his greatest contribution, though, was his influence on the progress of missions worldwide. He outlined five principles of missionary work that formed the core of many groups who followed in his steps.

- [1] Widespread preaching of the gospel by every possible method.
- [2] The Scriptures in the language of the people.
- [3] Establishing a church at the earliest conceivable time.
- [4] Thorough knowledge of the culture of the people.
- [5] Quickly training indigenous ministry.

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By his example and exhortations, numerous other mission agencies developed in Britain, Scotland, and America who sent forth workers into all the world.

MISSIONS IN AFRICA

TRADITIONS

In the Africa of the 1800's, the chief held an almost omnipotent place over his people and those he had happened to conquer. His word was law and he wielded the power of life and death: All of life revolved around him. No white man could ever move into an area without the approval of the chief.

Motives varied among the powerful chiefs in allowing white missionaries to come among their people. Some were clever enough to use the presence of the white man as a safeguard against the ever-present dangers to their tribe. Others viewed him like a milk-cow from which endless material and financial benefits could be extracted.

A few tolerated the white man as a curiosity, much like the prestige that having a tame elephant in one's own possession would bring. And there were some who outwardly accepted his Christianity because it was the superior religion of the conquering race and culture.

It is no easy thing to be a Christian and a traditional chief. Some would say it is impossible to be both. Certainly, true conversion necessitates the setting aside of idolatrous ways, both personally and officially. Thankfully though, there were true and genuine conversions to the Lord Jesus among some, though not without cost.

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The conflicts for a chief between the two were many. Typically the dignity of the chief was measured by the number of his wives. He was the recognized head of the ancestor cult whose traditions he was expected to continue. When rain failed, he was counted upon to perform the proper rituals to secure its return. As the sun cannot set without going down in blazing red, neither can a king pass away without carrying the blood of the living with him. Even whole villages of over one hundred have been entombed with the king and left to suffer and suffocate.

Proverbs and parables abound to express black Africa's view of life. Even his very manner of life is a parable, tangled and obscure at times. Traditional thinking and practices present stony resistant walls against the truth of God. One of the greatest lessons in Africa is gaining wisdom to adapt the truth of the "what" to the truth of the "how" to that of the "when."

Consider the effect that these native traditions have had upon presenting the gospel. In modern times, some of the following observations have faded, but elements of all abide to influence the current African outlook.

Trails: Paths are narrow and single file; twisting like a serpent, never straight. The man behind follows the steps of him who is before; never looking for himself, only trekking where other steps have trod over a thousand generations. Precedent, not principle is the law of black Africa. Antiquity means sanctity according to the ancient proverb, "An old well-worn path must lead up to a big chief." The few junctions of roads encountered become mystical places of power and magic. **Stop and think**: What is the gospel call to the African trail? [Lk.3:4,5; Isa.35:8; Mk.7:5-9,13; I Pet.1:18].

Round Huts: Circular structures reflect unending and

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unbroken cycles: day to night, dry to wet, generation to generation, spirit of dead to spirit of living. Discussions and reasoning proceed in wide orbits, never coming straight to the point. All is bent in the African native realm, in morals and in discourse. **Stop and think:** What do observing ceaseless cycles lead to apart from light from heaven? [Eccl.1:2-15; 2:11,17].

Lying: Only the “just” will be vindicated in the land of deceit where all are guilty until proven innocent. Truth is not defended where the liars subject the accused to the trial by poison, fire, or water; where it is presumed that the one in the right will not be harmed by the judgment imposed. **Stop and think:** What sentence is to be passed against lying, and by whom? [Col.3:9; Jn.8:3-11].

Law: Penalties are imposed for violations incurred though law is not logical and logic is not law. Any tripping on a vine along the way sets laws of nature in motion which must be enforced though the codes and consequences for transgression defy explanation. Taboos have their roots in these tribal laws.

Law is a hopelessly tangled cause and effect litigation removed from the court of reason where it becomes wrong to affirm the right; a law of entrapment to deprive another on pretense in order to gain for self. Advantage, not justice, is the goal. **Stop and think:** What does the gospel have to say to this type of “justice”? [Ex.23:1-9; Prov.17:15; 24:23-26; Isa.1:16,17,21-23; 5:21-23].

Tribute: “What did you bring me?” Every step in Africa is met with an outstretched hand demanding payment for the right to pass. Every man is king of his own little dominion. Any hesitation to pay is met with a flood of questions to which no answer is sought. Simply and only what is sought is a chance opening to press a “legal” claim against the intruder. All the while, dubious favors are promised in exchange for tangible goods demanded that then will

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gain admittance to his ash-heap kingdom. **Stop and think:** How does Rom.13:6-8 relate to tribute in a local tribal setting? Is there a difference between this and bribery in today's context?

Names: Multiple names conceal multiple identities. With every twist of character another alias emerges. To the African, a new name indicates a new nature. **Stop and think:** What is the significance of a new name in light of the gospel coming to a man? [Isa.56:5; 65:15; Jn.1:42; Rev.2:17].

Tribalism: Hear each tribe shout its own Pharisaical thanksgiving, "I am not like other men!" [Lk.18:11]. Thus all others are despised as heathen and mocked for their ignorant practices derived from their inferior gods. **Stop and think:** What effect must the gospel necessarily have upon this proud and arrogant assumed superiority? [Phil.3:20; I Pet.1:18; Col.3:10-15].

Tradition: "The voice of man is the voice of God." God is the author of culture. God's Law governs all native practices. "God is great: whoever conquered Him?" Thus the name of God is attached to a dark fatalism where every deed is justified as being an outworking of the will of God. God Himself becomes the reason not to repent, for each African tribe is already performing His will. Whatever is, simply is: It is the way things are, and have been, and ever will be. And God has ordained it all. **Stop and think:** What are the traditions of the gospel that we are to maintain? [2 Thess.2:15; 3:6,14]. Which traditions are we not? [I Pet.1:18].

Community: "Ten trees in a clump, shoot up like needles; one alone springs up crooked and twisted." The African is molded by his family, clan, village, and tribe; pressed on every side to arise like the rest; no place for innovation, individuality, or inventiveness here. Yet apart from the gospel, this fellowship of conformity will only result in a uniformity of corruption [I Cor.15:33]. **Stop and**

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think: What is the difference between the gospel's "clump of trees" and that of the traditional culture? [Eph.4:15,16; Heb.10:24,25; Prov.18:1].

Slaying infants: Twins must be murdered and the ones whose upper teeth show before their lower are to be killed. Any violation of rigid tradition from the past must be the invasion of the demonic into the land of the living. There is no room for deviation from the expected in Africa. **Stop and think:** How is it that tradition has such a powerful sway over men that they will slay rather than offend? [Jn.8:36; Col.1:13; I Pet.1:18].

Cannibalism: Does not the lion consume its prey? Is not war simply the blood shedding of the leopard? Therefore we eat what we kill. Here ritual merges with reality, appetite with avarice, and power with passion. **Stop and think:** How does the revelation of the written Word condemn cannibalism? [Gen.1:26; 9:2-6; I Cor.15:39].

White men: Whites are, to the African, sons of the day, the pampered and petted children of a God who is the great "White Man." Hear his thoughts, "Though whites dwell in the 'City of the King,' yet they killed the best among themselves, Christ, and then came to Africa to tell us blacks what they had done." He reasons, "We blacks only kill criminals and enemies, how treacherous then is this white man, really?" Suspicion ever meets the white man coming into Africa. Motives are distrusted and his "white magic" is feared yet desired at the same time. **Stop and think:** How can cross-cultural racial prejudice be overcome? [Lk.22:25-27; Phil.2:3-8; I Thess.2:7-12].

Writing: The African sees that the white man is ruled by paper. By paper, one may possess all; magical knowledge and paper wealth. Do not whites exchange paper for goods? Do they not covet

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and fight over amassing paper?

To him, writing is medicine; a mystical formula, a charm. Arabs have as their most potent cure a written line of the *Quran*, swallowed by the sufferer. "If leaves from the tree of life are medicinal, why not literal leaves from a book?" argues the Muslim. And so the darkened oral traditionalist and the superstitious Ishmaelite approximate Jeremiah's delightful discovery, **Thy Words were found and I did eat them, and Thy Word became to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart** [Jer.15:16].

Writing awakens at once the horrifying recognition to the African that the entire past history and record of his race has been lost through lack of literature. He has no past treasure of written wisdom, only the vagary of oral tradition which can so easily be twisted to meet the demands of the moment in the mouth of the sayer.

Promises, being merely verbal and not written, can conveniently be modified by him who shouts the loudest that it is so. The flow of devious twists of falsehood spring from the unwritten page. Expediency and deception dictate when definite data is unrecorded. **Stop and think:** What is the gospel's advantage by being preserved in writing? [Ps.119:89; Jn.20:31].

Dreams: These are the windows into tomorrow, whispers from eternity to light the path in a land without the Book of God. Indeed, God still speaks to those to whom He has not written, **in a dream...then He opens the ears of men** [Job 33:14-18]. **Stop and think:** What is the relative value of dreams for those who have the written Word of God? [Eccl.5:3,7; Jer.23:28].

Youth: "Soon ripe, soon rotten." The youth who is a man at 14 must be a boy at 30. The African knows everything too early and therefore can learn nothing when it is too late. Wine, tobacco, and

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hemp lead him astray to perversity and quarreling while forgetting what is decreed [Prov.21:1; 23:29-35; 31:5]. So from early days he errs in his reason and boasts in transgression [Isa.28:7; Hab.2:5], becoming a slave to a more cruel master, his thirst for drink. **Stop and think:** What remedy does the gospel bring to this early ruin of the children? [Mal.4:6; Eph.6:4; Col.3:20; Deut.6:5-9].

Drums: Like the cricket's call and the rhythmic croaking of the frog's chorus, his drumming invites lovers to dance, to mate. In the night, that throbbing drone invokes the gods of darkness; during the day, summons the warriors for blood. **Stop and think:** Will the gospel change the use of drums or forbid their use altogether? [Eph.5:17-19].

Nakedness: African shame has no covering. It is a flagrant exposure of a centuries' old reproach; rampant in the bush and passed down to the present. **Stop and think:** What covering does the gospel bring? [Lk.8:27,35; Rom.13:12-14; Rev.3:18; Isa.61:10].

Seasons: Months of ceaseless rain follow multiplied weeks of nothing but dried dust; wet and dry, active and dull, life and death, awake and asleep. The African follows the cycle of nature. He dozes in the day til the first heralding crack of thunder startles him to arise to labor. **Stop and think:** How does the gospel interrupt the cycle of activity and dullness in a man's life? [Prov.6:6-11; 10:4,5; 13:4].

Time: Nothing besides his blazing timepiece arching daily across the heavens dictates his movements. He thus imagines himself to be responsible to nothing and no one outside the natural realm of which his own desires are a part. "How can a clock dictate to me, a man?" reasons the African. **Stop and think:** How does the gospel teach a man to value time? [Ps.90:10-12; Eph.5:16].

Burial: Here, the dead truly dictate to the living and bring them into bondage. Fear, debt, and ritual are demanded from

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beyond the grave to haunt the survivors who still see the sun and bow to “the head of my father” and the blood of my mother. **Stop and think:** What constitutes Christian burial and how does it differ from traditional burial? [Mt.14:12; Lk.9:59,60; Jn.19:38-42; Acts 8:2; I Thess.4:13,14].

Blood: With out the shedding of blood in Africa, there is no - no anything. Blood purges, confirms, purchases, protects, overcomes, curses, blesses, appeases, begins, and ends; the blood of cocks, goats, rams, and men. Forgiveness is never obtained thereby, only a postponement of the inevitable; a temporary rest from cruel deities. **Stop and think:** Contrast the blood of Christ with the blood of Africa [Heb.9:12-14,22; 10:19-22].

Mediator: Every fibre of the African’s being fixes upon the man who will connect him with the unseen realm of spiritual power. He becomes his link to influences not at his disposal. This messenger quickly is seen as a miniature messiah. Perhaps this is why the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip soon away from the first convert of black Africa [Acts 8:39]. **Stop and think:** How do the Apostles’ words show that they truly believed I Tim.2:5? [Acts 3:12-16; 14:8-18].

Spirits: The spirit of the living is connected with the spirit of the dead through the mother’s blood that still circulates in the living though she has now departed. “No man really dies” in Africa; there is only a transition to glory. His connection with the mother spirit softens the harshness of a father he may never have known, while the spirits of the ancestors continue in the clan head to instill fear of temptations to wander. In all this, the Father God is silent and cold like the stars, doing nothing [it seems to him] in the unloved and unloving cruelty of Africa’s hostile natural realm in which he must live. **Stop and think:** How can the love of God be expressed to the

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African? [I Jn.4:7-12].

Polygamy: Precedent, not principle, is the law of Africa; what is observed in nature, not what is entombed in books. Do the beasts not teach us that there is a bull of the herd? As with the antelope and elephant, there exists a parallel between lust and land, wives and wealth. And so a man's goats, gold, and girls share a striking resemblance in his possession. And, indeed, his wives are little more than goats to him; merely cooks, concubines, and consorts, but not companions. **Stop and think**: What are the differences between polygamy and Christ and His one bride, the church? [Eph.5:25-33].

Eyes: Eyes reveal the soul of a man. An African will read the eyes of a man to see if they confirm the words of his lips. "Distrust a man who cannot look you in the face, and beware of the woman who can." **Stop and think**: How blessed is that man whose eye is simple, single, clear, and good. How can this be brought about? [Mt.6:22,23; Mk.7:20-23; Lk.11:34-36].

Slavery: Body bondage means soul bondage; slavery of mind. A slave is a living coin of commerce and becomes as insignificant as any other means to an end; a commodity of exchange. If you can buy a boy for a penny's worth of cloth to make a headtie, there you have the value of the man. When a mother and child are sold for small bags of grain, then we can understand how "man eats maize, but maize can eat man."

Is it reasonable then, to imagine the cash payment of an hour's abolition to redeem centuries of bred into the bone slavery and the growling grudge of that bondage? How then can the heart of a passive, fatalistic, and dulled humanity be opened, set free indeed, and reinvigorated?

Only with the key of opening one's own heart to theirs [2 Cor.6:11-13]; to exposing them to the love of Christ by honoring all

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men [I Pet.2:17]. Only by lovingly soliciting his perspective, inviting his contribution, and ennobling the mutuality of genuine fellowship of shared dignity and respect as co-recipients of the image of God and as co-heirs of the grace of life in Christ; by thoughtfully exploring a re-orientation of thinking to responsible reflection and voluntary obedience to the Word of God. **Stop and think:** Describe how slavery is the fitting expression of life in Christ in contrast to the wicked slavery of men [Rom.6:15-23; I Cor.6:19,20; 7:23].

Doors: The way into the heart of an African is to stoop lowly at the entrance of his dwelling. There is no other means of access. **Stop and think:** In the presentation of the one Door unto salvation [Jn.10:9], how will entrance be granted by the hearer? [I Thess.2:5-13; 3:6-13].

Deeds: Actions are the only well-expressed words in Africa where hearing is done by the eyes, and not the ears. He learns by observation, not by precepts of instruction. An example that sets a precedent for his eyes is far more persuasive than a lecture carried on wind to his ears. **Stop and think:** What additional weight is added to the conviction of the Spirit of God [Jn.16:7-11] in our presentation of the gospel? [Jas.2:14-18; Prov.29:19; 2 Thess.3:7-9].

OBSTACLES

Little was done to reach Africa with the gospel during the horrible centuries of the slave trade [see Appendix 4 *Slavery*]. It was only after that abominable institution was abolished, on paper though not in fact, that European and American missionaries turned their attention in earnest to the souls of men. Up until then, the occupation of their nations had been the buying and selling of their bodies. Strange that the church was not compelled by spiritual

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movements rather than political developments to reach Africa's millions before this time.

South Africa was the first area of focus of missionary enterprise. Moravians were early there in the latter 1790's followed by the London Missionary Society, Robert Moffat being one of the most famous among them. Sierra Leone on the West Coast and Kenya and Ethiopia on the East were the other early centers of Christian endeavor.

It was from these initial efforts that Africa became known as the "White Man's Graveyard." Hundreds of the pioneering missionaries perished in the efforts to bring the gospel to black Africa.

Fever and other tropical diseases claimed many. Some perished in tribal wars. Still others were murdered by hostile and superstitious tribes. Cannibals ate some. In Nigeria's Middle Belt, a white missionary was attacked and killed and the "demon" he rode, a bicycle, was mangled and hung on a tree in triumph over the oyinbo's [white man's] inferior "white magic."

Livingstone advocated the now famous approach that was widely adopted by governments and various missionary groups, Anglicans in particular, of the "3 C's;" Commerce, Christianity, and Civilization. In light of the history following that, especially from the African's perspective, a fourth should be added, "Conquest;" something Livingstone did not approve of. Yet seeds were sown thereby which yielded bitter fruit afterwards in the rush for colonial domination in the following years.

"Commerce" was a well-intentioned, though human, contrivance to establish a commercial alternative to African slavery. This unequal yoke of Mammon with heaven was not a blessed union. It invariably led to the fifth dual serpent headed "C,"

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Coveting/Corruption.

From the standpoint of the European nations, Commerce was the great objective and Civilization became merely a means to that end. Coveting and Corruption inflamed their Conquests while Christianity was only tolerated and sometimes a hindrance in the scramble to gain mastery over the continent [see Appendix 4 *Slavery*].

CENTRAL AFRICA

Patience is your key virtue in Africa. That patience, strengthened by humility and love, was rewarded in 1891 with the conversions of thousands in Lubaland of Central Africa, the domain of Mushidi the terrible.

Mushidi, vainly acting as husband to over five hundred women; wives, he calls them. Mushidi, who with his chiefs, swallow their local hot drinks served up in human skulls amidst hundreds of sun-bleached others scattered in piles around his compound. Mushidi, murderer, slaver, deceiver, tyrant, spiritist, drunkard, fornicator, part-time cannibal, and full-time rogue; for some twenty years he ate the sermons and spit out the salvation.

In an unfortunate and angry encounter with a British officer, this son of Belial, Mushidi, was shot to death. In the months of confusion and chaos that followed, the people turned to missionary Dan Crawford who had spent twenty-two uninterrupted years among them. His self-sacrificing service of love to Christ and to the people had so impressed them, that they wished him to be their *Konga Vantu*, the gatherer of the peoples. And so, in effect, he became their new king, and, literally, gathered the people.

Moving them from the scenes of Mushidi's horrific rule that Crawford described as a "murderous monster system of slavery," they

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founded a new Christian settlement, Luanza. Their novel village society was laid out, not overcrowded in squalor and contagion, but sensibly; separated and sanitized for reasons of sanctity and sanity. They themselves endorsed and encouraged the design.

There, on the northern shores of Lake Mweru in what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo, tribal differences and many traditional customs became things of the past. All were able to live in harmony as children of the one Father in heaven where local African ministry developed and flourished spontaneously.

Here is an African from among them, an elephant hunter and a missionary. His profession is elephants, but his confession is Christ. Deep into isolated and unreached forests and bush his elephants and His God lead him. He is a true missionary, much more so than the committee appointed employees of religious societies who venture forth into comfortable and semi-civilized fields.

See him dressed in his plain loin-cloth, his very plainness rebuking this modern generation of overdressed Christians. He adorns the doctrine [Tit.2:10] while they adorn themselves. He is a mighty hunter, not merely of elephants, but in the truest sense, a mighty hunter before the Lord.

Through him and others like him, the question of Africa's long delayed deliverance from its generations of darkness and bondage was answered at last. Having laid at Bethesda's pool for so many wearying years, Africa had finally gotten a Man to lift them into the waters of blessing [Jn.5:2-9]. Yes, a Man with men, African men, to raise multitudes of sick, blind, lame, and withered into the healing of Christ. May you and I be counted worthy to be found among them, as healed and healers alike.

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UGANDA

King Mutesa of Uganda met his first white men in 1862 that he described in this way, "I have not heard a white man tell a lie yet. They bought no slaves, and the time they were in Uganda they were very good." It was thirteen years later that Henry Stanley met with the chief who had begun to come under Islamic influence.

Stanley, an explorer first of all and missionary only reluctantly and occasionally, tried to impress upon his mind the truths of Christianity. More significantly, he wrote to England that the king of Uganda was requesting that missionaries be sent. The call was heeded and the CMS [Church Missionary Society of the Anglicans] commissioned eight brethren to Uganda, Alexander Mackay remaining as the sole survivor after just only two years in Africa.

Mutesa and the intelligent lovable Baganda people received him into their midst. The king was an unpredictable tyrant who daily executed at least one of his subjects and is said to have had more wives than any man in recorded history. He was known to have sacrificed 2,000 people in a single day in order to appease the gods that they might heal his loathsome incurable disease. Mackay said of him, "Mutesa is the greatest slave-hunter in the world, a monstrous murdering maniac, carrying on his raids on the strength of guns and powder brought up country by Arabs."

Both the king and his people were confused about the competing claims of their traditional religion, Islam, Anglican Christianity, and the soon to arrive French Roman Catholics. Numerous conflicts and discussions ensued, along with several attempts by Arabs and Roman Catholics alike to assassinate Mackay. He was repeatedly falsely accused before the king, yet he bore all

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meekly with grace.

Following the death of King Mutesa, his eighteen year old hemp smoking son, Mwanga, became ruler and unleashed his fury upon the believers. Only three months after his father's death, he had roasted three Christians over an open fire for refusing to participate in his sodomite lust that he had learned from the Arabs. After that initial outburst, many more martyrs followed during 1885 and 1886. On one occasion, thirty-two young men were slowly burned alive over a great fire while they committed their souls to God from the midst of the flames.

In 1887 the Arabs convinced Mwanga to drive Mackay out. He crossed into Tanganyika and continued his translation and printing of the Bible while working with Baganda refugees. There, at age forty, after only twelve years in Uganda, Mackay entered the presence of the Lord, having died of fever. The year was 1890.

Eventually, Mwanga was banished after he had convinced the pagan chiefs to abandon all Christian and Catholic leaders onto one of the river's islands to starve to death. He was driven out before that could be put into effect. Strife between the rival groups became even more intense. British Christians and French Catholics maneuvering between Arabs and idolaters, led to the great and horrendous battle of Mengo in 1892. The conflict was only brought under control by British military intervention.

In the years following, the gospel was received among the Bagandas by the thousands. One of the early results was that this tribe realized that the gospel that was good for them was also good for others. They sent forth many preachers and teachers from among themselves with the gospel to other tribes.

The most famous of these African pioneers was Apolo Kivebulaya who sacrificed and suffered that the gospel might reach

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the deep forest peoples. He penetrated into the dangerous land of the pygmies [a people short in stature, under 150cm, some of whom were cannibals], having won their confidence by his loving service. He left them a lasting legacy in his translation of Mark's gospel into their own dialect.

MISSIONS TO MUSLIMS IN AFRICA

In Saudi Arabia in the year 1891, Thomas French and Samuel Zwemer arrived in Muscat in order to confront Islam head-on with the gospel. French, more full of zeal than prudence, was dead in three months. Zwemer lived more than sixty years and became one of the greatest scholars, teachers, preachers, and authors throughout the world of Christian missions to Muslims.

At the great Tambaram Missionary Conference of 1938, Paul Harrison, a long-time worker among Muslims, told of the conversion of the first five believers in fifty years of their mission's work. The staggering impact of his testimony was felt by one and all; Imagine! five converts in fifty years of labor! He sat down with these quiet words: "The church in Arabia salutes you." Gospel work among Muslims is not a day's job.

Beginning in 1899, two brethren, Douglas Thornton and W.H. Temple Gairdner, began their work among Muslims in Cairo with a frank, friendly, and courteous approach to Muslims. One of the key means to their gospel presentation and inroads to the Muslim heart was their periodic publication, *Orient and Occident* [East and West]. It was a calm and sensible exposition of Christianity in relation to Islam, free from offensive and disrespectful verbal attacks which was used by the Lord.

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CHRISTIAN BRETHERN [Plymouth Brethren]

In the early 1800's there was a definite movement of the Holy Spirit from a deep study and dependence upon the Word of God. It resulted in a simplicity of gathering in various places and in a practical expression of Christ being the Pattern and Head of His church. Like the church in Antioch, the gatherings were blessed with a number of gifted teachers of the Word. And, like the Moravians, they dwelt together in the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace though from wide backgrounds.

The British Isles were the center of what became one of the most influential movements among modern Bible believing Christians. Their teachings went forth into every continent via their publications and wide-spread missionary work.

Great scholarly work was done in NT studies, manuscript research, and Greek dictionaries by brethren such as Samuel Tregelles, J.N. Darby, Kitto, and W.E. Vine. Expository commentaries on virtually every book of the Scriptures were written by men like C.H. Mackintosh, William Kelly, C.A. Coates, F.W. Grant, and Samuel Ridout. Devotional studies on life in Christ, the church, the second coming of our Lord, and a whole host of topics were penned by others too numerous to recount.

Anthony Norris Groves was notable among the missionaries who went out first to Baghdad and then to India by faith alone apart from dependency upon any agency or society for support. F. Arnot and Dan Crawford pioneered in the Democratic Republic of Congo and northern Rhodesia. Hudson Taylor, who is so noteworthy for his exploits in China, was early in their fellowship among those meeting in Bristol along with George Mueller.

Mueller, without appeal for funds, provided for literally

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thousands of orphans on a daily basis by faith in the living God. During his life, he contributed over one million pounds to Hudson Taylor and the missionaries in China in addition to many other servants of the Lord in various ministries.

In Dublin, Ireland, a Roman Catholic medical doctor became converted. This brother, Edward Cronin, from his early days was impressed with the essential oneness of God's people as he studied the Word. He made it a practice to visit various church meetings who were not part of the Anglican system to fellowship and break bread with them. He discovered, however, that these groups wanted him to forsake all others and join with them alone in order to continue in their fellowship. This, Cronin could not agree with.

He shared with a friend the perplexity this caused him, to cut himself off from others in order to identify with one group only. He saw that this would be participating in that forming of sects which Paul had condemned [I Cor.1:10-13]. They thus began to break bread together in their private homes. Soon others joined with them, still attending other gatherings of believers, but also meeting together in simplicity of devotion to Christ apart from denominational barriers.

At the same time in another part of the city, other believers unknown to each other were gathering in a similar manner. When they became aware of each other by the leading of the Holy Spirit, they gathered in the home of brother Hutchinson. Rapidly the meeting outgrew the home and they rented a hall to meet in. J.N. Darby, an ordained Anglican clergyman, joined them and eventually devoted his complete efforts to ministering to the growing circle of simple gatherings throughout the British Isles.

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ANTHONY NORRIS GROVES 1795 - 1853 AD

Groves had thought that in order to do the missionary work that his heart was burdened for, he must be ordained by the Church of England. As he traveled for his theological training to this end at Trinity College, he discussed the Word with J.G. Bellett on the subject. He realized from the Scriptures that the ordination of man was unnecessary for the work of the Lord.

It was a great joy for him to realize that, as he said, “We should come together in all simplicity as disciples, not waiting on [depending on] any pulpit or ministry, but trusting that the Lord would edify us together by ministering as He pleased and saw good from the midst of ourselves.” His next thought was that he could still serve as a missionary layman under the Church Missionary Society. But he found that he would be forbidden to celebrate the Lord’s Supper as an unordained clergyman. It was then that he parted ways with the Anglicans and went forth in dependence upon God alone.

As their wagons slowly wound their way through southern Russia in 1829, and eventually into Baghdad in Iraq [biblical Babylon], he remarked:

I feel I am happy in having no system [denomination] to support, in moving among either professing Christians or Mohammedans [Muslims]; to the one, [I] can truly say, I do not desire to bring you over to any church, but to the simple truth of God’s Word. And to the others, we wish you to read the New Testament that you may learn to judge of God’s truth, not by what you see in the churches around you, but by the Word of God itself.

In the second year of their work in Baghdad, the horrors of a tremendous plague descended upon the whole city. Half the

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population fled though many were cut down by an advancing army. Among the 40,000 remaining, the death rate soon reached 2,000 per day. To add affliction upon affliction, a great flood broke through the walls and swept away thousands of houses. In one month, 30,000 souls perished in the utmost misery.

With hearts torn by the suffering humanity around them, Groves was still able to write at that time:

The Lord has allowed us great peace, and assured confidence in His loving care, and in the truth of His promise, that our bread and our water shall be sure. It requires great confidence in God's love, and much experience of it, for the soul to remain in peace, stayed on Him, in a land of such changes, without means of escape in any direction; surrounded with the most desolating plague and destructive flood, with scenes of misery forced upon [us], and to which you can administer no relief. Even in this scene, however, the Lord has kept us by His infinite mercy in personal quiet and peace, trusting under the shadow of His Almighty wing.

When the disease and flood had passed and not one of their household had been struck, his dear wife took ill and in a very short time was taken in death by the plague that she had tenderly nursed many through. Shortly thereafter, his infant child also followed its mother.

It was then that the enemy armies assaulted the city. Mob rule took over within. His house was repeatedly attacked and robbed, but, though all within were helpless and unarmed, none suffered bodily harm. Cannon balls battered their building while shots rang around them and violence prevailed in the streets. Their eventual captors were far more merciful and orderly than the native populace who had degenerated into anarchy and looting. These were

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the things endured by this servant of God for the sake of the gospel. But he could write words such as these:

How *slow* we are to learn really to suffer, and to be *abased* with our dear Lord [Phil.2:3-10]. However, I think we are generally much more able to take up cheerfully any measure of bodily or mental trial than that which degrades us before the world. To see that *our abasement is our glory*, and *our weakness our strength*, requires extraordinary faith.

During his years of serving the Lord in India, his thoughts on missionary work matured. He expressed it in these words:

I think we all feel an increasing interest in that plan of missions which we are now pursuing; either laboring ourselves, or being associated with those who profess some "honest trade"...and also set an example to others that, by so doing they may support the weak. That dear young native, by name Aroolappen, has remained faithful to his purpose. [He] has declined any *form* of salary, because the people, he says, would not cease to tell him that he preached because he was hired.

Those who know the natives will, I am sure, feel with me, that this plan of missions, whereby the native himself is thrown *on God*, is calculated to develop *individuality of character*. The native naturally loves a provision and ease, and thereby he is kept in dependence on the creature: The European, on the other hand, loves to keep the native in subjection and himself in the place of rule. But it must be obvious to all, if the native churches be not strengthened by learning to lean on the Lord instead of man, the political changes of an hour may sweep away the present form of things, so far as it depends on Europeans, and leave not a trace behind.

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Some years before the schism promoted by J.N. Darby broke out and caused such heart rending division among the brethren throughout the world, Groves had recognized these tendencies in Darby and wrote him in this manner:

I wish you to feel assured that nothing has estranged my heart from you,...though I feel you have departed from those principles [you once held] and are in principle returning to the city [denominational thinking] from whence you departed...[when] your union [basis of fellowship] daily [is] becoming one of doctrine and opinion more than light and love, there will be little sympathy with such [who do not agree with your every opinion]. Your government [leadership] will become one wherein, overwhelmingly, is felt the authority of *men*: You will be known more by what you witness against than what you witness for, and practically this will prove that you witness against all but yourselves.

Our principles of communion [with the brethren are] the possession of the common life of the family of God...the fellowship of the common Spirit, in the worship of our common Head; and as Christ had received them, so would we to the glory of God the Father. The transition your little bodies [groups following Darby] have undergone, in no longer [being] witnesses for the glorious and simple *truth*, [but being] witnesses against all that they judge error, have lowered them in my apprehension from heaven to earth. *I would infinitely rather bear with all their evils* [of the immature and untaught], *than separate from their good* [as you and your followers are doing].

Unfortunately, brother Darby did not heed this godly and

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loving admonition. He continued to turn aside from those sound biblical principles of dealing gently with the ignorant and misguided [Heb.5:2], receiving those who are weak in faith [Rom.14:1], and of maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace [Eph.4:3]. Increasingly, he demanded of the brethren in all groups he was associated with to judge things according to his assessment and cut off fellowship with any who did not agree with his growing centralized control.

This mentality can only lead to increasing division and formation of multiplied sects, and it did. It is not only uncharitable, it is unreasonable to expect every person to understand and agree on every point of doctrine. If for no other reason, it is unrealistic to require a child to possess the conviction of a man in order to associate in love. Christ, our Pattern, did not choose and draw His own disciples together on this basis. When we insist that it be so, we have departed from Christ.

Those who continued in the fellowship of love in the light of Christ, refused to cut themselves off from those real believers who as of yet did not see all that they had from the Word. The saintly Robert Chapman described Darby and his followers as, “brethren dearly beloved and longed for, whose consciences lead them to refuse my fellowship and to deprive me of theirs.” This is truly the graciousness of turning the other cheek.

This loving fellowship and wholehearted dependence upon the Scriptures alone were their great witness to the world. As Rationalism spread its poison into the pulpits and colleges throughout Europe and America [see chapter 10 *Laodicea*], the Lord used these brethren to maintain a strong and uncompromising testimony to the reliability and inspiration of God’s unchanging Word. This is perhaps their greatest and abiding legacy for the

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church in our generation.

J. HUDSON TAYLOR 1832 - 1905 AD

From the age of five, Hudson Taylor had spoken freely about his desire to be a missionary in China. By the time of his death, over eight hundred missionaries served in association with him and that entire mighty country had a gospel testimony in strategic locations throughout the whole.

Though raised in a godly home, he was not converted until his seventeenth year. While his mother was away from the home for a few days, she sensed a great burden to pray for his conversion one particular day. As she brought her son's need before the Lord, she received a certainty that the Lord had heard and answered her plea. Upon return, Hudson met her with the news of his joyous conversion. She was not surprised.

While studying medicine at age eighteen, he purposefully disciplined himself by living a simple life of self-denial. He limited his diet to one loaf of bread and perhaps two apples daily. He chose to live in a comfortless one-room rental in a poverty stricken slum in order to prepare himself for the hardships of missionary life in China.

It was an experiment of living entirely by faith. When in need, he expressed that to no one, not to parents nor to his employer who was overdue in paying his wages from time to time. His thinking was this, "When I get out to China I shall have no claim on anyone for anything; my only claim will be on God. How important, therefore, to learn before leaving England to move man, through God, by prayer alone." This became the famous motto for which he became known in coming years.

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That he had this experience before leaving was providential in the mercies of God. When he first went to China, it was under an association with the China Evangelization Society that proved to be a most mismanaged and incompetent organization.

Often they failed to forward expected and needed funds that they had promised. Finally, after three years of disappointment with them, Taylor severed his connections when he learned that they had been operating in debt for some time. It was the Lord's doing for His man to be wholly cast upon the Lord for the large venture that could only be accomplished by a vigorous faith in God alone.

In Shanghai in 1854 as a young man of twenty-one, he met with a bewildering array of scenes and sounds. He knew nothing of the Chinese language and had never been out of his own country. A large group of foreign missionaries lived together in an international compound in the city where Taylor found lodging. The young unordained newcomer from a less than reputable mission society was not well received.

Hudson found the missionaries self-indulgent and lazy. The American ones were particularly offensive with their critical, vulgar, and backbiting habits. He was all too glad to get away from them and reach the interiors where Christ had not been preached by the complacent Westerners in their comfortable compound.

It became evident to him that in order to effectively reach the Chinese, he must adopt their customs and dress to identify with the people he was trying to reach. Thus it was that he shaved his hair and plaited a long queue [pig-tail] to his own head and donned the typical black silk garments of the natives. When he returned from his evangelistic tour, he was received with hostility and ridicule by the other missionaries.

But the Lord had other purposes for him besides fitting into

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traditional missionary thinking. In 1858 he married Maria who had been brought up in China by missionary parents and together they served in Ningpo where he supervised in the local hospital. This experience convinced them that he needed further medical training and so they departed for England.

God had other reasons for sending them there. While obtaining further medical skills, he also devoted himself to a revision of the Ningpo NT, a laborious task that he often spent thirteen hours a day at. It was also while there that the idea of the China Inland Mission came into being.

Unique in its day, Taylor realized that if the more than 400 million inhabitants of China whose death rate of one million per month were to be reached, it could not be done alone. God would need to raise up a mighty army of devoted servants to join with him. The principles he established for the CIM were these:

[1] Appeal for laborers was to be among committed Christians of various backgrounds, and not from the highly educated and ordained among particular denominations.

[2] The operating headquarters of the mission would be in China and not in England in order to avoid incompetency and delays in communication hindering needful decisions on the field.

[3] Single women were welcome to come and do pioneering work among the Chinese women by themselves in the interior of the land.

[4] CIM missionaries were offered no set salary but rather were to depend entirely upon God for their needs without taking up offerings or making direct appeals for money.

And so it was that in 1865, Hudson and Maria along with their four children and fifteen new missionaries set sail for the several months' long journey to China. On board ship, many of the

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crew came to know the Lord and join in with their Bible studies. Other things developed on board as well.

Seeds of ill-feeling and division had been allowed to take root in the hearts of some. Jealousy and discontent sprang up because of money matters, earthly possessions, or attention shown to others. Taylor was able to soothe the disturbed and correct the discontented with loving private discussions and prayer with each. In some, however, it trimmed off the bitter fruit but did not pull up the root. Upon landing, there was near disaster.

Complaints arose about the Chinese dress that they had all agreed upon to wear before leaving. This, combined with the ridicule of the missionaries from other societies and the overall strangeness of the new environment led to bitterness and even outright refusal to submit to Taylor's leadership. Lewis Nicol led the group of troublemakers to even meet separately for meals and would not join with them in devotions.

The Lord's ways are not our ways. It was a sore trial for Hudson, Maria, and those spiritually minded among them who longed for harmony, fellowship, and that the testimony might go forward. None could have imagined how God would heal the breach.

In 1867 little eight-year-old Gracie Taylor became ill and never recovered. "Who plucked that lovely flower?" inquired the gardener. "The Master did so and carried it to His home," replied his fellow-worker. And the gardener questioned no more.

In the grief and sorrow of that loss, bitterness and grievances were forgotten in the sympathy expressed to the Taylors. All were reconciled with the exception of Nicol and his wife who later had to be dismissed from the mission due to their continuing strife. And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, **Cast out the scoffer, and**

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contention will leave; yes, strife and reproach will cease [Prov.22:10].

Chinese had developed a long standing dislike for foreigners over generations. Believing that the “foreign devils” kidnaped and ate Chinese children, violence broke out against the CIM during 1868. Many of their number were badly wounded but the missionaries escaped with their lives, though barely.

News of this in England prompted the British to send in their navy gunboats in order to teach the Chinese a lesson. The CIM was blamed for the disturbance in the *London Times*. Criticism against the mission rose sharply while contributions and missionary candidates dropped off drastically.

Like Paul of old, Hudson was plagued by conflicts without and fears within [2 Cor.7:5]. He wrote to his parents in 1869:

I have often asked you to remember me in prayer. That need has never been greater than at the present time. Envied by some, despised by man, hated perhaps by others; often blamed for things I never heard of, or had nothing to do with; an innovator on what have become established rules of missionary practice; an opponent of mighty systems of heathen error and superstition; working without precedent in many respects, and with few experienced helpers; often sick in body, as well as perplexed in mind and embarrassed by circumstances; had not the Lord been specially gracious to me, had not my mind been sustained by the conviction that the work is His, and that He is with me in the “thick of the conflict,” I must have fainted and broken down. But the battle is the Lord’s: and He will conquer. We may fail, do fail continually; but He never fails. Still I need your prayers more than ever before.

The greatest of these difficulties, however, was the inner

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wrestling with his own powerlessness against sin. He cried out, "Every day, almost every hour, the consciousness of failure and sin oppressed me." This was not the cry of the convicted thief nor that of the drunkard awakening the following morning. It was rather that grief of a bride who deeply regrets the least shadow of estrangement from her Beloved [S. of S. 3:1-4; 5:2-8]. Yet, blessed be God, in a letter from brother McCarthy, a fellow missionary in China, just at that very hour came this shaft of light, as it were, from heaven:

I do wish I could have a talk with you *now* about the way of Holiness. It [is] the subject of all others occupying my thoughts [due to] a consciousness of [my own] failure; a constant falling short of that which I felt should be aimed at; an unrest; a perpetual striving to find some way by which I might continuously enjoy that communion, that fellowship at times so real, but more often so visionary, so far off!

Do you know, dear brother, I now think that this striving, effort, longing, hoping for better days to come, is not the true way to happiness, holiness or usefulness: better, no doubt far better, than being satisfied with our poor attainments, but not the best way after all. I have been struck with a passage from a book of yours left here, entitled *Christ is All*. It says:

The Lord Jesus received is holiness begun; the Lord Jesus cherished is holiness advancing; the Lord Jesus *counted upon as never absent* would be holiness complete.

This [grace of faith] is the chain which binds the soul to Christ, and makes the Savior and the sinner one...A channel is now formed by which Christ's fulness plenteously [abundantly] flows down. The barren branch

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becomes a portion of the fruitful stem...One life reigns throughout the whole.

Believer, you mourn your shortcomings; you find the hated monster, sin, still striving for the mastery. Evil is present when you would do good. Help is laid up for you in Christ. Seek clearer interest in Him. They who *most* deeply feel that they have died in Christ, and paid in Him sin's penalties, ascend to highest heights of godly life. He is most holy who has most of Christ within, and joys most fully in the finished work. It is defective faith which clogs the feet, and causes many a fall.

This last sentence I think I now fully endorse. To *let* my loving Savior work in me *His will*, my sanctification is what I would live for by His grace. Abiding, not striving nor struggling; looking off unto Him; trusting Him for present power; trusting Him to subdue all inward corruption; resting in the love of an Almighty Savior, in the conscious joy of a *complete* salvation, a salvation "from all sin" [this is *His Word*]; willing that His will should truly be supreme – this is not new, and yet it is *new to me*.

I feel as though the first dawning of a glorious day has risen upon me. I hail it with trembling, yet with trust. I seem to have got to the edge only, but of a sea which is boundless; to have sipped only [from] that which fully satisfies. Christ literally *all* seems to me now the power, the *only* power for service; the only ground for unchanging joy. May He lead us into the realization of His unfathomable fulness.

How then to have our faith increased? Only by thinking of all that Jesus *is*, and all He *is for us*: His life, His death, His work, He Himself as revealed to us in the Word, to be the subject of our

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constant thoughts. Not a striving to have faith, or to increase our faith, but a looking off to the Faithful One seems all we need; a resting in the Loved One entirely, for time and for eternity. It does not appear to me as anything new, only formerly misapprehended.

The Lord Jesus was pleased to use this as life and light to his soul. In his own words he exclaimed, "As I read, I saw it all. I looked to Jesus; and when I saw, oh how joy flowed!" He went forth as a new man going out into a familiar world somehow strangely new. He wrote right away to his beloved sister in England, quoting from the letter he had received from McCarthy and commenting further with these words:

Here, I feel is the secret: not asking how I am to get sap *out* of the Vine into myself, but remembering that Jesus *is* the Vine – the root, stem, branches, twigs, leaves, flowers, fruit, all indeed. Yes, and far more too! He is the soil and sunshine, air and rain – more than we can ask, think, or desire. Let us not then want to get anything out of Him, but rejoice in being *ourselves in Him* – one with Him, and, consequently, with *all* His fulness. Not seeking for faith to bring holiness, but rejoicing in the *fact* of perfect holiness in Christ, let us realize that – inseparably one with Him – this holiness *is* ours, and accepting the fact, find it so indeed.

His transformation was thorough and joyous. He explained further what had transpired in a lengthy letter to his dear sister who had been close to the Taylors for many years. It reaches the core of real spirituality and lays the groundwork for true conformity to the Pattern of Christ. It is worthwhile to recount it for our own reflection and embracing by faith as we seek to also be pleasing unto our God.

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October 17, 1869: As to work, mine was never so plentiful, so responsible, or so difficult; but the weight and strain are all *gone*. The last month or more has been perhaps, the happiest of my life; and I long to tell you a little of what the Lord has done for my soul. I do not know how far I may be able to make myself intelligible about it, for there is nothing new or strange or wonderful - and yet, all is new! In a word, "Whereas once I was blind, now I see."

My mind has been greatly exercised for six or eight months past, feeling the need personally, and for our Mission, of more holiness, life, power in our souls. But personal need stood first and was the greatest. I felt the ingratitude, the danger, the sin of not living nearer to God. I prayed, agonized, fasted, strove, made resolutions, read the Word more diligently, sought more time for retirement and meditation - but all was without effect.

Every day, almost every hour, the consciousness of sin oppressed me. I knew that if I could only abide in Christ, all would be well, but I *could not*. I began the day with prayer, determined not to take my eye from Him for a moment; but pressure of duties, sometimes very trying, constant interruptions apt to be so wearing, often caused me to forget Him.

Then one's nerves get so fretted [upset] in this climate that temptations to irritability, hard thoughts, and sometimes unkind words are all the more difficult to control. Each day brought its register of sin and failure, of lack of power. To will was indeed present with me, but how to perform I found not.

Then came the question, "Is there *no* rescue? Must it be thus to the end - constant conflict and, instead of victory, too often defeat?" How, too, could I preach with sincerity that to those who receive

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Jesus, “to them gave He power to become the sons of God” [i.e. God-like] when it was not so in my experience? Instead of growing stronger, I seemed to be getting weaker and to have less power against sin; and no wonder, for faith and even hope were getting very low.

I hated myself; I hated my sin; and yet I gained no strength against it. I felt I *was* a child of God: His Spirit in my heart would cry, in spite of all, “Abba, Father”: but to rise to my privileges as a child, I was utterly powerless. I thought that holiness, practical holiness, was to be gradually attained by a diligent use of the means of grace. I felt that there was nothing I so much desire in this world, nothing I so much needed. But so far from in any measure attaining it, the more I pursued and strove after it, the more it eluded my grasp; till hope itself almost died out, and I began to think that, perhaps to make heaven the sweeter, God would not give it down here. I do not think I was striving to attain it in my own strength. I knew I was powerless. I told the Lord so, and asked Him to give me help and strength; and sometimes I almost believed He would keep and uphold me. But on looking back in the evening, alas! There was but sin and failure to confess and mourn before God.

I would not give you the impression that this was the daily experience of all those long, weary months. It was a too frequent state of soul; that toward which I was tending, and which almost ended in despair. And yet never did Christ seem more precious – a Savior who *could* and *would* save such a sinner!...And sometimes there were seasons not only of peace but of joy in the Lord. But they were transitory, and at best there was a sad lack of power. Oh, how good the Lord was in bringing this conflict to an end!

All the time I felt assured that there was in Christ all I needed, but the practical question was how to get it *out*. He was rich, truly, but

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I was poor; He strong, but I weak. I knew full well that there was in the root, the stem, abundant fatness; but how to get it into my puny little branch was the question. As gradually the light was dawning on me, I saw that faith was the only prerequisite, was the hand to lay hold on His fulness but it would not come; tried to exercise it, but in vain.

Seeing more and more the wondrous supply of grace laid up in Jesus, the fulness of our precious Savior – my helplessness and guilt seemed to increase. Sins committed appeared but as trifles compared with the sin of unbelief which was their cause, which could not or would not take God at His Word, but rather made Him a liar! Unbelief was, I felt, *the* damning sin of the world – yet I indulged in it. I prayed for faith, but it came not. What was I to do?

When my agony of soul was at its height, a sentence in a letter from dear McCarthy was used to remove the scales from my eyes, and the Spirit of God revealed the truth of *our oneness* with *Jesus* as I had never known it before. McCarthy, who had been much exercised by the same sense of failure, but saw the light before I did, wrote [I quote from memory]: “But how to get faith strengthened? Not by striving after faith, but by resting on the Faithful One.”

As I read I saw it all! “If we believe *not*, He abideth faithful.” I looked to Jesus and saw [and when I saw, oh, how joy flowed!] that He had said, “I will never leave *you*.” “Ah, *there is rest!*” I thought. “I have striven in vain to rest in Him. I’ll strive no more. For has *He* not promised to abide with me – never to leave me, never to fail me?” And, [dear sister], *He never will!*

But this was not all He showed me, nor one half. As I thought of the Vine and the branches, what light the blessed Spirit poured

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direct into my soul! How great seemed my mistake in having wished to get the sap, the fulness *out* of Him. I saw not only that Jesus would never leave me, but that I was a member of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. The Vine now I see, is not the root merely, but all – root, stem, branches, twigs, leaves, flowers, fruit: and Jesus is not only that: He is soil and sunshine, air and showers, and ten thousand times more than we have ever dreamed, wished for, or needed. Oh, the joy of seeing this truth! I do pray that the eyes of your understanding may be enlightened, that you may know and enjoy the riches freely given us in Christ.

Oh, my dear sister, it is a wonderful thing to be really one with a risen and exalted Savior; to be a member of Christ! Think what it involves. Can Christ be rich and I poor? Can your right hand be rich and the left poor? Or your head be well fed while your body starves? Again, think of its bearing on prayer. Could a bank clerk say to a customer, “It was only your hand that wrote that check, not you,” or, “I cannot pay this sum to your hand, but only to yourself”? No more can your prayers, or mine, be discredited *if offered in the Name of Jesus* [i.e. not in our own name, or for the sake of Jesus merely, but on the ground that we are His, His members] so long as we keep within the extent of Christ’s credit – a tolerably wide limit! If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us, and...we know we have the petitions that we desire of Him” [I Jn.5:14].

The sweetest part, if one may speak of one part being sweeter than another, is the *rest* which full identification with Christ brings. I am no longer anxious about anything, as I realize this; for He, I know, is able to carry our *His will*, and His will is mine. It makes no matter where He places me, or how. That is rather for Him to consider than for me; for in the easiest positions He must give me His grace, and in the most difficult His grace is sufficient.

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It little matters to my servant whether I send him to buy a few cash worth of things, or the most expensive articles. In either case he looks to me for the money, and brings me his purchases. So, if God places me in great perplexity, must He not give me much guidance; in positions of great difficulty, much grace; in circumstances of great pressure and trial, much strength? No fear that His resources will be unequal to the emergency! And His resources are mine, for *He* is mine, and is with me and dwells in me. All this springs from the believer's oneness with Christ. And since Christ has thus dwelt in my heart by faith, how happy I have been! I wish I could tell you, instead of writing about it.

I am no better than before, but I am dead and buried with Christ - yes, and risen too and ascended; and now Christ lives in me, and "the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me." I now *believe* I am dead to sin. God reckons me so, and tells me to reckon myself so. He knows best. All my past experience may have shown that it *was* not so; but I dare not say it is not now, when He says it is. I feel and know that old things have passed away.

I am as capable of sinning as ever, but Christ is realized as present as never before. He cannot sin; and He can keep me from sinning. I cannot say [I am sorry to have to confess it] that since I have seen this light I have not sinned; but I do feel there was no need to have done so. And further - walking more in the light, my conscience has been more tender; sin has been instantly seen, confessed, pardoned; and peace and joy [with humility] instantly restored: with one exception, when for several hours peace and joy did not return - from want, as I had to learn, of full confession, and from some attempt to justify self.

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Faith, I now see, is “the *substance* of things hoped for,” and not mere shadow. It is not *less* than sight, but *more*. Sight only shows the outward forms of thing; faith gives the substance. You can *rest* on substance, *feed* on substance. Christ dwelling in the heart by faith is *power* indeed, is *life* indeed. And Christ and sin will not dwell together; nor can we have His presence with love of the world, or carefulness [worried distraction] about “many things” [Lk.10:41; Mt.13:22].

And now I must close. I have not said half I would, nor *as* I would had I more time. May God give you to lay hold on these blessed truths. Do not let us continue to say, in *effect*, “who shall ascend into heaven, that is to bring Christ down from above:” In other words, do not let us consider Him as afar off, when God has made us *one with him*, members of His very body. Nor should we look upon this experience, these truths, as for the few. They are the birthright of every child of God, and no one can dispense with them without dishonor to our Lord. The only power for deliverance from sin or for true service is CHRIST.

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10

LAODICEA

THE MODERN CHURCH

Laodicea means, “The people’s rights.” This is the church that was self-sufficient, needing nothing in its own conceited estimation. It was a church that profited no one except itself, and that in no true sense of the word [Rev.3:14-22].

Neither hot nor cold, it was a sickening compromise between the two. As the traveler entered Laodicea, he met a natural cold spring to refresh him from his journey along his way. On the outskirts of the city, a healing hot spring soothed the afflicted.

This church was neither refreshing nor beneficial. Self rendered them useless to men and disgusting to Christ. They will be vomited out of His mouth as they could not possibly abide in Him in that condition. Rights, riches, and reliance upon self were their characteristics though they were actually wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. Laodicea aptly represents the church in the Modern period; religious, affluent, and focused upon self-interests of what they think is owed to them with no benefit to any.

SEVEN CHURCHES

The message to the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3 are

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most instructive. At the outset of each message, Christ is revealed as the solution to every departure that will resolve the lack in the church. The messages address not only the individual assemblies, but also all the churches and each overcomer within them, as in Rev.2:7. Thus the significance of these seven messages is not exhausted by one particular application alone.

As Revelation is a book of spiritual symbols and prophesy, we can expect to see these elements in the message to the seven churches as well. As we look at them symbolically and prophetically, we discover outlined therein, not only the immediate concerns about the particular congregations, but an overall history of the church throughout the ages.

Seven lampstands are seven churches, and they are a mystery [Rev.1:20]. Seven is the number of completeness, fullness, and perfection. A lampstand is the means whereby light is cast into the darkness; a testimony. The mystery of these seven churches, then, is that of the testimony of the whole church throughout the ages, revealed successively, stage by stage.

EPHESUS [Rev.2:1-7]

Ephesus represents the church at the first, during Apostolic times. It vigorously maintained the truth, labored untiringly, and upheld the name of Christ. But that best and most essential love, apart from which all else becomes nothing [I Cor.13:1-3], faded and failed.

The early tendency to this decline in love for Christ as having the central place among the brethren has been noted in Chapter 5 *Leaven in the Meal*. Testimonies become dim and are eventually extinguished altogether if this best and foremost love is

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not rekindled and vibrant. It was so in Jerusalem, Antioch [in modern Syria], Carthage [in modern Tunisia, North Africa], and Ephesus [in modern Turkey]; all now Islamic. **He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.**

SMYRNA [Rev.2:8-11]

Smyrna introduces the suffering church in the next two centuries. Smyrna means “myrrh,” a fragrant resin/gum that sends forth its aroma when crushed. Jesus notes that they will have tribulation ten days; precisely what occurred under the ten “waves” of persecution instigated by imperial Rome beginning with Nero in 64 AD as noted in Chapter 4 *The Storm Breaks*.

Faithfulness unto death issues in a crown of life given from Him who died in our behalf and rose again on the third day. He who was tempted in what He has suffered is able to come to the aid of those facing the same ordeal [Heb.2:18]. There is no rebuke to the church of Smyrna.

PERGAMOS [Rev.2:12-17]

Pergamos shows, alas, the church joined to the world in an unholy alliance between church and state beginning with Constantine in 313 AD as noted in Chapter 6 *Until All Was Leavened*. Surely where the “head” of the church is also the head of State, there you will find Satan’s throne.

Balaam becomes the “minister” to this Balak, who prophesies for mammon [2 Pet.2:15] and seduces the church to fornicate with the world. The doctrine of ruling over the common people [Nicolaitans: see Appendix 1 *NT Leadership*] is firmly

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established during this period. Yet the Lord will have His faithful witnesses in every period of the church; one or more like Antipas [Against All], like Athanasius who stood against all the bishops of Christendom as noted in Chapter 7 *Remnant*.

What is the remedy for such a church, such an age, or such an individual heart? The Word of Christ, that sharp two-edged sword, must divide, judge, and pierce to separate, convict, and humble. Repent; or He will come in wrath and war against any adulterously joined to the world [Jas.4:4]. He who has ears, let him hear.

THYATIRA [Rev.2:18-29]

Thyatira begins that horrific reign of the seductive Mother of Harlots, Jezebel: the Roman Catholic Church, as described in Chapter 6 *Until All Was Leavened*.

Who cannot see the parallel between Jezebel's immorality, idolatry, persecution of the faithful [I K.18:4], the covetous seizing of lands by murderous intrigue [I K.21], and the repeated practices of the Roman Catholic Church through the centuries? How often she was given chance to repent through the faithful testimony of truth presented by the remnant within her, yet she did not want to repent! Many tolerated her wickedness, many were her slain, and great is the impending wrath of Him who sees with eyes of purifying flame and walks with steps of burning judgment.

The doctrine of Jezebel, a wanton imposter bride, was nothing less than the deep things of Satan. Such was Rome's system. Compromise cannot be tolerated unless one will also be hurled into great tribulation because of fornicating with her.

Hold fast what you have until Jesus comes and may your

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deeds at the last be more than the first. Those reigning with Jezebel presently will never reign with Christ unendingly. Authority over the nations will be the future portion of the faithful with Christ then by the gift of grace, not due to Jezebel's sword and craftiness at the moment. These are words that also must sink into our ears.

SARDIS [Rev.3:1-6]

Sardis brings before us the period of the Protestant Reformation of the 1500's as described in Chapter 8 *The Light Dawns*. Outwardly, all was reformed. Inwardly there was deadness. Only a remnant within remained which were about to die. Wake up!

The question of Paul to the Galatians is a fitting one for Protestantism, **You were running well, who hindered you from obeying the truth?** [Gal. 5:7]. Deeds begun were not completed. The Reformation only went so far, and no further, stopping short of full restoration.

Significantly, the Lord reminds them to remember **how you have received and heard**. They had heard through the Word and received by grace through faith. It is to this they needed to hold fast to, repenting from turning aside to the codes and teachings of men.

Only Christ possess the seven-fold fulness of the Spirit; the remedy for all deadness. Reformers or princes are human substitutes for Him who has the seven stars; the fulness of representative direction and rule. In the Sardis age, Reformation men subtly replaced Christ, and movements stifled and deadened the Spirit's life.

Yes, there were a few who did not defile themselves. But garments of all walking with Him must be kept white in order to be worthily confessed by Christ before the Father in heaven. Let us hear

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also this.

PHILADELPHIA [Rev.3:7-13]

Philadelphia significantly means, “Brotherly love.” No reproof is offered to this church who did not deny Christ’s name and kept His Word. It introduces the church of true Christian testimony, zeal, and power following the Reformation period described in Chapter 9 *Wool and Linen*.

The love and service of the Moravians is a prime example of many fellowship groups of brotherly love who arose during this time and went forth through the opened door that no man could shut. Christ has the key and can open the same for any who have ears to hear.

DEVILISH SCHEMES

And now we turn to consider the Modern church of Laodicea in the Western world from the 1900’s up to the present. The details, individuals, and movements would exceed the scope of this book. Rather, trends and emphases that have affected the church worldwide through Western influence will be surveyed.

The battle to keep the Bible from the people has been the occupation of the devil from the outset. In the first three centuries, he attempted to eliminate it by fury and burning. Following Constantine, it was hijacked by Roman Catholics who forbid it to the multitudes. All through the Middle Ages, it lay buried under heaps of hatred, ignorance, superstition, and tradition.

During Reformation times, its living light burst forth in translations for the masses in their own tongues. Through the

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sacrificial labors of devoted brethren and the blessing of the printed page, the Word and its teaching was spread abroad in Europe and beyond.

With the Scriptures and its doctrine thus dispersed far and wide in recent times, the devil embarked upon a different scheme: Convince Modern Man that what they now held in their hand was irrelevant error.

MODERN THOUGHT IN EUROPE AND AMERICA

The Humanistic thinking of the Renaissance which led to the Rationalism of the Enlightenment, finally eliminated any rational meaning to life for Modern Man. The following diagram will illustrate the shift in thinking that took place which led Western culture to where it is today.

Grace:	Spiritual	God	Universals	Absolutes	Propositional- Revelation
<hr/>					
Nature:	Universe	Man	Particulars	Relativity	Experiential- Revelation

The things above the line are what give meaning to the things below. [Propositional: statements that are either true or false. Propositional-Revelation refers to the Bible]. The observations of man in the natural realm are focused and corrected by the things above. Man's thoughts about life, morals, society, relationships, and human personality can only be accurate if they align with the revelation of God in His written Word, the Bible.

When man began to reason about the individual things in

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Nature apart from the absolute reference point of eternal truth in the Scriptures, confusion, corruption, and despair resulted. As this was done following the Reformation period, conflicting opinions prevailed as the Word was increasingly set aside.

Eventually, men saw the futility of attempting to derive meaning from the particulars of Nature without any unchanging reference point to evaluate opinions by. Finally, all attempts to do that were abandoned, and Modern Man uncomfortably tried to adjust himself to the idea that he was part of a mechanistic universe of random chance.

Isaac Newton's [1642-1727 AD] discoveries about gravity through scientific reasoning, led to the common accepted belief that natural forces are rigid laws that govern the universe. As European explorers brought back news of distant cultures and religions, many Rationalists began to express that there might be a basic natural religion that all men had apart from the Bible or priests.

At the end of the 1700's, Rousseau maintained that whatever is natural is right. He said in the realm of philosophy what Darwin's evolutionary theory in biology would say some eighty years later. To him, man's morality must be sought for within the closed system of nature, not looked for outside of it in a god or religious code.

Nature is autonomous [a law unto itself] and therefore freedom is unrestrained since there is nothing outside Nature [nothing above the line: Grace] to govern it. Rousseau maintained that it is only institutions that have made men bad; by nature they are essentially good. Therefore, when the sovereign natural will of the people [which is good] is violated, the people may overthrow institutions in order to return to natural law. This thinking fueled the French Revolution.

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Deism resulted from the philosophic and scientific reasoning described. This was a religion without written revelation. Emphasis was placed upon God as the cause of creation who then left the universe to be governed by natural laws able to be discovered by reason. Moral and spiritual behavior were natural principles to be understood by reason, not by God revealing Himself in history through miracles, inspiration of the Scriptures, or becoming man in the person of Jesus Christ.

Deism's ideals of reason, nature, happiness, progress, and liberty were the dream of the Enlightenment during the 1700's. Having driven out the Huguenots by the early 1700's, France exalted the goddess of Reason in the cathedral of *Notre Dame* [Our Lady, formerly a title of Virgin Mary] in Paris in the year 1792 that they renamed "Year One;" the very year the massacres began in their "ideal" society based on reason alone.

The bloodbath of the French Revolution followed where more than forty thousand were slaughtered by their own revolutionaries of natural reason. Napoleon Bonaparte put an end to the Rationalistic ideal when he arose as an authoritative dictator in 1799.

By 1855, the Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard, expressed that Rationalism had failed to provide answers to the meaning of life. To him, since reference to Grace [the things above the line] had long since been abandoned by "reasonable" men, all that was left was an irrational leap by "faith" into an experience that it was hoped would provide justification for existence.

Non-reason held out an offer of optimism and hope. Reason led only to pessimism and despair. In other words, though all that you could understand gave no hope for meaning, just believe anyway.

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For the theologians who followed in this flow, the events of the Gospels were seen as non verifiable, non historical, and in error. Therefore all that remained were words with connotation; having emotional influence, but with no rational or trustworthy content.

Faith was thus seen as subjective, existing only as a memory, feeling, or imagined force, but with no object or real substance to it. Therefore faith in faith was all that remained; a groundless irrational hope.

No longer was it a question of “I and It,” but now it became “I and Thou.” That is, it was no longer a faith based upon documents [Moses, Scriptures, the Gospels are the “It”], but one of a direct encounter with God [the “Thou”]. Nature’s Experiential-Revelation had replaced Grace’s Propositional-Revelation.

Whatever definitions or content Modern Man wished to put into “Thou” words, such as “Jesus,” “God,” “Faith,” etc., didn’t really matter to them any longer. None of those terms had any significance beyond arousing an emotional cultural memory. The encounter itself was what was paramount and experience began to be viewed as the significant thing. Objective and historical content or meaning as declared in the Bible had become irrelevant.

Some thinkers described this faith without historical biblical content as a “feeling of dependence.” Thus religious meaningless discussion about experiences using religious terms void of objective verifiable content was all that the “church” was left with. It is no wonder that this “Christian” nonsense was not taken to be a serious matter in the twentieth century.

Theologians began teaching that the Bible was no more to be thought of as an inspired, objective, historical, and Propositional-Revelation in itself. It was rather a record of revelation and a witness

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to it; a means to an end, an empty pipe through which revelation might flow at a given instance. In other words, “revelation” occurs at the moment of the experiential encounter, not in the communication of truth in the form of documents, information, and verifiable statements.

From Germany and Europe, these ideas were popularized and absorbed into many seminaries throughout America. With few exceptions, the Scriptures were spoken of as being “conceptually” or “dynamically” inspired. That is, the words of the Bible itself may be in error, unhistorical, or contain myths, but they nevertheless can be used by God to “reveal” Himself to the heart through an “encounter.” In the realm of reason, the Bible was not trusted as the Word of God. In the arena of “faith’s” non-reason, it could become the Word through an experience with the divine.

Truth began to be defined in terms of the value that it had to the individual, rather than with reference to universal absolutes : “True to me, but not true to you.” A shift in thinking had occurred from “either/or” [right and wrong] to “both/and” [a relative subjective ethic].

Stop and think: Describe what happens when the Scriptures no more are viewed as the sole basis of revelation about God and man. On what basis can we justify an experience as true and right?

EVOLUTION

Evolution has made man simply part of a biological machine while philosophy has informed us that there is no unifying rationality to life. Following the publication of Charles Darwin’s *The Origin of Species* in the late 1850’s, evolution began to infiltrate all facets of thinking and society. The presumption was that the simple precedes

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the complex and that everything is in an on-going process of upward development. The formula for this transformation is: Time plus chance equals reality, with the present being the key to the past; a uniformity of natural causes within a closed system.

That is, there is nothing outside the system [of the natural universe] to influence it; neither God, spirits, nor a soul in man. In terms of the previous diagram, Nature is all that there is, Grace has disappeared from consideration. Man therefore is a product of mechanistic processes and is nothing more than an aspect of nature. Everything done by him is therefore natural, and nature is neither good nor evil, it simply is.

Man is reduced thereby to the level of another animal; a bio-chemical machine in a meaningless flow of time. Evolution removes all significance to man's existence, since all develops by random chance apart from design. Life is a cosmic accident.

With no God as Creator, morals cannot have any relevance for two reasons. [1] Without God, there is no absolute reference point determining right and wrong. Moral choice therefore becomes an absurdity since there is no way to finally decide whether one action is better than another. [2] Morality is not the concern of animals, and man is an animal according to evolution. Chickens have no laws against rape and goats do not punish theft.

All value judgments thus become arbitrary and pointless. Finally then, along with morality, love and freedom also disappear, being swallowed up by the mechanism of cause and effect within evolution's closed system.

Advantage to self is all the individual is left with to motivate and determine his actions according to evolution. It is only natural, therefore, for man to be utterly self-occupied with no concern for others. In evolution, only the fittest, most aggressive, and cleverest

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survive.

THEISTIC EVOLUTION

Theistic evolution is a compromising attempt by some in the church during the 1900's to cling to an appearance of biblical belief while not appearing foolish in the eyes of the world. Pride motivates the doctrine. It is imported into the text of the Scriptures but not derived from it.

The teaching of creation in the Word of God and the philosophy of evolution are mutually exclusive alternatives. Out of nothing [Heb.11:3], God created the first man, Adam [I Cor.15:45], whose flesh was not derived from that of animals [I Cor.15:39]. All was concluded in six days [Ex.20:9-11].

Theistic evolution imagines God using existing materials, existing flesh of beasts, and bringing into being more than one man by its process over millions of years. To hold to it, one must reject the plain message of the Bible.

It cannot answer the question when developing "man" became in the image of God, other than by the miraculous intervention of the God of heaven; but that is not utilizing an evolutionary natural process. The theistic evolutionary system is an irrational leap of faith into the arena of non-reason since it cannot be shown to be true either scientifically or biblically. It is simply non-verifiable Modern philosophic thinking dressed up in religious clothes.

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REVOLUTIONS

Tubal-Cain is the father of the abolition of Modern Man [Gen.4:22]. Bronze and iron tools in his hands forged economic and military advantage over weaker men lacking his technology.

The Industrial Revolution of the late 1700's signaled that man, as part of the evolutionary mechanism of nature, was destined to become irrelevant. What formerly required the presence of many, now could be accomplished with few. Modern Man began to realize that the individual was losing significance in the overall arena of greater concerns and forces.

Individual men became disposable commodities having significance only in so much as they were vital to a larger enterprise. The value of a man was assessed in relationship to the machine. The machine dictated whether he was of use or not. In the larger scheme of things, industrialization reinforced the philosophic and biological ideas that man is merely a component part of the all-encompassing mechanism of nature.

Education became secularized with emphasis upon technical intelligence and practical application of scientific inquiry. Aesthetic sense was dulled and the level of literature and art was lowered to the popular and mass-producible.

The small farm and nuclear family unit gave way to the factory, urbanization, diversity, and women's "emancipation" by entering the previously male-dominated workforce. Women and work both were now out of the home. The two World Wars fought in the 1900's greatly accelerated the flight of women from the home into cultural "liberation."

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Technological Revolution. Critical reasoning is becoming obsolete in a world culture where machines increasingly do our thinking for us. Information is obtainable without reflection. What was scattered at Babel's tower, is becoming reconfigured through computerized information technology such as the Internet. Rapid transforming of global consciousness and values are taking place through this means.

The evangelical church now thinks it knows the reality of Christianity because data counted to be truth is at their fingertips, even while estrangement of relationships degenerates due to transacting with electronic information. Indifference has been one result, both interpersonally and respecting the effort demanded to become wise.

Technically correct information void of wisdom, accuracy of content minus devotion by character, and answers to particulars but with an absence of grasping broad principles has resulted; a focus upon the immediate without regard to future consequences or past perspectives.

Another aspect of technology is that the iron weapons of Tubal-Cain mutated into means of global destruction through atomic weaponry. This shrinking sense of helplessness before unthinkable threats to existence has contributed to a desire for centralized world governance and "unity" as a means of self-preservation.

Stop and think: What is the relative value of information to wisdom and how is wisdom obtained? [I Cor.8:1; Prov.9:10; Heb.5:14].

Biological Revolution. Hybrids, genetic engineering, and cloning are modifying living plants and animals. The "fittest" hope to

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manipulate the very fabric of human life to consciously contribute to the “evolutionary” development of man. Here, the weak and undesirable will be eliminated by the strong and “superior” so that the developing super race might emerge.

This was Hitler’s dream for the Aryan [white German] race and a chief motivation for his genetic research and mass destruction of Jews during WWII. He quite clearly stated that Christianity and its notion of charity should be “replaced by the ethic of strength over weakness.”

Spiritual Revolution. In the West, there is a growing interest in Eastern mysticism and a return to Animistic roots. In a world in which the common man is weak, increasingly irrelevant, and where there is no basis for morals or rationality, there is a growing quest for power in order to control one’s life and environment. This is not a return to spirituality as a Christian would think of it; to seeking a god or values outside the closed system; not a return to Grace in the previous diagram.

These are powers that true Christians know to be demonic beings. Modern Man, however, sees them as natural forces to be controlled and used for his own ends. Though concealed under modern terms like parapsychology, bio-feedback, transcendental consciousness, Yoga, etc., this is nothing more than raw Animism such as we know in Africa.

Through visualization, meditation, and positive confession [incantation], these Animistic practices are becoming absorbed into the church in the Western world [see Appendix 5 *Animism*]. From there, they are passing into the churches in other parts of the world through modern Laodicean ministers and media.

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PSYCHOLOGY

Psychology rightly interprets the evolutionary and philosophic trends of the age in affirming that there are no criminals, only victims of influences beyond their control. Psychology erases moral accountability, seeking only to quench the sense of a guilt which does not actually exist but is only felt.

As self is the final reference point in evolution, so it is in psychology. The more than ten thousand conflicting psycho-therapies inform us that there is a “solution” to suit every individual to adjust to a behavior that he determines to be best for himself.

The basic fallacy of psychology is this: The heart of man is deceitful and wicked [Jer.17:9]. How then can a man with a deceitful and wicked heart tell us what is normative in human behavior? The very “tool” that he is using to discern what is correct, is itself incorrect; at best deceitful, and at worst wicked.

Apart from the revelation of the Word of God, there are no criteria to determine what is proper in the realms of morals and relationships. All is opinion, behavior is relative, and whatever is natural is normal. This is as far as psychology can take us.

Jesus is the **Wonderful Counselor** [Isa.9:6]. **The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing. The counsel of the Lord stands forever** [Ps.33:10, 11]. **Your testimonies also are my delight and my counselors** [Ps.119:24]. So much for psychological counseling.

POPULAR MEDIA

Through television, quiet prolonged reflection on written

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words was replaced by sensual impressions with no opportunity to ponder progressively unfolding scenes. Attention spans were reduced thereby to less than fifteen minutes. Distaste for non-sensory stimulants developed.

How one felt determined the message communicated; not analysis of objective content. Thus the same media experience was capable of conveying a wide range of meanings; all equally "valid" depending upon the subjective impression of the viewers.

Film and video became the media of conveyance for an era that had abandoned the truth value of propositional reasoning. It also became the tool of the dominant elite to manipulate and gain influence over the weak; a tool of propaganda to direct the course of generations. It presents an edited reality offered to the viewer under a pretense of objectivity and truth. TV brings the theatre and games of ancient Rome into our parlors.

Motion pictures obscure the line between fantasy and reality, from what is staged to what is actual. Through the cinema's special effects, the truly miraculous is made commonplace, humanly explainable, and despised as cheap manipulation. When Pharaoh's magicians duplicated Moses' miracles by their own performing arts, hearts were hardened to the genuine [Ex.7:22,23].

Modern Rock 'n Roll music shouts its message that nothing in the traditional rational or moral arenas provide answers for the meaning of existence. Purpose is to be found in a passionate wild abandon to sensual possession by an experience, force, or event that transcends self.

Rock music is an outcome of the evolutionary premise: Nothing but nature exists. Man is therefore an animal whose survival depends upon violent aggression to dominate the weaker and satisfy its own reproductive passions.

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Thus Rock's audio aggression and pulsing electronic erotic rhythm convey evolutionary formula in a popular tonic for the masses: Meaning to existence is not to be found in rationality, morals, or transcendent values [Grace], but in an unrestrained, aggressive, and animal-like experience [Nature].

The meaning of Rock is not to be sought for in the lyrics; they may not even be intelligible. The medium of the powerfully possessing sensual experience itself is the message.

Rock 'n Roll's degenerate offspring, "Rap", carries evolution's reduction of life to its logical conclusion: Violence and sex are all that remain. In the later 1960's, Rock was welcomed into the Laodicean church, God became trivial, and the sacred was made profane [common].

Stop and think: What cautions should be exercised in using practices of the world by Christians?

CHARISMATIC

Charismatics continued the emphasis upon the experiential in religion in contrast to obedience to objective revelation in the written Word of God. Episcopal priests, Roman Catholic worshippers of Mary, and a vast spectrum from nearly all denominations had the common "encounter" of "speaking in tongues" beginning in the middle 1960's. This became the essential ingredient in their Charismatic fellowship; not whether it was biblically based or not.

The "faith in faith" of the humanistic existential philosophers, became the substance of things hoped for in modern Pentecostalism stemming from this period. "Faith's" only content and object, as it was for the secular philosophers, was simply

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whatever was desired, felt, or thought in one's own mind. These were visualized, believed, and confessed as constituting what it meant to place faith in one's faith.

It was a purely subjective religion using "God-talk." In principle, this "faith" was really no different than the Animism of traditional religions, now sanctioned by philosophy and sanctified by Charismatics [see Appendix 5 *Animism*]. The typical Charismatic remained in his denomination, was ecumenical in outlook, and tolerant of differences in beliefs. Propositional-Revelation was only of minimal concern, if that.

While many true believers were found among Charismatics, the foundation was of sand. Doctrine was secondary and experience was foremost; and such experience can never support true biblical faith.

The doctrine of Prosperity and Positive Confession came out of this movement, though many Charismatics would not hold to either. These are recent doctrines in the history of the church, being put forth as "Christian" in the late 1960's. In an experience oriented church influenced by Americanism, it is quite easy to see why many were deluded by these errors.

ECUMENISM

With the tearing down of confidence in the Scriptures as the basis of faith, came a growing interest in organizational uniformity among the various church denominations. Since doctrine no longer separated them, and with the decline of Christendom's influence in the world, unity became desirable. Addressing various political and social issues occupies their primary concerns.

The National Council of Churches and the World Council

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of Churches are two major organizations with millions of members and numerous denominations in their ranks. Recently in America, prominent evangelical leaders have indicated their willingness to cooperate with Roman Catholics in the task of world “evangelization.” Their “gospels,” however, remain distinct; a yoking of donkey and ox [Deut.22:10].

Stop and think: How do Amos 3:3, Gal.1:6-10, and 2 Cor.6:14-18 compare to the Pattern of Christ and modern ecumenism?

CHRISTIAN PUBLICATIONS

Early in the twentieth century, a strong emphasis was placed upon sound doctrine among Evangelicals and Fundamentalists. The books and Bible colleges coming out of this era had a bright and lasting witness to the truth.

Currently, testimonials, techniques, and therapies summarize the content of contemporary publications in Western Christendom. Solid biblical teachings from previous generations are rarely still available in print. Consideration for what will appeal to readers and make money motivates many religious publishers.

The Christian music and video entertainment industry is an annual multi-billion dollar enterprise. Amusement, pleasurable pastimes, and Christianity have become strange but compatible bed-fellows in the mind of the Modern church.

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AMERICANISM

Because the great influence America has had on the church worldwide in the 1900's due to its teaching, literature, and missionary activity, we must comment upon this orientation. Americanism, an offspring of Deism, is comprised of several orientations that are directly opposed to the Scriptures.

Rights of the individual under law underscores the basic assumption of Americanism. This is not a Christian principle at all. Rights are obligatory based upon law. However, no blessings ever come from God to man on the principle of law. Mercy cannot be obligated. Demands cannot be pressed upon grace. Slaves/servants have no rights.

Rights and love are not synonymous. Love springs from the heart of the giver to neighbor and enemy alike regardless of their merits. Demands spring from the heart of recipients who insist on receiving their just and lawful due based on their own perceived merits.

Love is the basis of Christianity. Rights is that of Americanism which only can lead to a litigation conscious society who no longer forgive.

Democracy places the will of the people at the center of its governing principle. Thus the will and Word of God were replaced by the will and word of the people. Though resembling Christianity in being willing to be governed by a document [The Constitution and Bill of Rights], their agreed upon evolving social consensus must necessarily be pluralistic, progressive, and relative. In other words, constitutional law must give way for precedent law; the standard of governance must become situational rather than absolute, and the document eventually discarded.

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Individualism was promoted as a virtue. To require submission, conformity, and obedience without the final sanction of individual agreement to its reasonableness became a “sin.” Self became the highest court of appeal and a jealously guarded sanctum where no intrusion was permitted. Self, by the teaching of Jesus, however, is to be hated and denied [Lk.14:26; Mt.16:24]. Submission to one another is a godly indicator of possessing the common life of humility and love [Eph.5:21].

Seemingly in conflict with this focus, tolerance emerged as a virtue. Individualism was sacred, therefore room must be allowed for the individual to pursue and express his own will, even if his is in conflict with my own. In the church of Americanism, a cultural pluralism and diversity were tolerated where they biblically ought not to have been [2 Thess.3:14].

Liberty is closely allied with Individualism. Since the days of the American Revolution, rebellion was accounted to be liberty and unfettered self-will as freedom. Liberty was thus seen as freedom from external restraint. Christianity’s demand that believers submit as slaves to God is directly opposed to Americanism’s Liberty.

Happiness was promoted as a significant objective of life. An ever increasing affluence and enjoyment were conceived to be worthy pursuits in Americanism. Prosperity, leisure, and enjoyment became indicators of success and enviable achievement. Actually, along with pride, these are the very elements that lead to sodomy and destruction [Ezek.16:49, 50].

From this developed a society discontent with anything but the convenience of the instantaneous: possessing without ownership through credit purchasing, knowledge without character through electronic media, and discarding the unfashionably old for the readily new and replaceable.

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Stop and think: How are these elements of Americanism observed in the Christianity that has come to West Africa?

SUMMARY

In our historical survey, we have now come to the present; to you and to me. What will history record about us? What conformity to the Pattern of Christ will be read in our story? Or what sad recounting of compromise and departure will be told? Rather, what will the record kept in eternal books reveal on that solemn day before the judgment seat of Christ?

Will it be, **Well done, good and faithful servant; enter into the joy of your Lord;** or might we shrink away from Him in shame at His appearing having to hear, **I know your works...but I have this against you?**

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APPENDIX 1 NT LEADERSHIP

KEY PASSAGES: NATURE OF THE CHURCH

Foundation [Mt.16:16-19]

No blessing comes to any man who has a deficient view of Christ. Imaginary Christs can do nothing for anyone because they don't exist. Only what is revealed about Christ to the heart of a man by the Father in heaven will result in blessing.

Jesus is the Christ; the Anointed Priest and King. As Priest, there exists no other Mediator between God and man. No other sacrifice will avail to cleanse from sin. He alone is the Priest that can safely represent man before God without rejection.

As King, He rules and governs the heart of His servants according to the law of His kingdom. No other rulers, no codes or traditions can be accepted by His subjects. His Word exclusively must command His people.

Christ alone is the Rock upon which His church is built. The confession that there is no other King, no other Priest, is the unshakable Rock that all of hell's wisdom and might cannot overcome. Hell cannot undo what has been supernaturally imparted to the heart of a man by the Father in heaven. There is no other means of entrance into this church that Jesus is building.

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For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is **Jesus Christ** [I Cor.3:11]. **That Rock** [*PETRA*, *πετρα*] was **Christ** [I Cor.10:4].

Peter [*PETROS*, *πετρος*] is not that Rock [*PETRA*, *πετρα*] upon which the church is built. Peter is a stone [Jn.1:42], like all believers are **living stones** [I Pet.2:5], but he is not the foundational Bedrock upon which the church stands.

Christ alone can support the church that He is building. It belongs to Him. He says it is **My church** [Mt.16:18]. We dare not shift to another foundation, another priesthood, another Christ, another gospel, or another code of law.

This is the foundation of the church that is Jesus' possession and is the first mention of the church in all of Scripture. Study it well, the key lies at the door to all that is contained therein. There is no other church membership that will take you to heaven.

Father & Children [2 Cor.6:18]

The life of the Father is the common portion of all His children. He is exalted over all to whom all owe everything within the family. In this family, all are brothers. None have any place of superiority over others. Love and consideration characterize them all.

Master & Slaves [Rom.6:15-23]

Slaves are purchased possessions. They have no rights, and their independent opinions and desires are not the concern of the Master. Their one concern is to know and obey the command of their Master.

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No man can serve two masters. There exists no place for men to lord it over fellow slaves in the church of Christ. Jesus alone is Lord.

Shepherd & Sheep [Jn.10:1-28]

There exists but one flock with one Shepherd [Jn.10:16]. Men are no substitutes for Christ. His voice alone is heard and followed by His flock. The voices of strangers will not be listened to or followed: Rather, the sheep will flee from any not speaking the Word of the Shepherd.

This identifies what true shepherd care is: speaking with the voice of Christ, leading in His paths of righteousness to feed upon His Word. This is what a shepherd is according to the heart of God [Jer.3:15]. Any who would draw men after themselves, speaking man's wisdom and tradition, are thieves and robbers [Ezek.34:1-16; Acts 20:30].

Foundation & Temple [I Cor.3:10,11,16; Eph.2:19-22]

In God's temple, everything says, "Glory!" The outshining of His character is seen, the excellence of His moral perfections shine forth. Truth is dispensed, sacrifices rise, and the Lord dwells in the midst with holiness overshadowing all.

Christ as the Cornerstone is the reference point for all that is built upon Him. He is the foundation that the Apostles and prophets have laid. Everything rests upon Him and He determines the dimensions and scope of the building. Man's substitutes and carnal contributions are rejected as worthless and not according to the Pattern of Christ.

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This is the church that Jesus builds. It is not built with wood and cement. Living stones grow into a holy temple in the Lord. The church of the Lord Jesus is the pillar and support of the truth [I Tim.3:15], upholding and proclaiming the everlasting Word of God of Him who dwells within His spiritual house.

High Priest & Priests [Heb.4:14-16; I Pet.2:5,9]

A throne of grace is open to all who draw near to God through Jesus, the only High Priest who always lives to intercede for His own [Heb.7:24,25]. Each believer has equal privilege and access to the God of heaven, for all are spiritual priests.

From every believer without distinction, offerings are brought: Bodies are presented as living sacrifices [Rom.12:1,2], praise rises from grateful and fruitful lips [Heb.13:15], and good deeds of sharing abound [Heb.13:16].

No such thing as clergy and laity exist in the NT church patterned after Christ. No separate class of men officiate and rule over the spiritual life and ministry of the believers. All are priests.

Vine & Branches [Jn.15:1-17]

Apart from Me, you can do nothing [Jn.15:5]; nothing to glorify the Father, nothing to truly benefit man. The life of the True Vine courses through each and every branch to produce the fruit of that Life; **fruit of goodness, righteousness, and truth** [Eph.5:9].

Fruit cannot be imitated as spiritual gifts may. Death has its own odor that cannot be masked. The fruitful fragrance of Christ is what is evidenced in all who are in living union with Him. Life produces fruit that no ceremonies, regulations, associations, or

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traditions could ever do.

Head & Body [Col.1:18]

One Head governs the one body of Christ. There are not multiple heads in His church. No one's body could live and function with two heads.

The members of the body receive their direction directly from the Head, not from fellow members. The hand does not dictate to the foot. If one suffers, that member sends a message of distress to the Head. The Head then orders the response of the other members to relieve the suffering member.

All is orderly and coordinated because the Head governs all. No imposed structure from without directs the church. Christ is truly the Head.

Captain & Soldiers [2 Tim.2:3,4]

Soldiers do not entangle themselves in the affairs of life. Conflict for the sake of the kingdom is their concern. Commands from their Captain are all that they listen to.

Hardship, self-denial, and discipline are what their lives consist of. Pleasing the Commander and gaining victory over the foe fills their waking moments.

The church fights the good fight of faith, not with carnal weapons and fleshly might, but with the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. Error, evil, and hate is fought with truth, righteousness, and love. Only then is victory sure.

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Bridegroom & Bride [2 Cor.11:2,3; Rev.19:7-9; Eph.5:25-32]

Affectionate devotion and determined purity are what characterize the bride. She has an eye for none other. Her love is reserved for One alone.

She despises that friendship with the world which would defile her into harlotry [Jas.4:4]. She makes herself ready for the glorious day in which she shall appear spotless and radiant, with no stain or blemish.

Righteous deeds weave the whitened fabric of her beautiful dress while she gladly submits to His good pleasure. And so it is that the true church of Christ can say, I am my Beloved's, and His desire is for me [S. of S. 7:10].

KEY PASSAGES: LEADERSHIP

[In the discussion of the following passages, various NT Greek words will be referred to. They will be identified by writing them in *ITALIC CAPITAL* letters. Their meanings along with the references for each will be found under the heading: NT Greek Words for Authority/Rule beginning on page 312]

Luke 22:24-27 [Mt.20:25-28; Mk.10:42-45]

Ruling and lording it over the people of God is never to be found in the church of Jesus Christ. He forbids it to be so. Dominating and exercising authority over inferiors is what the heathen do. It is worldliness and completely unlike the Pattern of Christ.

He humbled Himself as the lowliest of servants. This is what

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constitutes leadership in His kingdom, in His church; serving as a slave.

Leadership is by performing loving deeds of service, not by exercising authority over others. True leadership, according to Christ, is by an example of humbly serving others, not by having others perform my will. The youngest is the greatest.

In Lk.22:26, the word “**chief**” [KJV], “**he who governs**” [NKJV], “**the one who rules**” [NIV], and “**leader**” [NASB], are all translations of the word *HEGEOMAI*. Jesus here says that the *HEGEOMAI* is a servant. This is the sense in which we must understand the meaning of this term in the church.

Without controversy, servants are not rulers, they are ruled. Therefore, the ideas of chief, ruler, or governor cannot possibly be the proper sense of a *HEGEOMAI* in the NT church. The meanings, “leader, guide,” are correct, as they alone are consistent with being a servant. A servant can lead and guide by an example of devoted care and truthful words. But no servant is a ruler, governor, or chief; that is a contradiction in terms.

Acts 20:28-32

Elders who are equipped by the Holy Spirit to oversee, are capable of shepherding the flock of God. It is the work of God to make a man in this capacity. Man’s appointment and ordination cannot make a man into someone and something that the Holy Spirit has not already done.

Elders [Acts 20:17,18] and Overseers [Acts 20:28] are terms describing the same individuals. An Elder [*PRESBUTEROS*] is an older man of proven spiritual maturity. An Overseer [*EPISKOPOS*] describes the work that an Elder performs. That work is watching

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over and tending to the needs of the flock as a Shepherd would do [POIMAINO].

The work of a Shepherd is essentially two-fold: to lead the flock to good pasture and to watch over them so that the wolf does not attack and destroy. The means provided by the Lord to accomplish both of these services are one and the same. The Word of God is what the believers are led to feed upon by mature godly teachers. That same Word, skillfully used in the hands of Overseeing Shepherds, is their means of protection against error and evil.

1 Peter 5:1-6

Once again, it is the Elders [PRESBUTEROS] who are performing the work of overseeing. Overseer is not a position or office of higher rank than that of an elder. The two words are simply describing the same individual, considered from different aspects of his qualifications of service to the saints.

Leaders, here called Elders, are among the brethren, not over them. Peter himself does not assume a ruling position over the brethren or other elders. He simply calls himself, **your fellow elder**.

Here it is clearly seen that an Overseer who watches over [EPISKOPEO], must not Lord It Over [KATAKURIEUO]. Overseeing is therefore never legitimately ruling and exercising authority over the brethren. Rather, Elders/Overseers are to be examples, both in loving and humble service as well as in purity of life and of doctrine. They do not dominate, they demonstrate.

Hebrews 13:7,17

NT church Leaders [HEGEOMAI] are not rulers. This has

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already been seen by our Lord Jesus' use of this word in Lk.22:26. They are guides; servants who lead by loving godly care while speaking the truth.

Believers are to carefully reflect upon both the godly lives of their Leaders and the Word that they have taught. It is then that they are persuaded to imitate their faith and submit to their guidance and example.

They obey because the Leaders' doctrine and lives are persuasive to the spiritual hearts of the godly. The church does not obey because Leaders rule over them with authority as lords. Christ's Leaders follow His Pattern by guiding according to example, combined with the persuasive power of truth.

The most frequent word in the NT for Obey is [HUPAKOUO υπακουω] [not shown below]. It means TO OBEY, in the sense of submitting to authority; such as a believer to the Lord [Heb.5:9], a child to his parent [Eph.6:1], or a slave to his master [Col.3:22].

However, in Heb.13:17, a different word for Obey is used. That word, [PEITHO πειθω] [not shown below], means TO CONVINCe, PERSUADE, OBEY. The obedience called for in Heb.13:17 is based upon godly spiritual persuasion, not upon submission to one in authority over others.

Thus, the meaning of the command in Heb.13:17 can better be expressed in this way: **Be persuaded by your Leaders and submit.** Their submission is to the truth of their teaching from the Word that is also evident in the convincing example of their godly lives.

I Timothy 3:1-7

Oversight [EPISKOPE] is a good and desirable work. It is

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truly a work of service, not occupying a position or assuming an office. The Overseer [EPISKOPOS] must possess essentially two qualifications. [1] He must be blameless in character. [2] He must be able to teach.

Thus the Overseer must be a consistently spiritual example and able to teach the Word; the same qualifications as were seen in Acts, I Peter, and Hebrews.

He must be one who Manages [PROISTEMI] his own household well. If he is not a good example, leader, and caring helper there, how could he possibly be qualified to help the church?

Titus 1:5-9

Elders [PRESBUTEROS] and Overseers [EPISKOPOS] are addressed as being the same individuals. Contrary to Ignatius' man-made teaching noted on page 78, there exists no hierarchy of one over the other or over the brethren.

Any true Overseer must be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict. Such is the work of a Shepherd; to feed with the Word and to defend with the same.

I Timothy 5:17-22

Those Elders [PRESBUTEROS] who Care For [PROISTEMI] the brethren well are worthy of double honor. They should be worthy, not only of honor, but even of financial support since they are working hard at preaching the gospel and teaching the believers.

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I Thessalonians 5:12,13

Leaders are noted for their diligent work of Caring For [PROISTEMI] and admonishing the brethren according to the Word of God. These are the ones that we should draw close to in order to observe, know, and highly esteem their worthy examples and sound doctrine. Because of their good work, we love them dearly.

NT Greek Words for Authority/Rule

[Listings for each word show all NT references unless noted otherwise. Verses particularly relevant to the study of NT Leadership are in **bold type**].

EXOUSIA [εξουσια]

AUTHORITY, ABILITY, FREEDOM OF CHOICE, RIGHT, POWER, GOVERNING OFFICIALS. [Mt. 7:29; 8:9; 9:6,8; 10:1; 21:23,24,27; **28:18**; Mk. 1:22,27; 2:10; 3:15; 6:7; 11:28,29,33; **13:34**; Lk. 4:6,32,36; 5:24; 7:8; 9:1; 10:19; 12:5,11; 19:17; 20:2,8,20; 22:53; 23:7; Jn. 1:12; 5:27; 10:18; 17:2; 19:10,11; Acts 1:7; 5:4; 8:19; 9:14; 26:10,12,18; Rom. 9:21; 13:1,2,3; 1Cor. 7:37; 8:9; 9:4,5,6,12,18; 11:10; 15:24; 2 Cor. **10:8**; **13:10**; Eph. 1:21; 2:2; 3:10; 6:12; Col. 1:13,16; 2:10,15; 2Thess. 3:9; Tit. 3:1; Heb. 13:10; 1Pet. 3:22; Jude 25; Rev. 2:26; 6:8; 9:3,10,19; 11:6,6; 12:10; 13:2,4,5,7,12; 14:18; 16:9; 17:12,13; 18:1; 20:6; 22:14].

This word occurs ninety-four times in the NT and is never once used of one believer as having Authority over another. The Lord Jesus is the One who has all Authority in heaven and earth

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[Mt.28:18].

The only Authority that believers have with relationship to one another is to perform the work that the Lord has commanded each of them to do [Mk.13:34]. The work that Jesus gives to His servants is never that of ruling over others, but is rather simply Authority from Christ to build up the brethren [2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10]. Each believer has Authority to speak the truth in love to the building up of the body of Christ [Eph.4:15,16].

EXOUSIAZO [εξουσιαζω]

TO EXERCISE AUTHORITY OVER. [Lk. 22:25; 1 Cor. 6:12; 7:4,4]. Jesus forbids His leaders from exercising authority over His people. Only heathen men of the world do that.

KATEXOUSIAZO [κατεξουσιαζω]

TO EXERCISE AUTHORITY OVER/UPON. [Mt. 20:25; Mk. 10:42]. It is worldliness for a leader in the church to act like the oppressive rulers of the unbelievers.

KATAKURIEUO [κατακυριεω]

LORD IT OVER, BE MASTER, SUBDUE. [Mt. 20:25; Mk. 10:42; Acts 19:16; 1 Pet. 5:3]. Both Jesus and Peter forbid NT leaders to dominate and rule His people.

ARCHE [αρχη]

[A frequent meaning of this word is “beginning.” These references have not been listed since they do not relate to our study here. The following definitions are seen in the passages listed].

A RULE, AUTHORITY. [Lk.12:11; 20:20; Rom.8:38; 1

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Cor. 15:24; Eph. 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Col. 1:16; 2:10,15; Tit. 3:1]. This word is never used with reference to a believer. It refers only to human political rule and authority or to angelic rulers and authorities.

ARCHO [αρχω]

[Apart from two exceptions in the NT, this word means “to begin.” The two times it means “to rule” are shown].

TO RULE. [Mk. 10:42; Rom. 15:12]. Rule over subjects is a heathen practice among men, but is forbidden in the church.¶

ARCHON [αρχων]

RULER, LORD, PRINCE, AN AUTHORITY. [Can be either human or demonic]. [Mt. 9:18,23,34; 12:24; 20:25; Mk. 3:22; Lk. 8:41; 11:15; 12:58; 14:1; 18:18; 23:13,35; 24:20; Jn. 3:1; 7:26,48; 12:31,42; 14:30; 16:11; Acts 3:17; 4:5,8,26; 7:27,35; 13:27; 14:5; 16:19; 23:5; Rom. 13:3; I Cor. 2:6,8; Eph. 2:2; Rev. 1:5]. Never is any Christian said to be a Ruler, Lord, Prince, or an Authority. This term has reference only to the civil magistrates, governors, and Rulers of earth, the religious Rulers of the Jews, and demonic powers and Authorities.

HEGEMON [ηγεμων]

PRINCE, GOVERNOR, RULER. [Mt. 2:6; 10:18; 27:2,11,14,15,21,27; 28:14; Mk. 13:9; Lk. 20:20; 21:12; Acts 23:24,26,33; 24:1,10; 26:30; I Pet. 2:14]. No Christian is ever referred to as a Ruler. This term describes only the civil Governing authorities of man’s governments or the religious Rulers of the Jews.

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HEGEOMAI [ηγεομαι]

[This word is translated many times as “to think/consider.”

The passages shown are all references to the definitions noted].

TO LEAD, GUIDE, GOVERN, RULE. [Mt. 2:6; Lk. 22:26; Acts 7:10; 14:12; 15:22; Heb. 13:7,17,24]. Jesus’ definition of this term determines the sense it has in His church. He says that the *HEGEOMAI* is a servant, not a ruler [Lk.22:26]. No servants are Rulers. Therefore, Leader or Guide are the only meanings that make sense in the Christian context.

Paul was the Leading speaker, not the Ruler over Barnabas [Acts 14:12]. Judas and Silas were Leading men among the brethren, not Rulers over the Apostles and the church [Acts 15:22].

Rulers in Heb.13:7, 17 [KJV] must be understood to mean Leaders or Guides because of Jesus’ own use of the word in Lk.22:26. To do otherwise is to reject Jesus’ word for the sake of establishing and maintaining man-made tradition and governing systems in the church.

PROISTEMI [προιστημι]

Literally, TO STAND BEFORE, and is translated as LEAD, ATTEND TO [with diligent care], MANAGE, MAINTAIN, CONDUCT, BE CONCERNED ABOUT, CARE FOR, GIVE AID, DIRECT, RULE. [Rom. 12:8; I Thess. 5:12; I Tim. 3:4,5,12; 5:17; Tit. 3:8,14]. This wide-range term describes someone who is standing before others as an example of devoted service, help, care, and direction to them. The ideas of Leading with diligent care, concern, and direction is the idea in Rom.12:8.

In I Thess.5:12 it is those who are Attending to, Caring for, Giving aid, and Directing the brethren by their laboring in teaching and admonition that the saints are to lovingly esteem. They are not

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“over you” as ruling authorities, but are Standing before the church as teachers and examples.

The sense in which Overseers are to “**rule**” [I Tim.3:4,5 KJV] their household well is explained by the use of the term “**take care of**” in I Tim.3:5. The word “take care of” [*EPIMELEOMAI επιμελεομαι*], is used in only three verses in the NT; Lk.10:34,35 and I Tim.3:5.

In the Luke passage, the good Samaritan did not rule, lord it over, or exercise authority over the man who had been robbed and beaten. Rather, he Attended to, was Concerned about, Cared for, Gave aid, and Directed for the care of the man in need. Provision was made at his own expense for the well-being and blessing of the wounded traveler.

This type of care is what is needed in the church and in the home. If one cannot Attend to, be Concerned about, Care for, Give aid, and Direct the members of one’s own family, how could a man ever be of benefit to the church, the family of God? Ruling and exercising authority as a lord does not fit or qualify a man to either lead in his home or in the church.

Elders worthy of double honor are not worthy because they are Rulers, but because they Attend to, are Concerned about, Care for, and Give aid to the people of God [I Tim.5:17,18].

EPISKOPOS [*επισκοπος*]

OVERSEER, SUPERINTENDENT, GUARDIAN, BISHOP. [*Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; I Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:7; I Pet. 2:25*]. Overseer emphasizes watching over the brethren for their spiritual protection, comfort, and blessing. It is not a title of superiority above that of Elder. Elder and Overseer are merely descriptions of the same individual viewed from two different sides.

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Jesus is the only Overseer who has the right to rule over the brethren [I Pet.2:25].

EPISKOPEO [επισκοπεω]

TO OVERSEE, CARE FOR, LOOK AT. [Heb. 12:15; I Pet. 5:2]. In I Pet.5:2,3, Peter makes it absolutely certain that to Watch over has nothing to do with Lording it over. Spiritual maturity, insight, and alertness are required to Oversee. A man can lord it over others with none of those qualities.

EPISKOPE [επισκοπη]

OVERSEERSHIP, POSITION AS OVERSEER, VISITATION. [Lk. 19:44; Acts 1:20; I Tim. 3:1; I Pet. 2:12]. In neither Acts 1:20 nor in I Tim.3:1 is contained the idea of an “Office” of rulership. It is not a place of superiority over those who are subject to the one in authority. The desire for Overseership is a good desire for a good work. And that good work is not a work of ruling, but of setting an example for the saints along with teaching sound doctrine and helping the brethren in their life of faith.

PRESBUTEROS [πρεσβυτερος]

OLDER, ELDER. [Often used to describe the Jewish Elders in the Gospels and Acts such as in Mt.21:23. In Revelation, the twenty-four Elders are mentioned as in Rev.4:4. The following passages relate to Elders in reference to our topic of NT Leadership]. [Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2,4,6,22,23; 16:4; 20:17,18; I Tim. 5:17,19; Tit. 1:5; Jas. 5:14; I Pet. 5:1,5; 2 Jn. 1; 3 Jn. 1].

Elders are older spiritually mature men who have a testimony of proven character and wisdom. They are thus qualified to Oversee the brethren. Physical age in years or recognition and

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influence in the community do not qualify a man to be an Elder in the church. It is possible for a man to be an elder in the community and be absolutely unfit to be an Elder in the church.

Apart from Paul appointing Elders in the newly founded Gentile churches [Acts 14:23], traditional elders would have filled that role and disaster would have resulted. He appointed Elders in order to show these former idolatrous converts that traditional elders are not qualified to serve as Elders in the church unless they have the needed spiritual qualifications. Thus, it is even possible that traditional elders may not be recognized as being spiritual Elders, and that they will be required to submit to even younger men who are spiritually qualified.

PRESBUTERION [πρεσβυτεριον]

ASSEMBLY/COUNCIL OF ELDERS. [Lk. 22:66; Acts 22:5; I Tim. 4:14]. The Elders, as a group of spiritually mature men who Oversee the brethren, observed in Timothy both the gift of God and his proven character. They therefore were willing to commend him to the work of the Lord by the laying on of their hands. This indicated their blessing for him to represent Christ's church in behalf of the assembly.

POIMEN [ποιμην]

SHEPHERD, SHEEP-HERDER. [Used literally in many passages such as Lk.2:8. The passages listed relate to NT Leadership]. [Mt. 9:36; 25:32; 26:31; Mk. 6:34; 14:27; Jn. 10:2,11,12,14,16; Eph. 4:11; Heb. 13:20; I Pet. 2:25].

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Shepherd of His church [Jn.10:2,11,12,14,16; Heb.13:20; I Pet.2:25]. Men can only properly be called Shepherds [pastors] if they are leading the flock

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along the path to the pastures of the Good Shepherd by speaking to them with His voice. Otherwise, they are false shepherds and the sheep will flee from them.

Eph.4:11 is the only verse in the NT that refers to a man as a pastor. A pastor is simply doing the work of a Shepherd. He leads the brethren to the good pasture of the Word of God and watches over them so that the wolf does not ruin and destroy.

POIMAINO [ποιμαινω]

TO SHEPHERD, RULE. [Mt. 2:6; Lk. 17:7; Jn. 21:16; Acts 20:28; I Cor. 9:7; I Pet. 5:2; Jude 12; Rev. 2:27; 7:17; 12:5; 19:15].

Feeding of the flock is the primary task of the Elders and Overseers who Shepherd the people of God. Since the Lord Jesus is the One Shepherd of the church [Jn.10:16], the true Overseer of our souls [I Pet.2:25], and the Ruling Shepherd [I Pet.5:4], no man ought to dare to influence the church to follow himself rather than Christ.

Every man who does the work of a Shepherd is, himself, also a sheep in the flock. He must therefore also follow the Good Shepherd, but he cannot rule. Only Jesus alone has the right to rule His sheep.

ARCHIPOIMEN [αρχιποιμην]

CHIEF/RULING SHEPHERD. [I Pet. 5:4]. This description is used of the Lord Jesus only. No one else is the Ruling Shepherd.

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LEADERSHIP: PLURAL OR SINGULAR?

Throughout the NT, leadership in the local assemblies was plural, and not singular. In other words, there was not one man who was the leader of a church or group of churches. There is to be more than one Elder/Overseer/Pastor in a local church gathering.

There is no one “priest,” bishop, reverend, pastor, primate, general overseer, or “man of God” who determines policy or who directs the actions of the believers and affairs of the church. The modern “pastor” as we have conceived him to be from the time of the Reformation, is not found in the pages of the NT. [Acts 6:1-6; 13:1-3,13; 14:23; 15:2,4,6, 7,12,13,22,32,35; 20:17,28; Phil. 1:1; I Thess. 5:12,13; ITim. 1:3,6,7; 3:1,8; 4:14; 5:17-20; 2 Tim. 2:2; Tit. 1:5; Philemon 1-3; Heb. 13:7,17; Jas. 5:14; IPet. 5:1-5].

LEADERSHIP: MALE OR FEMALE?

There is no reference in the NT of a woman being a pastor, elder, overseer, or teacher in the church. The command to Christian women is clear: A woman is not allowed to teach or exercise authority over a man [ITim.2:11,12]. And this is not a command limited to a particular situation or culture, but is the directive of God for all believers in every place at all times [ICor.1:2; 4:17; 7:17; 14:37].

By creation, she is a follower, not the leader; a helper, not the initiator; the responder, not the director [Gen.2:18; ICor.11:9; ITim.2:13]. She is indeed a fellow heir of the grace of life [IPet.3:7], but not a fellow minister in the church as men are. Though one in Christ where there is neither male nor female with respect to salvation and its blessings [Gal.3:28], she is not given the same sphere

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of ministry by God as are men.

Her God-given realm is in the home; loving her husband and children [Tit.2:3-5], raising her children [1 Tim.2:15; 5:14], and working at home [1 Tim.5:14; Tit.2:5] so that the Word of God will not be dishonored [Tit.2:5]. Her sphere of teaching is in practical instruction in godliness to other sisters and children [Tit.2:3-5]. Doing good by helpful works of service [Lk.8:2,3], giving to the poor [Acts 9:36,39], and kindly hospitality [Acts 16:15,40; 1 Tim.5:10] are some of her great and needful contributions to the work of the gospel; fellow workers, not competitors.

BELIEVERS: INFERIORS OR EQUALS?

Christians are addressed as spiritual equals in the NT. There are no classes or ranks among the brethren. None are inferior to some who supposedly are ruling over others. [Acts 17:11; Rom. 15:14; 1 Cor. 5:12, 13; 10:15; 12:7, 18-27; 14:26, 29-35; 2 Cor. 1:24; 1 Pet. 5:1; Rev. 1:9].

CHURCHES: ASSEMBLIES OR RULERS?

The Epistles in the NT that are addressed to assemblies, are not addressed to the “rulers” in those churches. They are addressed to the entire fellowship of the brethren, not to an imagined hierarchy within it. [Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:2; Eph. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1; 1 Pet. 1:1].

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CHRIST THE PATTERN

Paul wrote so that believers would know how they ought to conduct themselves **in the house of God, which is the church of the living God** [I Tim.3:15].

Throughout the Scriptures, there has always been a pattern for the house of God. The Tabernacle had to be built according to the pattern shown on the mount [Heb.8:5]. Solomon's Temple had a divinely revealed plan [I Chron.28:12, 19].

The re-built Temple in the days of Ezra was built according to the absolute standard of the plumb line that measured all from above [Zech.4:9,10]. And Ezekiel's Temple of the future has a carefully revealed and measured pattern [Ezek.40:4; 43:10-12].

There exists a Pattern for the church as well, which has Christ Himself as the standard [I Cor.3:9-17; 4:17; 7:17; 11:16; 14:3, 37, 38; 2 Thess.2:15; I Tim.3:15; 2 Tim.1:13,14].

In the NT church, everything revolves around and is measured by Jesus Christ the Lord. He truly has **first place in everything** [Col.1:18].

All life [Col.3:4], direction [I Cor.2:16], enabling [I Cor.1:24], and gift [Eph.4:7,8] come directly from the Lord Jesus Christ, the HEAD of the Body, His church.

As HIGH PRIEST, He is the one Mediator between God and man [I Tim.2:5] that all believers as Priests have equal access to.

Christ alone is qualified to command and rule His Servants as their KING and LORD. **You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men** [I Cor.7:23].

No traditions of men, rules, codes, ceremonies, or formulas can save or improve our condition. Christ is the TRUE VINE and

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source of all fruitfulness for every believer abiding in Him [Jn.15:5].

The church of the Lord Jesus Christ is built upon nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else than Himself as its FOUNDATION [1_Cor.3:11]. With Himself as the CORNERSTONE, the perfect reference point for the church, the whole Building **is growing into a holy Temple in the Lord** [Eph.2:20, 21]. The church is not a literal building made of cement and wood, and does not depend upon any man, ministry, or denomination for its existence, guidance, or progress.

Sheep in His flock listen to and follow the voice of their one SHEPHERD, Christ Jesus. All other voices and messages are those of thieves and robbers and will be fled from by Christ's sheep [Jn.10:4,5].

Purity from the defilement of the world is evident in His Bride whose devotion and affection is reserved for Christ alone, the BRIDEGROOM of His church.

IN THE NT CHURCH

No man governs and rules. It is the right of the Lord Jesus to have such place among His people.

Christ Jesus dwells in the midst as the focus of every obedient, worshipful, and loving heart [Rev.2:1].

Our Lord leads, commands, directs, and draws out a response of love from those belonging to Him [Rev.19:7, 8].

He is truly honored as Lord as there are no competing "lords" among His people [2_Cor.1:24; 1Pet.5:1-3].

Leaders are among the flock, not over them.

Overseers watch over as servants, but do not lord over as

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rulers.

All is done **decently and in order** [1 Cor. 14:40] because He is not a God **of confusion but of peace** [1 Cor. 14:33]. Yet no pre-arranged program is needed to direct the worship of the church. The Spirit of God, whose work it is to glorify Christ [1 Jn. 16:13,14], will lead the people of God [Rom. 8:14] to **worship the Father in Spirit and truth** [1 Jn. 4:23].

Unity exists, not by outward conformity and association, but because the Spirit of God joins all to glorify Jesus as Lord [Eph. 4:3,4] in a common life of godliness [1 Jn. 17:21-23].

Each one contributes for the edification of all [1 Cor. 14:26] and all judge what is spoken by any [1 Cor. 14:29].

Everyone submits to each other in the fear of Christ, whether believer or leader, young or old alike [Eph. 5:21].

The Breaking of Bread [Lord's Supper/Communion meeting] is the commanded meeting of the church. **Do this in remembrance of Me** [Lk. 22:19]. Other gatherings are secondary or even optional.

Disobedient brethren are lovingly restored back into the way or regretfully removed from the fellowship by the church, not by its leaders alone [Gal. 6:1,2; Mt. 18:15-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-13].

LEADERS WHO BECAME LORDS

Jesus Christ the Lord, who has the central place among the lampstands [Rev. 2:1], hates **the deeds of the Nicolaitans** [Rev. 2:6]. He hates it because they attempt to take over His rightful place as Lord.

Nicolaitan is a compound word in Greek. It comes from joining the words NIKAO [νικᾶω] TO OVERCOME and LAOS

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[λαος] THE PEOPLE.

Jesus hates the deeds of those who “Overcome the People.” Great men ruling the common people [Laity in English comes from this word] and exercising authority over them is what the rulers of the Gentiles do.

It is what the rulers of the churches do. And it is hated by Christ.

There is a man in the NT who ruled in the church. He was a wicked man. He did not accept the Word of God. He oppressed the brethren who wished to follow the Scriptures. Those who loved the brethren were forbidden by him to do so. And those who would not obey his rule were thrown out of the church [3 Jn.9,10].

The root cause of his evil exercise of authority was that he **loved to be first among them** [3 Jn.9]. He is chief of all church rulers who follow in his steps, loving positions of power and authority .

The Scriptures state that Christ is **to have first place in everything** [Col.1:18]. But Diotrefes loved to have that first place. Yet two cannot possibly both have the honor of being first. One must of necessity occupy second rank.

There cannot be two heads in one body. Two kings have never sat together on one throne. If Diotrefes and the church rulers walking his crooked path would have first place, Christ must be pushed aside to make room for them.

This is the heart of the matter.

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APPENDIX 2 RESURRECTION

HISTORICAL FACTS AND EVIDENCE FOR

The spiritual meaning of the resurrection of Christ has been considered in Chapter 2 *The Life was Manifested* as it relates to Him being our Pattern. This Appendix will focus upon the historical facts of the resurrection that demonstrate the great foundation of our faith and acceptance with God. **If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins** [1 Cor.15:17].

The resurrection of the Lord Jesus demonstrates that His claims about Himself and the salvation He accomplished are true. He was **declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead** [Rom.1:4]. If He were a deceiver or His sacrifice rejected by the Father, He would not have been raised up in glory.

As it is, His revelation about Himself has been vindicated. He is Lord [Mt.22:42-45] and equal with the Father [Jn.10:30]. He is both the source of life [Jn.5:21] and the final Judge of all men [Jn.5:22, 27-29]. Christ Jesus is the absolute Truth [Jn.14:6] and possesses all authority in heaven and earth [Mt.28:18].

The facts of His death, burial, and resurrection are these. Jesus was crucified, and actually died, for the sins of the whole world [Jn.19:18, 30-37]. His death was not imaginary as some have claimed.

He had been beaten with fists [Mt.26:67] and whipped on

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His back until raw [Mt.27:26]. After being beaten on the head [Mt.27:30], He had His hands and feet nailed to a cross [Jn.19:18; 20:25]. Finally, His side was pierced with a spear [Jn.19:34].

Because He was obviously dead [Jn.19:31-35], His body was taken down from the cross. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea wrapped Jesus' body in linen along with about one hundred pounds [50 kg] of spices according to Jewish burial custom [Jn.19:38-40].

They laid Him in a tomb cut out of the rock [Lk.23:53] and a large stone was rolled against the entrance [Mt.27:60]. Pilate placed a guard of Roman soldiers at the tomb to prevent theft of the body [Mt.27:62-66].

Early on the morning of the third day, His followers found the tomb empty [Lk.24:1-3]. An angel informed them that Jesus was risen from the dead, just as He said [Mt.28:5,6].

After His bodily resurrection from the dead, Jesus appeared to many witnesses, proving that He was alive. He was seen by Mary Magdalene [Jn.19:16-18], the two Marys [Mt.28:1,9], and two men on the road to Emmaus [Lk.24:13-35].

He appeared to Peter [Lk.24:34], ten disciples [Jn.20:19,20] and others [Lk.24:33-36]. He showed Himself alive to Thomas, a doubter [Jn.20:26-29], seven of His followers at the Sea of Galilee [Jn.21:1-3], and to over five hundred brethren at once who were still alive as witnesses some twenty-two years afterwards [I Cor.15:6].

Men have invented many foolish explanations to deny that Jesus actually rose from the dead according to the Scriptures. Some of these explanations were purposeful lies. The Jewish leaders bribed the Roman soldiers to spread the lie that the Apostles stole the body [Mt.28:12-15].

The foolishness of this lie is obvious to all. How could disciples proclaim the resurrection of Christ that they knew was a lie,

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since they themselves teach that liars will not inherit the kingdom of God? Secondly, why would they choose to die horrible deaths for a lie that they themselves invented [I Cor.15:12-19, 30-32]?

More foolish yet is the idea that the disciples came to the wrong tomb and, in their joy at finding it empty, began to preach a false message of Jesus' resurrection. If that were so, why then did the Jewish and Roman authorities not simply show His dead body at the correct tomb and put an end to the "deception" of Christianity? They could not because He was not there.

Some unbelievers [even in the "church"] say that Jesus never was an actual man who lived upon earth. They claim that His whole life story is a religious myth that never really happened.

This is nonsense. If that were true, how could Peter on the day of Pentecost accuse the Jews of crucifying Jesus, their Messiah, a Man who never even existed [Acts 2:22-24]? Even more amazing, is that some three thousand of these enemies of Christ repented and asked forgiveness from a Christ whom they knew never lived and did not exist! [Acts 2:36-41].

There is one further wicked denial of the truth of our Lord's resurrection. It is stated that, though something may have happened, no one really knows for sure what that was.

The people to whom the Apostles spoke knew. They were some of the very ones who had eaten of the multiplied loaves, who had been healed [Mk.3:7-10], and who had heard Him teach daily in the synagogues and the Temple [Jn.18:20,21].

They certainly knew what had happened. And if the Apostles had misrepresented the facts, they would have immediately been contradicted by thousands. No one would have listened to them again.

However, these multitudes knew by firsthand experience the

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truth of the message and were not fooled. Neither were they fools. They believed the obvious. There is no other explanation for Jesus' empty tomb except that He is risen and He is Lord!

The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God" [Ps.14:1].

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APPENDIX 3 ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

[References to the *Quran* are indicated with an “S.” followed by the numbers. “S.” is an abbreviation for *Surat*, similar to our chapter]

HISTORY OF ISLAM

Islam was raised up and used by the God of heaven as a scourge to the idolatrous Christendom of the sixth century. The Church was devoted to superstitions, images, and the worship of Mary. This waywardness was confronted by the fierce monotheistic [belief in one God only] religion of Mohammad.

Born in 570 AD in Mecca, he began receiving his “revelations” of Allah at age forty from the angel Gabriel [as he claimed]. When he was rejected as the specially appointed prophet of Allah by his own Koreish tribe, he fled to Medina in 622 AD. This *Hijra* or *Hegira* [flight] dates the beginning of the Islamic calendar.

There he was received and rapidly gained both a religious and political following. In 630 AD he led his ten thousand troops against his native Mecca in his first successful *Jihad* [holy war]. The *Ka’ba* [the sacred shrine that housed the Black Stone and 360 idols] was “cleansed” and the worship of Allah was established by slaughter and conversion at the point of the sword.

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Mecca and its *Ka'ba* thereafter has been the sacred and undisputed center of Islam and of their pilgrimage. War was declared against all forms of “unbelief;” pagan, Jewish and Christian, and has since spread throughout the world. Today there are about one billion Muslims worldwide.

WHO IS ALLAH?

Islam and Christianity are not serving the same God. Allah and the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ are not the same. They are two different deities with two different religions.

“Father” is not one of Allah’s ninety-nine names and he “begets no son” [S.17:111]. He cannot possibly be the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Christians are to pray, **Our Father who is in heaven** [Mt.6:9]. No Muslim would ever pray to Allah in this way.

Allah of the *Quran* does not love sinners, the God and Father of the Bible does. *Allah does not love transgressors* [S.2:190]. *He loveth not any ungrateful sinner* [S.2:276]. *Allah loveth not those that do wrong* [S.3:140]. *Allah loveth not those who trespass beyond bounds* [S.7:55]. **But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us** [Rom.5:8].

Who then does Allah love, if he does not love sinners and he is supposedly, *oft-forgiving, most merciful* [S.4:25]? The *Quran* gives the answer, *Truly Allah loves those who fight in his cause in battle array, as if they were a solid cemented structure* [S.61:4].

Allah loves those who kill in his cause; who terrorize *kafara* [unbelievers] into submission to Islam. Allah preaches a message of submission or slaughter. *Kafara* are to be converted or eliminated.

Therefore, when ye meet the Unbelievers (in fight), smite at their

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necks;...But (He lets you fight) in order to test you...But those who are slain in the way of Allah, he will never let their deeds be lost. Soon will he guide them and improve their condition, and admit them to the Garden [Paradise, the Islamic “heaven”] which he has made known to them [S.47:4-6]. Those engaging in jihad, have the highest rank in the sight of Allah. They are the people who will achieve salvation [S.9:20].

Fight in the cause of Allah...and slay them wherever ye catch them...and fight them on until there is no more persecution and the religion becomes Allah's [S.2:190-193]. I [Allah] will instill terror into the hearts of the unbelievers: smite ye above their necks and smite all their finger-tips off them [S.8:12]. Fight and slay the Pagans wherever you find them, and seize them, and beleaguer them [surround with an army], and lie in wait for them in every stratagem [scheme] of war [S.9:5].

But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you [Mt.6:44].

But they did not receive Him...When His disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?”

But He turned and rebuked them, and said, “You do not know what kind of spirit you are of; for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them” [Lk.9:53-56].

Christianity says, “Believe and live!” Islam says, “Believe or die!” Two religions and their gods could not be more contrary to each other, much less imagined that they are one and the same. Islam’s view of Christ Jesus makes this even more evident.

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WHO IS JESUS?

ACCORDING TO THE QURAN

[1] To call Him Son of God is a monstrous blasphemy [S.19:88,89] and an unforgivable sin [S.4:48, 116].

[2] Christ is a direct creation of God [S.19:35], like Adam, from the dust [S.3:59].

[3] He is no more than a messenger [S.5:75] and a servant [S.43:59].

[4] Saying there is a Trinity is blasphemy and unforgivable [S.5:73].

[5] Christ is not Allah [S.5:17].

[6] Jesus was not crucified [S.4:157] and could not bear anyone's burden of sin [S.53:38].

[7] He did not know what was in Allah's heart [S.5:116].

ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

[1] The Son of God.

He is called the Son of God by: [a] God Himself [Mt.3:17] [b] Jesus Himself [Jn.5:19-23] [c] John the Baptist [Jn.1:34] [d] Jesus' disciples [Mt.16:16] [e] The angel Gabriel [Lk.1:26,32,35]. Even in the *Quran* the *malika Jubril* [angel Gabriel] calls Jesus the Son of God. Speaking to *Maryam* [Mary] *He said: "Nay, I am only a messenger from thy Lord to announce to thee the gift of a pure son."* [S. 19:19].

It is blasphemy to imagine that God could ever beget a son as a man begets a son. This could never be. God is incapable of such a physical act and we must never think of God in this way. No

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Christian would ever think such an unworthy thing of the true and living God.

When we speak about a son we say that he is the very image of his father. He has the authority and right to represent his father and speak on his behalf. His word is the same as hearing that of his father. To see the son is to see the father.

When you go to the village, you first must go and greet the chief. Many times you will be escorted by a younger man to the dwelling of the chief. As you speak, it is often the young man who replies. You soon realize that this is the son of the chief.

To see him is to see the chief. To hear his answer is to hear the reply of the chief. He has full authority to speak in his behalf. He is the heir of the kingdom. He is to be honored as one would honor the chief. This son stands in a unique relationship to this father which no one else shares.

This is what Christians mean when we say that Jesus is the Son of God. He is unique. No one else is like Him in relationship to God or men. He is greater than any prophet or angel [Heb.1:1-6].

[2] The Creator.

All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him [Jn.1:3, 10].

For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things have been created through Him and for Him [Col.1:16].

[3] Higher than any and all Messengers.

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The word angel ANGELOS [αγγελος] has as its root meaning MESSENGER and then also ANGEL. All the Messengers/Angels of God worship Jesus, the Son [Heb.1:6]. The Messengers/Angels are ministering spirits [Heb.1:14], Jesus, the Son, is God [Heb.1:8].

[4] Trinity: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are co-eternal as three distinct personalities in one essence [Jn.1:1; Heb.9:14].

One reason for Islam's hatred of the Trinity is that it was thought that Allah, Jesus, and Mary were the three gods of the Christians. This is expressed in the *Quran* in this way, *And behold! Allah will say: "O Jesus the son of Mary! Didst thou say unto men, 'Take me and my mother for two gods beside Allah?'"*...[S.5:116].

Sabellius [c.260 AD] put forth yet another error regarding the Trinity which is widespread in many branches of Pentecostalism up to today. He conceived of an unscriptural view of a successive trinity of revelation, rather than the biblical truth of a simultaneous Trinity of essence.

His view is referred to as Modalism [a Trinity of form rather than of essence]. He taught that the one unity of God manifested itself first as Father in the giving of the OT law. Secondly, the revelation of Father was withdrawn to make way for the coming of the revelation of God as the Son at the time of Jesus. Lastly, when Jesus ascended to heaven, God next was revealed as the Holy Spirit in inspiration, regeneration, and sanctification.

In other words, there is no such thing as three distinct, co-eternal personalities in the being of God, only three different ways to show Himself to man. While in the mode as Father, the Son and Holy Spirit did not exist. When revealed as the Son, there was no such thing as Father or Spirit. Finally, both Father and Son are no

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more and all that remains is the Holy Spirit.

Such an imaginary view does violence to the plain teaching of the Scriptures. Worse yet, it places confidence in God who does not exist.

After His baptism, Jesus came up out of the water, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him, and the Father in heaven said, **This is My beloved Son** [Mt.3:16,17]. This is not Modalism.

Jesus, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without blemish to God [Heb.9:14]. This is not Modalism. This is one eternal God with three distinct personalities within the one essence, all existing at once.

Jesus prayed to His Father in heaven [Mt. 26:39]. He told Mary after His resurrection, **I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God** [Jn.20:17].

This is not deceptive language; Modalism is. Jesus was not praying to no one; He was not praying to Himself. There was truly the Father in heaven while He was here on the earth.

God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" [Gen.1:26]. **Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; From the time that it was, I was there. And now the Lord God and His Spirit have sent Me** [Isa.48:16].

How can we explain such mysteries? God's ways are unsearchable and past finding out [Rom.11:33], yet we can know truth that He has revealed to us. Some things are beyond our full grasp simply because God is infinite and we are small weak creatures.

Even the nature of man himself is a mystery we cannot fully explain, how much more that of the eternal and infinite being of God? Consider this.

You, your word, and your spirit are one. You are not three,

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but one, though there are three distinct elements in your being.

Your word communicates yourself, your very spirit. It reveals all that you are. Your spirit cannot be expressed apart from your word. Your word cannot be expressed apart from your bodily members of tongue and lips.

The same life breathes in your word, spirit, and body. You are one in essence, though distinct as three. Are your words really different than you? Is the Spirit dwelling in your body something besides your own self? Is your body separate from who you are? No, you are one and not three.

This, in a very limited way, is what is meant by Trinity. God, His Word, and His Spirit are what Christians call the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit; one God with three eternal distinctions in the one essence.

[5] Christ is God.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father [Jn.1:1, 14].

All should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him [Jn.5:23].

I and My Father are one [Jn.10:30].

If you had known Me, you would have know My Father also...He who has seen Me has seen the Father...I am in the Father and the Father in Me [Jn.14:7,9,11].

For in Him [Jesus] dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily [Col.2:9].

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[6] Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures [I Cor.15:3].

Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory? All things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled...Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be preached in His name among all nations...you are eyewitnesses of these things [Lk.24:26, 44, 46-48]. See Appendix 3 *Resurrection* for evidence of Christ's death and resurrection.

Islam believes it is impossible for anyone to bear the sins of another based upon passages in the *Quran* such as *No bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another* [S.53:38]. This is quite true and agrees with Scripture, **No man can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him** [Ps.49:7].

However, Jesus is not a mere man or like any other prophet. He is God manifest in the flesh. Secondly, Jesus alone of all men was sinless, and thus had no burden of His own to bear [Mt.3:17; Jn.8:29, 46]. He therefore is qualified on these two accounts to bear the sins of man in His own body on the cross [I Pet.2:24].

From the beginning, the shedding of blood to cover the guilt of sin has been required of God for acceptance. Adam sinned and tried to cover the shame of his guilt with his own remedy. God rejected this, slew an animal, and clothed Adam's guilt with God's own solution to the shame resulting from his sin [Gen.3:7,21].

Cain, who brought a sacrifice of suitable food over which God's name was invoked [this is the Islamic concept of what sacrifice is], was rejected. Only Abel who worshiped God on the basis of the shed blood of the lamb was accepted by the Lord [Gen.4:3-7;

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Heb.11:4].

Abraham offered up the ram in the place of his condemned son. The lamb was a substitute in the place of his son. The shed blood of the lamb rescued the son from death and judgment. Never again would he face judgment because God had provided a sacrifice in his place [Gen.22:4-14]. Even the *Quran* refers to this event and states *We [Allah] ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice* [S.37:107].

Moses was directed by the Lord to have every Israelite slay a lamb and apply the blood to where they lived. It was only then that they would be saved from the judgment coming upon the whole land. The blood of the lamb was their protection from the wrath of God coming upon the unbelievers [Ex.12:3,6,7,13].

All these were preparing the way for the coming of the Lord's final sacrifice, the one that forgives sins once and for all. Isaiah spoke in great detail about this coming sacrifice many hundreds of years before He came [Isa.52:13-15; 53:1-12].

It was the purpose of God to make His Servant a sacrifice for sin. This Servant was pierced for our iniquities. He was like a lamb sacrificed to bear the sins of others. Who was this Servant? How could a Servant of God become a sacrifice to forgive sins?

John, the prophet of God tells us. **He saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"** [Jn.1:29]. No one took Jesus' life from Him. He rather gave Himself freely to die in the place of sinful men [Jn.10:17,18]. It was the will of God that Jesus should offer Himself as a sinless substitute for the sins of man in order that they might be forgiven.

[7] **I know Him**, because I am from Him, and He sent Me [Jn.7:29].

No one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone

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know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him [Mt.11:27].

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APPENDIX 4 SLAVERY

HISTORY OF AFRICAN SLAVERY

In less than four hundred years, between thirty and forty million souls were lost to Africa during the transatlantic enslavement to the Americas. The leading merchants in this wicked trade were the Portugese and British, followed by the French, Spanish, Dutch, and North Americans.

This wretched traffic in human souls became one of the largest ocean-going and commercial ventures in the entire history of the world. Men made in the image of God were captured and sold for pieces of cloth, scraps of iron, alcohol, cowries, and beads.

Slavery was initially an African phenomenon. Long before Europe and the Americas were involved, fellow African Muslim Mullahs were seizing black Africans and selling them body and soul.

As far back as 1390, the king of Bornu [now Nigeria] bitterly complained to the Sultan of Egypt that Arabs were always seizing his people like merchandise. Yet historically, the Oyo kingdom had always supplied slaves to their Northern Muslim neighbors and later to the European traders.

It was in the early 1400's that the Portugese began to stain their hands with the blood of the innocent by purchasing these captives from the shores of North Africa. Being a Roman Catholic country, they sought to justify their crimes by claiming that it was actually to the advantage of the blacks to be taken in slavery. "For,"

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they said, “it is better to be a ‘Christian’ though a slave, than an African in his native land.”

By the middle of the 1500's Spain had entered into the devilish enterprise while some masters in Portugal had begun to encourage female slaves to breed, like animals, for sale. Britain followed in 1562 when captain Hawkins captured three hundred blacks at the river Sierra Leone, sold them for spices, goods, and money and returned to England with “a good profit.”

Only a few voices of protest were being raised in the 16th century. They were answered by the prevailing opinion among both Roman Catholics and Muslims that the blacks were under the curse of Ham. A Dominican Friar, Fray Francisco de la Cruz, told the Inquisition in Lima, Peru, in about 1575 that, “the blacks are justly captives by reason of the sins of their forefathers, and that because of that sin, God gave them that color.” This was, and is, nothing but a wicked perversion of Scripture to vainly try and justify an inexcusable guilt.

Nevertheless, Roman Catholic objections continued to be raised into the early 1600's. These may have even led to abolishing the trade had the Northern European Protestants not entered in heavily to the miserable enterprise at this time.

Ironically, and to the shame of the “Christians,” the Muslims in North Africa freed black slaves who professed faith in Islam and were, in that respect, more “Christian” than the church! But the blame for this despicable business did not rest on the shoulders of Europe alone.

Blacks deceiving or kidnaping blacks to be sold on the slaving market, even selling their own children, was widespread. Tribal wars increased in order to profit by the illicit trade.

By the 1700's every major river that reached the Atlantic

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became a slaving port. From Saint-Louis in Senegal to Luanda in Angola, millions of blacks were herded onto ships of bondage for the terrible two to three months' crossing of the sea.

In West Africa, Wolof, Serber, and Mandinga people were shipped down the waters of the Senegal and Gambia and imprisoned on the Isle of Goree. From there they departed either to their death or to the sugar cane plantations of South America and Carribean islands.

At the mouth of the Cuanza river in Angola during the 1600's, the Lundas, led by their king who daily anointed himself with a pomade of boiled human fat, supplied the Portugese with bodies from raids upon other tribal villages. Even the king's own children from his nearly thirty wives were gladly sold into horrible servitude to Brazilian plantation owners.

Nigeria figured heavily in the slave traffic. Even up to today, there remain more than two million Yoruba speaking people on the coast of Brazil, still serving Sango and Ogun, whose ancestors arrived as slaves.

Lagos, Warri, and Calabar were early centers of this unholy trade. On an island near Igala, just below the confluence of the Niger and Benue rivers, a major slave market was established where blacks sold no less than eleven thousand of their fellows on a yearly basis.

Human cargoes floated along the banks of the Volta River dividing the Ashanti and Dahomey kingdoms. The peoples of Guinea and the Temne and Mende contributed their quota carried afloat on the river Sierra Leone.

34% were taken in tribal wars, 30% kidnaped by Africans, 11% were sold for crimes [mainly adultery], 7% sent due to debt, 7% traded by relatives and friends, and the remaining were enslaved for

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a variety of other heartless causes.

When captured, the unfortunate victims were chained and collared or tied together in groups of four with choking ropes about the neck. Those who resisted were beaten mercilessly. Often the captives marched in human caravans of one thousand at a time for several months before they reached the slaving ports along the Atlantic.

Deception and cheating were practiced by seller and buyer alike. Brass shavings were mixed in with gold dust by the Africans when selling metal to Europeans. The whites mixed water with their brandy or rum when paying for slaves.

All slaves were branded with hot irons as a mark of ownership. During the early 1600's each slave was baptized as a "Christian" before leaving Africa. This was done by giving them Christian names and sprinkling salt on their tongues followed by "holy" water.

Finally the priest would proclaim, "Consider that you are now children of Christ. You are going to set off for Portugese territory, where you will learn matters of the Faith. Never think any more of your place of origin. Do not eat dogs, nor rats, nor horses. Be content."

The horrors of this entire business were compounded by the widespread belief among the Africans that the white people were followers of the "Lord of the dead" and had seized slaves to eat them. The red wine that the slave traders regularly merrily became drunk on was thought to be the blood of the blacks.

On the ships of bondage for the crossing of the sea, the prisoners were packed, naked and crowded, like fish in a tin. Forced to sleep atop one another due to lack of space, they relieved themselves where they were in unbearable heat and stench amid the

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groans and shrieks of the sick and dying.

Whips were used for the slow in obeying and others had arms cut off as a warning to any thinking to try and return to the land of their birth. Rape of the chained women was the regular practice of captain and crew. Rebels were tortured and then thrown overboard for sharks to eat or hung on the masts for some days as a lesson to the rest.

Water rations were minimal and many died from dehydration. Dysentery accounted for one third of the pitiful passengers' deaths. Blindness afflicted many like a plague. In the 1600's the death rate in transport was anywhere from twenty to fifty percent; the 1700's fared slightly better, "only" up to thirty-two percent.

Storms claimed many lives. In 1738, a Dutch crew abandoned the ship and escaped while leaving its cargo of 702 slaves to drown in the raging sea. A Danish ship in 1702 was lost at sea with 820 slaves on board.

Rio de Janeiro was the main Brazilian port receiving Portugese slaves, mainly from Angola. Buenos Aires in Argentina was Spain's chief port and Charleston was first in North America. There they were displayed and sold like any other merchandise.

By 1780, the cost of a slave had risen to ten times what it had been one hundred years earlier. Nevertheless, tremendous profits were made in the early 17th and 18th centuries though the financial rewards sharply dropped off in the later 1700's.

About two-thirds of the African slaves were sent to produce sugar in the plantations of the Americas to satisfy European's taste for sweets. So much so, that in the 1700's, Liverpool in England became the world's largest trader in slaves.

There is no record of any sermon against slavery in the

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pulpits of the world during the entire 1600's. A sole voice, that of the English Puritan, Richard Baxter, said on one occasion in the late 1600's, "It is better to call those who owned slaves demons rather than Christians."

Opposition to the atrocities of slavery were slow in coming. A novel appeared in 1688 written by a woman, Aphra Behn, that vividly brought before French and British audiences for over one hundred years the plight of African slaves. The Quakers, in the mid 1700's, both in America and in England, began to openly oppose slavery.

They published statements like, "No Quaker could keep a slave without risking damnation," and condemned all who invested in the trade or supplied cargoes for it. Others also began to question the trade.

Montesquieu, a Frenchman in the later 1700's, mockingly said, "One cannot put oneself into the frame of mind in which God, who is a very wise being, took it upon Himself to put a soul, and a very good soul at that, into such an entirely black body. [So] it is impossible for us to suppose these creatures are men because, if one were to allow them to be so, a suspicion would follow that we are not ourselves Christian."

George Wallace of Scotland in 1761 protested, "An institution so unnatural and so inhuman as that of slavery ought to be abolished." Sir William Blackstone took up the pen in England, declaring in 1769 that the law of England, "abhors and will not endure the state of slavery within this nation."

Even apart from such humanitarian [concern for the good of people] appeals, there also began to be a growing worry that the slaves, much more numerous than their owners, might rise up in rebellion. This added additional concerns over increasing the slave

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population.

A Quaker in America, Benezet by name, began in the late 1760's to persuade others outside of his denomination about the moral outrage of slavery. He wrote Edmund Burke, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and John Wesley, among others, which established an intercontinental link for the growing opposition.

During the middle 1700's in England, Granville Sharp prosecuted the institution on legal grounds. John Wesley wrote moving pamphlets against it on moral and humanitarian grounds, predicting that the time for England to repent was fast approaching, "whose worst crime was its indulgence in the slave trade."

Adam Smith pointed out the economic disadvantages and risky investment both in terms of human lives and financial returns. Meanwhile, the rebellious Americans were challenging the rights of the British parliament to make laws binding upon the colonists.

In an open letter to King George III printed in the *Boston Gazette* in 1771, it was claimed that being subject to laws made by other people is the essence of slavery with its "endless and numberless curses," a condition "worse than death." At the time, this was little more than a curious emotional hypocrisy, as the American colonists still practiced and profited by the black slave trade. It at least showed the effect that the golden rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," produced in their minds, however inconsistent their application of that was.

A timely "Committee for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade" was established in 1787. This London society joined together many diverse international opponents of the slave trade together. Action began to be taken in British parliament led by William Wilberforce with the support of his friend William Pitt, the Prime Minister.

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John Newton, former slave captain who wrote the hymn *Amazing Grace* after his conversion, greatly assisted in the process. Moral and spiritual conviction was what prompted this move to end this centuries' old wretched traffic.

At the same time, there was proposed that a new colony be established in Africa for freed slaves. Thus began the "Sierra Leone Plan." The first attempts were utter failures.

Malaria, drunkenness, laziness, war with local tribes, and rains killed off half of the original settlers. Many departed from the settlement and went to work for nearby slave dealers.

Slave traders hated the new colony and influenced "King Jemmy" to drive the settlers away and burn down the town. It would be several years yet in the future before Freetown would be established as the hoped for "cradle of African civilization."

Opposition to abolition in England was very strong. Sixty percent of Bristol's ocean going business depended upon it. Merchants throughout England had been manufacturing their goods to be exchanged for slaves. Simply put, the love of money was the root of all this evil and the cause of delaying its end. Finally though, through the tireless efforts of William Wilberforce, England passed the law abolishing the slave trade, effective May 1, 1807.

The announcement led to riots of protest on the Gold Coast among Africans whose main source of income had become capturing and selling their fellow Africans. The king of Bonny on the Niger delta informed captain Crow of England, "Our oracle and priests say this trade must go on...your country can never stop a trade ordained by God Himself."

In 1820, the king of Ashanti asked the British official, Dupuis, "Why do the Christians not want to buy slaves any more? Is your God not the same as that of the Muslims, who continue to

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buy, kidnap, and sell slaves just as they have always done?" Indeed, there continued to be more slaves in Africa than in America.

The Haussa slave trade continued inland unabated. It is estimated that fully twenty five percent of the population under the Sokoto Caliphate may have been slaves by the end of the 1800's.

Among the Ashantis, the laboring people were still mostly slaves in 1840. More than one thousand were sacrificed at the death of the king of Ashanti in 1824.

Slavery continued to prevail throughout West Africa. From Lagos blacks uninterruptedly sold blacks by the tens of thousands across the Sahara to the north. In Bornu near Lake Chad, merchants would hardly accept payment for goods in anything other than slaves in the 1820's.

Half of Brazil's population of four million in 1817 were slaves. In Virginia of the USA, by 1800 there existed farms for breeding slaves. The invention of the cotton gin [a machine that separated seeds from the cotton] greatly increased the demand for slaves, especially women, so that their numbers tripled between the years of 1790 and 1825.

Other nations were slow to follow the British lead to end the despicable business. The British navy began patrolling the West African coast to insure obeying the new abolition law while arresting and fining "pirates" who had no legal right to carry slaves.

Soon ships of other European and South American countries were intercepted and their human cargoes were taken to Freetown and set free in the colony that had been reestablished there. Up unto 1840, 425 slave ships were forced by the Royal Navy to deliver up their captives at Freetown where they were maintained by the British for one year and then left to fend for themselves. Rapidly the liberated slaves from 117 tribes of western and central

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Africa outnumbered the indigenous population.

There they attempted to reorient their lives with no country of their own, no common language, and from diverse cultures. Many were confused and often damaged by the horrible experiences endured during their capture and transport aboard ship.

Missionaries to Freetown first came in 1804, sent by the Church Missionary Society of the Anglicans. Their early focus was upon schools, clinics, housing, and roads. By the mid 1800's, Sierra Leone was literate, progressive, and Christian, with a literacy rate as good as many European countries. Fourah Bay College was established in 1827 to train teachers and preachers, and by 1840, they were sending African missionaries to other parts of Africa.

One of these freed slaves, a Yoruba named Adjai, took the name Samuel Crowther and led the first missionary team into Abeokuta, Nigeria about the year 1844. He later became the first African bishop in 1864. It was these African brethren that first influenced and convinced the Anglicans to produce self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating churches on the African continent.

Other nations eventually joined with the British in abolishing this evil enterprise. The Vienna Treaty was signed by the European nations in 1815. In it they pledged to end the slave trade as soon as possible. UK officially abolished slavery as an institution throughout the British empire in 1833 and paid slave owners twelve million pounds in compensation for freeing their "property." America outlawed slavery by its thirteenth amendment to the constitution in 1865. Brazil was the last nation to agree, doing so in 1888.

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SCRAMBLE FOR AFRICA

Following the enslavement of Africans came the colonization of the entire continent during the Scramble for Africa. For this to succeed, demanded a revolution in African society. Greed for the wealth of natural resources and profit from trade drove the frenzy to annex a continent as the colonial property of European kingdoms.

Exploration led to enterprise, and that to exploitation and eventual economic and military enslavement. Unfortunately, and sometimes unavoidably, evangelism was too often attached to that sequence; guns going ahead of the gospel or cannons chasing after the inroads of the cross.

In some twenty years, every nation in Africa except Ethiopia was brought under a new type of slavery; one on its own soil. Almost the entire ten million square miles of the continent was claimed and captured, while 110 million bewildered blacks watched as their lands were snatched right from under their feet. Livingstone's discovery of quinine to treat malaria, the exploration of the Nile, Niger, and Congo rivers along with the steam engine's revolution of industry and travel both by land and sea, greatly advanced Mammon's maddened rush for Africa.

The evils of the phenomenon of slavery were staggering, both on the part of Africans themselves as well as the whites. Blacks willingly pillaged, murdered, and enslaved fellow blacks for the sake of sordid gain and then institutionalized the practice over long centuries.

Even after it had been abolished by the British, at least on paper and to some extent on the West Coast, slavery was still thriving like a cancer. In Central and Eastern Africa under the whips,

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machetes, and guns of Arab and Swahili slave raiders along with tribal chiefs' willing cooperation, the "open sore of the world" flourished.

It was under the banner of eliminating this evil that imperialist Europe marched into Africa. Few were sincere about the humanitarian aspect of occupation. Most were consumed by passion for profit and political power. The missionaries were the most consistent exception to this exploitation and "legal" enslavement. Even notable explorers like David Livingstone's companion, Henry Stanley, were little more than agents of colonial conquerors themselves.

Livingstone truly had opened up the continent for the "3 C's" of Commerce, Christianity, and Civilization. Though he traveled widely and preached to the Africans, this was not his main objective. He stated that he was not so much interested in preaching Christ to Africa as in preaching Africa to Europe. His great burden was to heal the open sore of slavery that ravaged the heart of the continent, and to accomplish that required for it to be brought before the conscience of Europe.

Livingstone himself lived in humility and selfless meekness and kindness. Stanley did not walk in the footsteps of his master. He said about himself, "My methods, however, will not be Livingstone's. Each man has his own way. [He] has been almost Christ-like for goodness, patience, and self-sacrifice. The selfish and wooden-headed world requires mastering, as well as a loving charity."

He lived his creed. When refused food and threatened by the Bumbireh people, he decided to "make an example" of them. He and his men shot and killed more than 40 villagers and wounded more than 100. This was the first of such brutalities to open the way for the mixed blessings of the "3 C's." Such atrocities earned him the

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title *Bula Matari*, the Breaker of Rocks; a magical worker who smashes all obstacles.

Yet whether that of Abel or Africa, blood still cries out to the God of heaven from the ground. Stanley's initial group of more than 250 [once up to 700] had been reduced to 108 by the time he reached the Atlantic coast. Cannibals, disease, starvation, desertion, and the river Congo itself took their toll during the 999 day journey of 7,088 miles.

SOUTH AFRICA AND RHODESIA

1867 brought the deadly discovery of diamonds in South Africa to the attention of the British. At the Cape House of Assembly the Colonial Secretary said, "Gentlemen, on this rock [diamonds] the future success of South Africa will be built." Soon the Kimberly mine became the largest man-made hole in the world as the greedy diggers lusted after the glittering filthy lucre obtained by the blood of Africans.

Wages paid to Africans were spent on European guns and the whites, in turn, slaughtered tribes in order to prevent an "uprising" against colonial power. Mammon knows no mercy.

Cecil Rhodes exploited the situation and the Africans in order to amass a personal fortune. Through deceit and treachery he obtained all metal and mineral rights to the domain of King Lobengula, promising that there "would never be more than ten of his representatives on the king's land at a time." The entire region and beyond eventually became Rhodesia, and the king lost everything, being sacrificed to Rhode's dream of uninterrupted British colonies from Cape to Coast; South Africa to Cairo.

In 1893 when his Rhodesia was virtually bankrupt, he sold

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some of his personal shares in his Chartered Company and hired a small army to massacre the king and his subjects. They murdered thousands, burnt villages, seized 10,000 square miles of farm land, and 100's of thousands of cattle.

King Lobengula escaped Rhode's white army, but when he learned that his last chief had surrendered, he poisoned himself that he might die with the dignity of a king rather than being hunted down as a dog. Rhodes was well pleased with the outcome. 50 white lives and 50,000 pounds was a small price to pay to double the size of Rhodesia and save his business venture from financial ruin. Newspapers were bribed in order to report his official version of the conflict back in London.

With no land, no cattle, and no army, the surviving Ndebele became little more than slave labor for the whites. A tax was imposed, 10 shillings, on every hut throughout the realm which forced them to work to pay the tax; and the whip was employed on both accounts. Hostility brewed like a tropical thunder head. The spark that lit the fuse of this human keg of gunpowder was two years of drought, massive swarms of locust, and the terrifying deadly pestilence of a malignant cattle disease.

Swiftly, more than 2.5 million cattle perished. The Africans attributed all these disasters to the white man's presence. By March of 1896, the first African revolt against European Colonialists broke out being urged by their oracle priests. White men, women, and children were brutally hacked to death in the attempt to purge the land of all Europeans. It was met and squashed by Rhode's police militia and British troops as mercilessly as the attacks had been upon the whites.

From 1899 to 1902, Britain turned against their fellow whites in the Transvaal and Orange Free States [Rhodesia]. With

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methods of barbarism, over 111,000 whites and no less than 43,000 blacks were herded, men, women, and children, like beasts into concentration camps. Typhoid, dysentery, and measles raged, claiming tens of thousands of lives. In these filthy confines, the death rate rapidly rose to 34%.

The motive for these atrocities and wanton slaughter? The lust of the eye for coveting their gold, the pride of life in an imagined British superiority, and the lust of the flesh in just plain malice for personal reasons. Each called upon the same God and proceeded to massacre one another on the killing fields of Africa.

Following the war, finding the Africans to be too costly a labor force, these British despots of gold and diamonds imported Chinese laborers and used them as virtual slaves. There they were separated from their families for three years, herded into the wretched concentration compounds, and severely punished should they try to escape. Sodomy resulted, yet the miners of mammon forcibly kept them from their wives for the sake of their filthy lucre.

LEOPOLD'S CONGO

By 1878 Stanley had formally committed himself to King Leopold II of Belgium for a period of five years as his official representative. Under the guise of the "3 C's" humanitarian concerns, Leopold was actually secretly masterminding the exclusive control of the entire Congo basin in order to amass a personal fortune.

By the summer of 1884, the most feverish phase of the Scramble had begun between the French, British, and the Germans; all lusting after control of the Niger palm-oil industry. Just five days

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before England had anticipated claiming all, Bismark of Germany took possession of Cameroon as a colony.

By November, The Berlin Conference had convened with delegates of fourteen nations to map out how the “3 C’s” could be achieved. They established three broad goals: [1] Free trade for the Congo, [2] Free navigation on the Niger, and [3] Agreement on rules of future colonization but without defining boundaries of carving up the continent.

The Belgian king did not even attend, yet all the while, Leopold, like a cunning leopard, maneuvered circumstances behind the scenes; playing French against English and German against both while undermining Portugal and pretending neutrality towards all. In the end, his International Association of the Congo, The Free State, was granted universal recognition and sealed with appropriate treaties.

It was, in fact, his own private kingdom of Leopoldland, with full access to the Atlantic along with excellent ports. Over 1 million square miles in the heart of Africa were his under the false front of his humanitarian association. Before anyone knew what was happening, he was aggressively exploiting the one “C,” Commerce, at the expense of all others by employing the 4th, 5th, and 6th “C’s,” Conquest, Coveting, and Corruption.

It was only at the turn of the century that an obscure clerk of a shipping company in Liverpool, Edmond Morel, discovered the treachery of Leopold. Through comparing the reports of the imports and exports of goods and rubber from the Congo, the fraud and staggering wealth and wickedness of the king was exposed. In short, Leopold’s humanitarianism was shown to be nothing more than “legalized robbery enforced by violence; a secret society of murderers with a king for [its head].”

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Leopold had created a monopoly with a system of forced labor compelled by torture and murder in order to provide free export rubber to fatten his own purse. News spread to the British press and investigations were called for. Books were written by Morel and his associates exposing the horrific practices.

But the king, cunning as a serpent, launched his own counter-attack. Quickly one author was sued to court for criminal libel while Leopold's men bribed all witnesses to keep them from testifying. Morel himself was approached by a Belgian official to inquire how much he would agree to in order to keep silent. Morel refused.

The Baptists and Catholics, however, were more obliging. For some years Leopold had "reduced" their taxes in the Congo in exchange for their missionaries' silent cooperation in not reporting what they had witnessed.

Finally, however, William Morrison of the American Presbyterian Mission returned from the Congo with a full and truthful exposure of the evils that existed. Europe, in 1903, was stunned.

African towns of 40,000 had been reduced to 1,000 by being forced to abandon their farms to collect Leopold's "rubber tax:" Bring rubber or die! Weeks in the jungles took their toll on countless thousands who died of starvation, attacks by wild beasts, and disease.

Wages were not paid; there were none. Low quotas resulted in beatings, ears being cut off, roping of necks to be sold as slaves, or simply being shot. Hundreds of families were butchered and their villages looted and burnt. Baskets of severed hands were carried to Leopold's agents to prove that they had not wasted valuable ammunition in killing the tribesmen, but had "wisely" used more economical means.

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At the direction of the now alerted English government, Roger Casement, the British Consul in the Congo, was ordered to verify the reports. That he did, and the half could not be told. Even the guilty missionaries came forward and confirmed the ghastly tales.

The Belgian monarch multiplied his deceit, intrigues, and bribery over the next few years while continuing his unspeakable atrocities. But Justice must triumph at last. In 1909, Leopold lay dying. Who now will own your fortune? What now will atone for your blood-stained hands dyed red from those severed from Congolese? Not even the Roman Catholic priest would pronounce for him Extreme Unction [final prayers with anointing oil], for at his deathbed was his immoral mistress that the king had taken when she was eighteen and he, sixty-five.

GERMAN COLONIES

Genocide best expresses Germany's response to African revolt in their South Western [Namibia] and Eastern [Tanzania] territories. In the Southwest, colonialism conquered by theft, rape, and brutality. A Herero herdsman complained to a German settler, saying, "The missionary says that we are the children of God like our white brothers...but just look at us. Dogs, slaves, worse than baboons on the rocks...that is how you treat us."

When they could endure no more, they revolted. Mercilessly the Herero people were systematically forced by German troops into the desert, wells were stopped up, and the people surrounded and left to starve and die of thirst.

East Africa was worse. Those killed by a German induced famine perished miserably. Fields, crops, storehouses, and villages

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went up in smoke among thousands of acres. A minimum of 250,000 souls were forced into starvation, some tribes losing 75% of their people.

When the famine was ended, survivors returned to an unrecognizable landscape. What had been fields of maize now was taken over by forest, which became home to rhinoceros, buffalo, and elephant. The land that once swarmed with people was transformed into the largest wild game reserve in the world. Truly, men made in the image of God were worse off than baboons on the rocks.

In West Africa, German rulers of Cameroon and Togo abused their powers in grossly horrendous ways. Flogging men to death, buying young black girls for concubines, mutilation, and murder were all too common. On one occasion, all the men and women of a village were shot and the fifty-four surviving children were put in baskets and drowned like cats in the river. Togo was the domain of a notorious German harem of whipped African prisoners of immorality, some as young as thirteen.

NIGERIA

The same crushing military conquest prevailed in Nigeria. Slaughter of tribes along the Niger and Benue secured the advance of British interests in palm oil and hardwood exports. Kano, Ilorin, and Sokoto succumbed to the persuasion of cannons and machine guns. New emirs were appointed who would cooperate with colonial rule.

In 1906, a minor uprising by Mallam Isa in the Sokoto caliphate was met with utter annihilation. Villagers armed with hoes and hatchets were cut down by blazing British firepower, leaving not one man, woman, or child alive among the 2,000 inhabitants.

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Prisoners were executed, heads severed and placed on poles, and the entire village leveled to the ground. The Sultan of Sokoto pronounced a curse on anyone who would try and rebuild Satiru or cultivate its fields.

SCRAMBLE OUT OF AFRICA

As sudden and incomprehensible as the scramble into Africa had been, so was the rush out. Between the years 1957 and 1968, the European powers virtually fled from their colonial roles. Boundaries remained essentially unchanged and names of many countries were changed.

Independence was hailed by pan-African nationalists, but the governance that emerged too often was woefully inadequate. Likely the wretched example of Europe's colonialism set the precedent for military coups, civil wars, genocide, corruption, and exploitation of impoverished tribal peoples by rich rulers. So it appeared that the African disciple became like his colonial master; and neither like the Prince of Peace.

REFLECTIONS UPON SLAVERY AND COLONIALISM

Greed at the expense of other's misery will ever dictate the rule of such and never allow just or compassionate governance of themselves. Islam will always remain oppressive as will any African people who would willingly engage in an atrocity such as slavery.

Combined with an underlying animistic culture, slavery has molded the consciousness of black Africa. Initiative, individuality, and inventiveness are not part of that cultural legacy. Passively

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assuming one's role determined by masters, whether black or white, has characterized entire peoples because of the combined effects of animism and slavery.

Concern for and self-denial for others can never become the culture of any populace when brutality and utter disregard for fellow humans is tolerated because of the root of all evil, the love of money. True Christianity with Christ as its Pattern is the only hope of African and Western societies.

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APPENDIX 5 ANIMISM

Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your empty way of life received by tradition from your forefathers; but with the precious blood of Christ
[I Pet.1:18, 19]

BASIC ELEMENTS OF ANIMISM

Religious methods can be broadly described as being either manipulating or supplicating, controlling or submitting, directing or asking, and commanding or dependent. Animism, also known as African Traditional Religion [ATR], attempts to manipulate, control, direct, and command spiritual powers and influences according to the will of the man using them.

Animists view bodily posture, certain words, objects, and rituals as possessing effective power of their own which can be employed to obtain one's wishes. His key to a successful life is the ability to manipulate forces according to correct formula.

The culture of the animist is determined by ancestral tradition and conformity to that by being in harmony with the powers that have brought it about. He therefore is ultimately concerned about the "who" and "why" of life rather than the questions of "what" and "how" that Westerners focus upon.

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To discover who is in power and why this power acts as it does is a constant pursuit. Meaning to life is always to be understood in a spiritual way rather than in a physical or material manner.

Therefore the causes behind disasters, sickness, deaths, and other details of life will be sought for in terms of who made these things happen and why they did so. Power is needed, both to discern the events of life, to obtain protection from forces, and to direct their course.

This makes the correct performance of prescribed ritual of utmost importance. An animist's relationship with power has little to do with morality, but has everything to do with the expertise to get results by proper technique.

It is not the will of the god that is his concern, but the compelling, asking, or manipulating that god to perform the person's own will. Thus by rites, rituals, incantations, or use of sacred objects, he seeks to use spiritual powers to produce success, happiness, or whatever else he may want, whether good or evil. Simply stated, man is the focus of all of life and the forces are viewed as existing solely for his benefit.

He believes that life can be transformed by techniques applied to mind, body, and spirit. There is no "sin" other than to not correctly perform the proper rituals in the approved manner. For the animist, there exists no absolute standard external to himself that judges his actions or to which he is accountable.

Essentially, good and evil are judged by whether the action promotes the well-being or harm of the group, not in terms of moral truth according to a written standard. Because he sees himself as an extension of the corporate community, tribe, and its spirit world, he does not view himself as blameworthy of misdeeds. Any failure must be attributed to some means used against him and the cause must be

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sought, not in himself, but in divining its spiritual source.

Feeling, experiencing, and participation are what make his life meaningful, not ideas or knowledge derived from written sources.

World religions, by way of contrast, are institutionalized rather than experiential and pragmatic [whatever works being considered right or true]. They point back to a founder, have sacred writings, and appointed places of worship. Sin is judged by an established written code and membership is determined more on moral grounds and agreement with documents than ritual participation.

Animists practice oral traditions passed down through ritual to insure the continued involvement of the ancestral spirits among the living. As such, a broken relationship between people of the same group is a serious breach in animist theology and is the closest thing to being considered “sin.”

The ancestors are thought to be the guardians of the living who determine which spirit will come to inhabit the unborn. Thus, to disrupt the harmony between the spirits of the ancestors and the group as a whole becomes a horrifying prospect.

This is not to say that an animist cannot have his own thoughts and distinct behavior. He may, but he must not violate ritual practices or this will provoke the anger of the spirit world and the wrath of the community to which he belongs.

Great pressure is therefore upon him to conform to the accepted practices with respect to his assigned role within it. It is why individuality, diversity, and inventiveness are discouraged and rarely seen.

A man without relatives or children of his own is like someone without citizenship, identity, friends, or help in this life or

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the next. To be cut off from the tribe is therefore the most terrible punishment that can be inflicted upon anyone.

Yet his participation in the community is essentially self-seeking. His desire is to gain power both within the group and over his own destiny. Prayer, sacrifice, and rituals are not performed out of devotion, but in order gain what he wants by “using” the spirit world.

Power can be gained in a variety of ways; through sacrifices, offerings, incantations, liturgies, taboos, charms, fetishes, ceremonies, witchcraft, sorcery, or by contact with powerful persons or objects, through the laying on of hands, or articles of clothing, anointing, etc. Because of the universal belief that the spoken word carries power to effect reality, speaking in tongues is widely practiced among animists and is thought to have more power than understandable prayer.

Dreams, visions, and ghosts play a significant role as they are viewed as bringing contact with the ancestral spiritual world. Also, totems [certain animals, objects, or plants that are thought to have a special brotherly relationship with the family or tribe] are not to be treated as common, but as sacred. Trees, groves, rocks, streams, or mountains and high places are examples of these.

To an animist, the supreme God is at best distant and unconcerned with the practical affairs of men. He may be respected, but He is not personal, certainly not a Father, though He may be considered to be Creator or even Judge.

The existence of an impersonal power often referred to as the life-force is a common belief among animists. This force has no moral nature but can be tapped into and used for either good or evil. This belief is evident even in various forms of Pentecostalism where it is common to hear groans, shouts, or short gasping sounds to

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inhale or obtain the “power” of the Spirit of God.

Ritual is the foundation of animism and ATR. Through the correct formula, access is gained and help obtained from the spirit world. The basic belief is that if a man will perform so and so, a sure result must necessarily follow. The ritual act is sacred and effective merely by being performed according to correct formula. Many Muslims, for example, believe that by someone repeating the *Shahada* [the creed], he automatically becomes a Muslim.

There is a reciprocal relationship between the devoted man and his god. The god cannot influence the world apart from the ritual of the man and the man has no power to change his situation apart from the god. They are, in that sense, mutually dependent and one together in the stream of life as they influence their world.

That using the proper words correctly will always produce the desired results is fundamental to all animist belief and practice. There are certain power words that must be used with great caution. “Positive” and “negative” declarations are believed to bring either prosperity or a curse.

Animistic healing takes place using this technique. Through power ritual language, sickness is commanded to leave the distressed and enter the body of a sacrificial animal.

Symbols also play a vital role in sustaining the animist’s contact with the spirit world all around him. Horns, swords, crosses, crescent moons, and bodily gestures all convey spiritual power.

Ceremonial meals are common expressions of the community’s ritual practice along with dances, music, and parades. Weddings, births, and burials are all highly important events for the continuance with blessing of the ancestral spirits.

Burial rites are especially significant to the animist. Without the proper ceremonies, the departed spirit will not be admitted to the

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blessed state but be doomed to wander as a haunting evil spirit who will trouble the living. This is why one-year anniversaries to honor the deceased are common practices among animistic peoples.

Beware that you are not ensnared to follow them...and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, "How do these nations serve their gods, that I also may do likewise?"

You shall not worship the Lord your God in that way; for every abomination to the Lord which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods [Deut.12:30,31].

We must repent of the concept of incantation: manipulating spiritual powers through words. We must rather submit to the Word of the one true Sovereign God. We must abandon the practice of serving gods based on oral tradition where the priest speaks for the deity and is the mediator of power and contact with the supernatural [Isa.8:19,20].

It must not be thought that submission and obedience to the hierarchy of elders is to be absolute and unquestioning [I Thess.5:21; I Cor.10:15; Job 32:4-12; Tit.1:10, 11]. It is error to imagine that the true God can be influenced or controlled by ritual activity for selfish ends as the spirits are.

The true and living God [I Cor.8:6] is in an unrivaled category by Himself and shares no arrangements with other deities. All others must therefore be cast away and He alone worshiped and served.

Tribalism therefore has no basis to be continued since the ancestral spirits and gods of the tribe are wicked delusions and cannot continue to be served and honored alongside the true and living God. Christians are a single culture as citizens of one kingdom and tradition [Phil.3:20] who serve the one true Eternal Spirit, God

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the Father.

Jesus Christ is not a deity to be added to those already being served; the one who can forgive and carry to heaven while the others take care of the “practical” issues of daily living.

Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

Therefore, “Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.

“I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God [2 Cor.6:14 - 7:1].

ANIMISM AND THE CHRISTIAN HOME

Because the animist views all of life as means to his own ends by manipulating, controlling, or even deceiving the forces he encounters, this has direct bearing on his home, especially his women. The basic animistic orientation towards women is a result of his whole outlook on life. To him, women are disposable possessions; a means to achieving the man’s end for pleasure, profit,

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power, and progeny [children].

The following passages must transform our thinking from this animist perspective to that of a genuine Christian home.

THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN/WIFE IS:

[1] to be honored, understood, and not mistreated since she is weaker [I Pet.3:7].

[2] to be loved as one's own body, not treated as property [Eph.5:25,28,31].

[3] a helper, not an animal used as a sexual object for pleasure and to simply provide children [Gen.2:18-20].

[4] not a slave whose labor profits the man. The man is to provide for her [I Tim.5:8]. Man is not king [Gen.3:16].

[5] not to be divorced [Mal.2:16] and barrenness is no cause to do so [Lk.1:7; Gen.11:30; 18:10,11; I Sam.1:5-8].

[6] not under the authority of the extended family or clan. They have no rights over the wife of their male relation [Gen.2:23,24].

[7] not the one held responsible for the training of the children; the man is [Eph.6:4; Gen.18:19; Deut.11:18-21; Prov.4:1-4; Ps.78:3-8].

[8] not to be isolated and separate from the man and all that concerns him; no secrets covered up. All is freely shared [Gen.2:25].

[9] a fellow heir of the grace of life, not of lesser privilege [I Pet.3:7; Gal.3:28].

[10] not to be shared among other wives. Polygamy does not have God's approval [Gen.2:18-25; Mt.19:4-6; Deut.17:17].

If repentance from the animistic view about the wife and

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home is not actual, it renders our Christianity an empty masquerade, because our prayers will be ineffective and hindered [I Pet.3:7].

ANIMISM AND WEST AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

There is evidence that the roots of basic animistic thinking and practice have not been abandoned in the Christianity of West Africa. When the Orthodox church came with its liturgy, rites, priests, ceremonies, cassocks, religious objects, and sacred places, essentially they were received within the animistic framework.

These things were believed to be vehicles of power that were effective in and of themselves, rather than merely representative and symbolic. The Bible, as a sacred object, often is used as a talisman, pictures of Jesus as a means of grace, and water and crosses as charms for protection or blessing. Extreme forms of these characteristics are seen in the so-called White Garment churches.

Modern Pentecostalism in West Africa stemming from the 1970's is ever as much flagrantly animistic. Here the "Man of God" has taken the place of the *Ifa*, the oracle priest who speaks for the god. Thus it is thought that the "pastor" has contact with the "Spirit" in a way that the uninitiated do not, and must never, therefore, be questioned.

Power is transferred by his touch through the laying on of his hands. Objects such as water, oil, and handkerchiefs that he has "blessed" are believed to transfer the "anointing."

The "Positive Confession" doctrine is nothing more than the foundational assumption of all ATR: The spoken word has power to effect reality if the correct method is used. Shouting, "Back to sender," is a popular formula [incantation] used by "deliverance" ministers to transfer spirits, curses, or problems to a sacrificial victim,

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in this case, to the person who is the “source” of the spiritual affliction.

All of these things are animistic to the core and must be repented of if our religion will be Christian indeed and be conformed to the Pattern of our Lord Jesus Christ.

When you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations.

There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer,

or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead.

For whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord; and because of these abominable things the Lord your God will drive them out before you.

You shall be blameless before the Lord your God.

For these nations, which you shall dispossess, listen to those who practice witchcraft and to diviners, but as for you, the Lord your God has not allowed you to do so [Deut.18:9-14].

Perhaps the most critical issue facing the church of West Africa is that of the influence of ATR upon its beliefs and practices. Specifically, two major concerns must be responded to biblically, both in teaching and in practice. The issues are these:

[1] What is a Christian home?

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[2] What is Christian burial?

Because these have not been thoroughly addressed by the West African church itself, there has been no distinctive Christian culture emerge in the more than one hundred and fifty years that the gospel has come to this part of the world. In these two areas in particular, little difference can be seen between the Muslim, Animist, and Christian in their basic assumptions about and daily treatment of wife and children, or with respect to the dead and the burial ceremonies attending that event.

These are questions that must be answered by the African, not by the Western missionary.

From the Word of God and led by the Holy Spirit, determination must be made of what is truly Christian and what is simply ATR masquerading in a new religious dress.

Persecution surely will come, but that truth, once discerned, will set us free.

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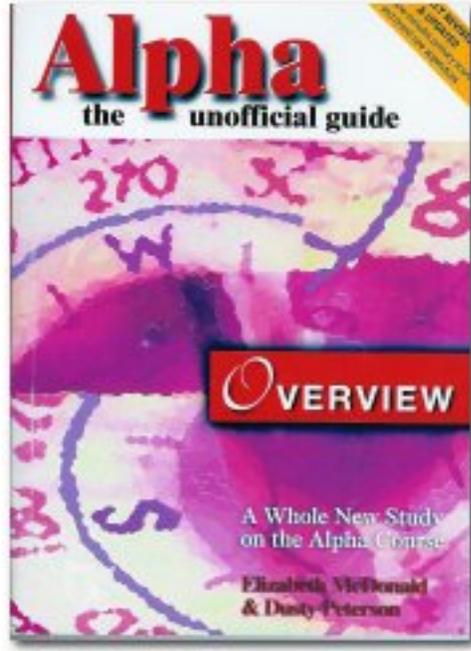
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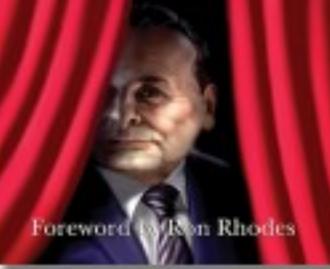
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A MATTER of BASIC PRINCIPLES

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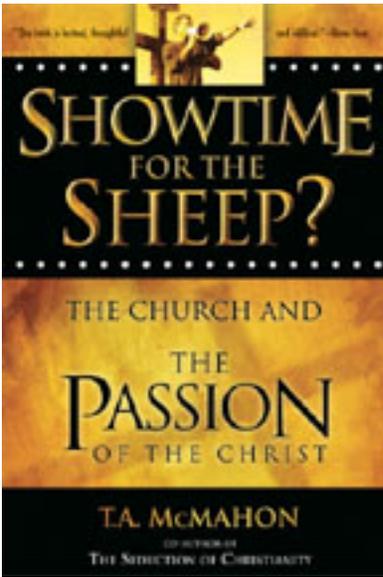
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UNDER THE BANNER OF HEAVEN

A Story of Violent Faith

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AFRICA



West African Mission Update

"We do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as bondservants for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor. 4:5)

"You also joining in helping us through your prayers" (2 Cor. 1:11)

Steve & Patricia Phillips

[The Gospel for West Africa](#)

[West African Update 10-05](#)

[West African Update 7-05](#)

[West African Update 4-05](#)

November 2005

Dear Brethren,

We have been with child, we have been in pain; we have, as it were, brought forth wind; We have not accomplished any deliverance in the earth, nor have the inhabitants of the world fallen [Isa.26:18]

Our Lord Jesus instructed us to candidly confess, "We are unprofitable servants" [Lk.17:10]. It is a sober and wise assessment that accords with the facts of the matter.

Too often, we clamor for the extraordinary and sensational to bolster our conceptions of serviceability in the kingdom of heaven. If we can catalog enough religious meetings, tally an impressive number of converts, or boast of successful testimonies, we assure ourselves that it is well.

But in reality, what have we really accomplished; or rather, who are we actually in the inner man during the oft repeated tedium of day to day necessities? The quantifiable and tangible make for impressive reporting, but may not

reflect what abiding spiritual advances have actually transpired. And, if at the end of the day, these be superficial and anemic, what matter all of the sanctimonious hurrahs participated in during our fleeting days of vanity under the sun?

The sentence of heaven peals its clarion with no uncertainty: "Behold, You desire truth in the inner parts" [Ps.51:6]. It is there, in the secret chambers of the heart, that truth must be found, for "out of it flow the issues of life" [Prov.4:23]. Seemingly spiritual exploits are no substitute for barrenness of soul. Christ must be formed within.

This was the consuming objective of Paul's burning selfless passion: "Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily" [Col.1:28, 29].

Every man complete in Christ; all else fades into irrelevancy in light of this one necessary thing. Brethren, it is for this that we labor and strive and I will be the first to evaluate the outcome of my efforts: We are unprofitable servants.

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; stuck down, but not destroyed – always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh" [2 Cor.4:7-11].

And it is thus that we solicit your prayers.

I returned to Sierra Leone from three weeks in Nigeria on the 14th of this month. There I taught the Scriptures on 38 occasions in addition to numerous times of private discussion and counsel. Brother Titus accompanied me on the trip.

After making ample provision for his family in Nigeria , Titus had joined us in Sierra Leone for five months of discipleship. During that time he completed the 150 sessions of *The Discipleship Experience*, studied through *Are We Like Christ?* and read through the entire Bible, as well as bringing questions for daily discussion and visiting people in Regent village where we live.

Titus is now back in Nigeria with his family, where he is presently discipling Timothy, Adeosun, Kunle, Samson, and others. He is doing the final editing work on a Yoruba translation of *The Discipleship Experience*. He has also teamed up with brother Yinnkah to train 12 other disciples in Ibadan .

In some respects, Titus' history parallels that of Moses' early days. Acts 7:22 describes Moses at age 40 as being "mighty in words and deeds." At age 80, Moses himself confessed, "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant" [Ex.4:10]. God can use such a man who is emptied of self.

At age 58, Titus confesses that he has no ability and knows nothing. God is using such a man. I'm sure he would be encouraged to hear from any of you, and I know that you will be encouraged to hear from him directly. His e-mail address is: toadisciple@yahoo.com.

Brother Yinnkah is a burning and shining light there in his home town of Ibadan , Nigeria at age 29. He has been teaching up to 30 brethren at a time from *The Discipleship Experience* since July. His intention is to join us here in Sierra Leone beginning the first of January for an intensive three-month discipleship. He will be staying in Titus' former room at our house.

Brother Solomon in Benue state, Nigeria , continues in the consistent godly and loving service that has characterized him for many years. He is raising up his own disciples as well as preaching and teaching in several villages in his vicinity.

Dr. George and brother Jairus are influencing some 35 brethren in Otukpo, Benue state, through their teaching efforts and weekly fellowship for the breaking of bread. Just a short while before I arrived, they had gone to a staunch Roman Catholic village to preach the gospel among the unreceptive and somewhat hostile residents.

The Lord blessed their efforts despite the opposition, and several people were saved, among whom was brother Ignatius, a 70-plus year old man with snow white hair. He testified that this is the message he had been longing to hear throughout his entire lifetime, but had never heard it up until the day that these brethren came to preach. A church fellowship is now established in that village.

The brethren in Enugu state have been growing in grace, knowledge, and numbers; up to about 75 now in fellowship. We had a blessed time among them. though they complained that the eight hours of teaching was too brief.

I was able to visit Papa Steve once again during our stay with them. Some of you may recall that he was the now 90-plus year old head of the village, and the leading juju man [witchdoctor] among them, who was wondrously converted through my coming to preach to him some five years ago. Who can describe the radiant joy coursing through his whole being when we embraced in his mud-block room? May the Lord bless him indeed.

Pawlos is a dear Ethiopian brother whom we met several years ago in Nigeria . He had been cast out of his home in Ethiopia since he chose not to worship the Virgin Mary and bow before and pray to the ark of the covenant in the Coptic church of his family. He became converted to Christ after becoming deaf at age 17, and it was then that he was disowned.

He managed to come to Nigeria , where he studied at a Bible school operated by the former Sudan Interior Mission. We met him at the Christian Mission for the Deaf in Ibadan .

He is a sincere, intelligent, and devoted servant of the Lord Jesus. He is planning to join us in our home here in

Sierra Leone in order to conduct gospel work among the deaf here, who are woefully neglected and abused. As soon as his immigration papers are in order, he plans to come. Do pray that the Lord will make all things possible for this to occur.

Brother Quintin has a sincere burden to reach the Provinces here in Sierra Leone . Fifty percent of the population lives in poverty, ignorance, and wretchedness – no roads, electricity, stores, clinics, schools, water systems, medicine, communication, or transportation.

His desire is to build a mud block house there among them in order to preach the gospel, teach the word of God and literacy, and raise up disciples to reach these areas with the gospel, the majority of which have not even one church. He is in the process now of getting ready to plant some varieties of fruits and cassava on several acres that he was able to purchase for \$65, in order to contribute to his sustenance while he carries on the gospel work.

If any of you wish to know more about his endeavors, he would be glad to correspond with you. His address is: qbsgem2000@yahoo.com.

Peters is reaching out to many through his biblical writings, which he posts bi-monthly on the internet. He has contacted many here in Sierra Leone , Nigeria , other African nations, and has at least two brethren in the USA who have obtained his permission to post his teachings and exhortations on their websites and in their newsletters.

This area of writing is how he believes that the Lord will use him to reach others that he can disciple for the work of missions. He would be happy to send you his one-page write-ups on a variety of relevant and helpful topics. His address is: hardey_piethars@yahoo.co.uk. [There is an underscore after hardey].

Time would fail me to include more at the present. But these are some of the things that the Lord is doing in the hearts with whom we have the privilege to serve. May the Lord cause them all to abound yet more and more in true

grace and all discernment.

Love,

Steve and Patricia Phillips

oyinbosteve@yahoo.com

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Are We Like Christ?

Begin Here

All histories are selective short accounts. The Bible itself is condensed narrative. In the bibliography are listed 47,618 pages of references used in writing the 381 pages of this book. The content that has been included, has been selected in order to lead the reader to follow the Pattern of Christ based upon the Word of God alone.

The perspective of this book is that there exists one unchanging Pattern for the church which is Christ Jesus Himself. In character and in method of ministry, He is the perfect example and standard for all who follow Him. All that He was and everything He did had the full approval of His Father in heaven.

No improvement can be or ought to be made upon this Pattern. Nothing is to be ignored or deleted. Likeness to Christ will always meet with the Father's, "Well done." Departure from Him will ever be encountered otherwise. All is to be evaluated and adjusted in light of the perfect Pattern of Christ according to His Word which cannot be broken [Jn.10:35].

Forever, O Lord, Your Word is settled in heaven [Ps.119:89]. This is the unchanging reference point for all things pertaining to life and godliness by which we become partakers of the divine nature[2 Pet.1:3,4]. It is this Word that abides forever [Isa.40:8], is right concerning everything [Ps.119:128], and apart from which, there is no light [Isa.8:20].

The very words of the Bible are inspired

[Mt.5:18] and alone are authoritative for all believers in every generation and in every place [I Cor.1:2; 4:17; 14:37]. It is the Word of Christ that will judge one and all on the last day [Jn.12:48].

Therefore, nothing else is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness except the teaching that is according to the inspired Scriptures [2 Tim.3:16,17]. All else is worthless for godliness, and deadly to spiritual health and eternal well-being [Mk.7:5-9; Col.2:16-23]. This is the outlook from which this book has been written. The sincere prayer of the author is:

[1] To stimulate the brethren to love and good deeds by reorienting our hearts and churches back to the only enduring foundation of Christ and His Word.

[2] To encourage brethren who are being persecuted by prevailing institutional religions to endure all with patience and joy without compromise out of love for Christ.

[3] To provide a biblical and historical frame of reference for Christian beliefs and practices among West African brethren especially.

Christ and His Word: All else will be swept away in an overflowing flood [Mt.7:24-27] and rise in disastrous smoke [I Cor.3:10-15]. May the Lord preserve us for Himself without spot or blemish or any such thing that we might become His devoted and loving bride [Eph.5:27]. To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus, both now, and unto all generations. Amen.

Test all things; hold fast what is good

[I Thess.5:21]

**They received the Word with all eagerness, and searched
the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so**

[Acts 17:11]

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Are We Like Christ?

1

IN THE FULNESS OF TIME

In the fulness of time, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law [Gal.4:4]. It was the right time for Christ to come and die for the ungodly [Rom.5:6]. Then He, the Desire of all nations, came to fill His house with glory [Hab.2:7].

All great movements in the soul of a man or in the history of the world need proper preparation. God is never in a hurry and does all things well without regret. And this is how He prepared the world for the coming of His Son.

The Roman Preparation_

Under the mighty leadership of Caesar Augustus just 27 years before Christ, the Roman Empire asserted its world rule. Three

major changes took place that prepared the world for the spread of the gospel of Christ.

[1] Men were united under a system of law as citizens of one kingdom. Tribal fighting, revolt, and independent governing were not tolerated, and men were expected to submit to a law that was not their own, but was imposed on them by their conquering king.

Such was to be the coming of the kingdom of heaven. Christ would unite all of His own from various tribes and peoples under His kingship according to the law of His Word. That established a new kingdom and culture for all whose **citizenship is in heaven** [Phil.3:20].

[2] The *Pax Romana* [Roman Peace] was enforced by the military throughout the Roman world making travel safe from armed robbers once again. Since their excellent road system radiated out from Rome to every strategic center of the empire, movement throughout was made without difficulty.

[3] As the Romans conquered different lands, it was viewed by the people as a conquering of their gods as well. They believed that the Roman gods must be stronger than their own. But when they learned about the Roman gods, they knew that they were no better. This disillusionment led many to look for a true God to replace their own weak and useless ones.

Stop and Think: How does tribalism and lawlessness hinder the preaching of the gospel? How can even war lead a people to reconsider whether their gods are true or powerful?

The Contribution of the Greeks

The Greeks, who were the world rulers before being defeated by Rome, developed and spread a universal trade language known as *Koine* [common] Greek. This was the language in use in New Testament [NT] times.

It was also the language into which the Old Testament [OT] translation known as the *LXX* or Septuagint was made [*LXX* “Seventy,” since it was claimed that seventy scholars produced it in seventy days]. This translation made in the 200's BC was the Bible version used by the believers at the time of Christ and in the years following. The NT was written in this same *Koine* Greek and was the language that the gospel was preached in by the Apostles on their missionary journeys.

Stop and Think: How can the Bible being available in a common tribal or trade language be useful in preaching God's truth?

Israel's Condition

Many things had changed in the nation of Israel between the time of Malachi [writing in 400 BC] and the coming of Christ. And these are the conditions that Jesus met when He came.

Israel: Synagogues

Synagogues [a gathering together/assembly] came into being probably after Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC. Israelites who were in the foreign land of Babylon as captives for seventy years met together in a synagogue wherever ten families could gather.

Even after returning to the land of Israel and the Temple was rebuilt under Ezra and Nehemiah, the Jews continued to meet in their local synagogues throughout the land. In these

meetings, rabbis [teacher/master] translated and explained the Hebrew OT into the local language and the people joined in prayer together. Each year the entire OT was read and taught in each synagogue and any male was free to teach, though prominence was given to the rabbi or scribe among them.

Differing schools of thought arose around prominent rabbis who gained a following. Pupils studied the commentaries of their rabbi rather than the text of the OT itself. Over time the “correct” interpretation of the rabbi came to have as much authority as the text of the OT itself in the minds of their followers.

Eventually the scribes, who faithfully copied the text of the OT onto hand-written manuscripts, feared to proclaim any understanding of Scripture unless it was backed by the “authority” of some master. But this was an “authority” of a man-made office from which doctrine that was nothing more than human opinion was taught.

This is how the “tradition of the elders” spoken of in the NT developed. It is also why Jesus’ teaching amazed men, for His authority and message was drawn from the eternal spring of wisdom itself.

The thoughts of man became elevated to the same level as the Scriptures themselves and the ceremonial took on the same significance as the moral and spiritual. Whenever this occurs, the text of the Word is soon neglected and forgotten while true godliness declines and disappears.

Stop and think: What are the dangers of basing your faith on the explanations of men rather than knowledge of the text of the Word of God itself?

Israel: Pharisees

In the years preceding Christ’s coming many Jews were being influenced by Greek culture to compromise their faith and practices. As a result the Pharisees [separated ones] arose in

order to instruct the people to follow the law of God more strictly. But their teachings from the Scriptures too soon turned to little more than the burden of traditions that **neither our forefathers nor we have been able to bear** [Acts 15:10].

Jesus condemned these man-made rules as worthless to make men acceptable to God [Mk.7:5-13]. They thought that obeying their commands would prevent men from disobeying God. For example, some Pharisees taught that it was illegal to spit on the ground on the Sabbath. They explained that the spit would “plow” the dust and thus the man would be “working” on the Sabbath.

Thus the people were taught oral traditions from these rabbis as being more important than the Law itself. Pharisees insisted that their oral tradition was given by God at the time of the giving of the written Law on Mt. Sinai. This, they claimed, explained and “corrected” anything that the Scriptures did not seem to agree with. And so it was that man-made opinions were exalted above the Word of God and chaff was fed to multitudes as if it were the bread of God.

Stop and think: How can oral tradition actually cancel the Word of God? Why is their teaching called leaven? [Mt.15:11,12].

Israel: Sadducees

A second major group arose during the years before Christ who were willing to accept many aspects of Greek culture. They rejected the Pharisees’ strictness based on oral tradition in preference for the wealth and power that befriending politicians brought them.

These Sadducees [the righteous ones] were the rulers of the Temple ceremonies and even bought and sold the office of the High Priest among themselves. Since they did not believe in the resurrection, angels, or spirits [Acts 23:8], they imagined that worldly prosperity was an indication of God’s favor upon them.

Love of money, political and social influence, joined with a despising of the poor and unfortunate were what characterized their miserable and heartless lives.

Though they could not escape close association due to the common Temple they frequented, Pharisees and Sadducees actually hated each other; the Pharisees because they viewed the Sadducees as abandoning true religion, and the Sadducees because of the arrogance of their imagined social and religious superiority since they were the wealthy elite and the High Priesthood was under their control [see Acts 23:1-10].

The Council or Sanhedrin [a seating together] was made up of seventy-one prominent members of the High Priest's family, Jewish elders, and scribes. It served as a Jewish supreme court of sorts in judging cases involving interpretation and violation of the Law. Both Sadducees and Pharisees were members of the Council. It was this Council that ordered the crucifixion of Christ, the stoning of Stephen, and attempted to kill Paul [Acts 23:1-10].

Stop and think: What happens when the moral and spiritual aspects of the kingdom of God are replaced by the material and political?

Israel: Essenes

Some Israelites did not accept either the traditions of the Pharisees or the corrupted influence of the Sadducees in the Temple. The Essenes believed themselves to be the true Israel and withdrew from Jerusalem by forming their own separate communities. There they lived apart from fellow Israelites in a disciplined and simple manner.

Each member of the Essene community was expected to be devout and regular in his study of the Scriptures and other religious books. Manual labor was expected of all in order to make the community self-supporting. They shared things in

common and submitted to strict discipline enforced by an overseer.

Sabbath keeping was taken to an extreme, God-ordained sacrifices and feasts were rejected, and marriage was either discouraged or forbidden. Many thought that matter and the physical body was evil. They believed that physical isolation from corrupted conditions would make them holy before God.

Stop and think: Why can isolating oneself from corrupted situations never purify either you or those whom you have separated from?

Israel: Zealots

Roman rule was not popular with most Jews. The Roman yoke was a reproach and a bondage to the Israelite. The Pharisees viewed Roman oppression as a judgment of God for the sins of the nation that must be patiently borne until God was pleased to remove it. Many expected the promised Messiah [Christ/ Anointed One] to free them from it.

Some were violently opposed to Rome and refused to pay taxes to Caesar and even led followers in revolt. These were the Zealots. They advocated taking up the sword against their enemies as did Israel of old. Various of their leaders perished in their rebellions as did Theudas and Judas [Acts 5:35-39].

Even one of Jesus' own disciples came from this background [Lk.6:15]. Eventually the Zealots succeeded in winning the majority of the people to their side. Their continual increasing defiance of Rome finally brought about the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

Stop and think: Why is using political force not part of the gospel of Christ?

Israel: Samaritans

During the days of Nehemiah in about 430 BC, one of the grandsons of Eliashib the High Priest married the daughter of Sanballat, the enemy of the Jews. This wicked man, Sanballat, furiously opposed Ezra and Nehemiah's rebuilding of the Temple and the wall of Jerusalem [Neh.4:1,7,8].

When Nehemiah learned that this unholy marriage had taken place defiling the priesthood, he drove Sanballat's son-in-law out of Jerusalem [Neh.13:28]. As he left he carried with him a copy of the law of Moses which later came to be known as the Samaritan Pentateuch [the five books].

They settled in the area between Jerusalem and Galilee, establishing a religion centered in Mt. Gerizim. They claimed that this was the place of blessing where God commanded His name to dwell, and not Jerusalem, according to their understanding of Deut.12:11; 11:29; 27:12,13.

This was why such hostility developed between the Jews and the Samaritans [Jn.4:9] since both claimed to have the true religion [Jn.4:20], even though Samaritans worshiped ignorantly without salvation [Jn.4:22].

Stop and think: How does unholy compromise lead to false religion? If the root is corrupt, what of the fruit?

Israel: Apocalyptic Literature

Many writings before the birth of Jesus claimed to be prophetic of the coming kingdom of the Messiah. In these apocalyptic [revelation] works the promised kingdom was represented as an earthly paradise for the Jews with Jerusalem as its capital.

These ideas filled the minds of the multitudes and probably accounted for Jesus' popular reception as He rode into Jerusalem as their King [Mk.11:9,10]. It explains their

enthusiasm to take and make Him King by force, because He had prospered them with gain without their labor, when the loaves and fish were multiplied [Jn.6:14,15].

Stop and think: How can popular ideas about Jesus keep someone from truly knowing Him as He is?

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Freely you have received, freely give [Mt.10:8]

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DEDICATED TO

MY DEARLY BELOVED PATRICIA ANN

Who has descended to the Roots of the Mountains
Beneath all His Breakers and Billows,
And from Out of the Depths has learned to cry,
Salvation is of the Lord!

and to

MY ESTEEMED BROTHER BOB HAINES

Who has passed through Dark Waters;
My fellow partaker in the Tribulation,
Kingdom and Perseverance in Jesus

in fond memory of

THE SAINTLY MERCHANT KING

Who has gone to Eternal Comfort
Having spent the last half of his life confined to a Wheelchair
From which, with devoted emphatic Fervor,
He exclaimed more than once,
Let there be no wasted Suffering!

1

FROM EDEN

FROM EVERY TREE OF THE GARDEN YOU MAY FREELY EAT,
BUT... [Gen.2:16, 17]

Unmolested freshness graced every bud and blade in Eden's
pristine splendor. Thorns and thistles, grime and sweat
were things yet unknown. All was bliss for all was **very good**
[Gen.1:31].

Every tree **good for food and a delight to the eyes** [Gen.2:9]
lavished this haven of mercy. The tree of life in its midst along with
that of the knowledge of good and evil were found there. All was well.
Nothing harmed and nothing alarmed.

Nothing alarmed, that is, except the strange decree, **...you
shall not eat of it...you shall surely die** [Gen.2:17].

What isolated this tree from all else? Hideous to the eye it was
not. No corpses of unwitting beasts littered its fair trunk. Rank odors
did not repulse any who approached. Poison dripped not from its
lush leaves.

To all appearances it differed in no respect from its
surroundings. It too delighted the vision and was fine for food. All
was very good.

Why, then, forbidden? Gaze as you may, nothing presented
itself to reason's eye to refuse its fruit. Nothing appreciable in itself
would caution or repel the beholder.

By sight, nothing persuaded man to comply with God's voice. Through reflection, no reasons surfaced to convince the mind why the command ought to be heeded.

"Why" remained unanswered, undiscerned. By searching, no clue was unearthed to explain the enigma of this strange decree. Finally, having exhausted the fruitless inquiry, only one cause to obey remained.

God had spoken. He must be obeyed simply because the very fact of His being God demands that we do.

The Lord may yet obscure your path with shadows. Disturbing unanswered questions may plague your restless mind. You may cry out repeatedly in vain for explanations that never are forthcoming.

But this you know, He must be obeyed, though you can't tell why. It is a distressing state. We prefer rather to be in the know, to choose what is agreeable to our own understanding. But this is walking by sight and not by faith. And such sight proves to be no test of love and devotion at all.

Faith obeys God in the midst of perplexities. It honors God though all evidences point to the contrary. Raw faith says, "God has spoken, His Word must be performed."

In the midst of our swirling confusion, God Himself silently watches without intervening as He did in the beginning. Like Adam, we are left alone with His Word amidst circumstances nearly screaming the impossibility and folly of obedience. All the while across spiritual distances, heaven's hosts watch, awaiting the outcome as they did then.

Faith's original foundation laid bare is this: God has spoken and He must be obeyed because He is God.

If even one shaft of light has penetrated your heart from considering this first prohibition in Eden, you are on the threshold of grasping the mystery of suffering.

2

ULTIMATE ISSUES

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED MY SERVANT, JOB? [Job 1:8]

God Himself provoked the inquiry. It was the Lord who raised the question. Consider this man. Come, look well, friend or foe alike, or even Satan himself. Consider Job. Search him thoroughly. Examine him to his foundations.

Thus, the ultimate issue was raised by the Lord of Testing. This most critical and fundamental consideration of the ages is exposed. Why does a man fear God and serve Him? What motivates him at the core of his being? The answer to this determines eternal destinies.

Satan had an answer: Man only serves God for the benefits gained thereby. **Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face** [Job 1:9-11].

"Man is self-seeking. He has no love for God. Man only serves God for what You give him." This is the devil's accusation. His allegation is that no one honors God simply because He is God, because of who He is. Man is only attracted to God for what he can get from Him.

It is a serious charge. If true, no one will reach heaven. If false, Satan will never reach heaven. These are ultimate issues.

If at the core of a man's heart is the root of self-interest, he is no better than Satan himself. Lucifer became the devil and fell from heaven because of this very thing [Isa.14:12]. He was full of ambition, self-gain, self-seeking [Isa.12:13, 14]. Lucifer promoted himself using God's bounty out of a heart whose concern was not God Himself, but only self-interest. And he **shall be brought down to hell** [Isa.14:15]. It is for this reason that this poses an ultimate issue, yes, the ultimate issue.

Self-seeking casts into hell. It did with Lucifer. It does so for all following in his steps. This is the ultimate issue for man.

But behind this lies a second consideration looming as a dark cloud threatening to dislodge the bedrock of the very throne of justice itself. It is an accusation leveled against the foundation of everlasting righteousness.

The dilemma raised is this. If an essentially self-centered man is welcomed into heaven, then God has no basis to exclude Satan from that place either. If God is "served" [actually, used] by man to obtain his own ends, then man's "love" and "obedience" is a charade, a clever device to cover his inner corruption and nothing more. If that is true, then God is not honored and obeyed at all. On man's terms alone is God "served."

When examined, if the final motivation for man's religious devotion is self-interest, and yet that man is received into heaven as righteous, then God is unjust. God is shown to be unrighteous or a fool, because, without cause, He arbitrarily accepts one self-centered being and excludes another. If self-seeking man attains heaven while self-seeking Satan descends to hell, justice decays into mere whim.

Too pure to approve evil are the eyes of the Lord [Hab.1:13]. The devil knows this very well. Yet he turned this very thing to his own advantage to demand access into heaven in the case of Job.

"You have welcomed Job. You delight boastfully in him. He, You say, fears You and turns away from evil. But I say, he has not turned away from evil. You have cast me out of Your presence saying that my ambitious self-seeking was evil. But Job is full of the same in the depths of his soul.

"I will prove that he is no different than me. I will demonstrate before all heaven that you have no right to reject me and accept him. I will unveil Your injustice. I will expose this double-standard and demand my entrance back into Your realm," thus says Satan.

All heaven is watching. Eternal issues hang in the balance in the unseen spheres. God did not accept the devil's challenge, for it was the Lord who challenged him. For time and eternity the Lord will lay the unshakable ground of the rightful condemnation of self-seeking. His proof centered in a man named Job, a man who suffered at the hand of God, by the will of God, and for the glory of God.

Lucifer, unrivaled in wisdom and beauty, had everything and did not love God [Ezk.28:12-19]. Job, a man who lost everything and was reduced to wretchedness, loved God and trusted Him simply because He is God. Hear him cry, **Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him!** [Job 13:15].

God is vindicated. His judgment is just. He had found a man who through sorrow, affliction, pain, reproach, false accusation, abandonment, and utter privation yet clung to God, maintained his integrity, and magnified the God of heaven simply because He is worthy.

Job condemned the devil. God thereby displayed the grounds upon which He Himself will condemn him as well. Job is in heaven, Satan is not. Job was shown to be free from self through his sufferings while Satan suffers unendingly by reason of being full of self. These are indeed ultimate issues.

Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?...Do

you not know that we will judge angels? [I Cor.6:2, 3]. Do you not know? Do you not know that your every sorrow here below is designed to display the manifold grace of God above?

Are there not eternal issues revolving about your afflictions in this life? Will not your obedience through mists of tears be an everlasting rebuke to once bright spirits now darkened demons?

May you fall on your face and worship, blessing the name of the Lord as did Job. May you not sin or charge God foolishly. May you endure as seeing Him who is unseen.

And may He who is unseen see in you what He saw in Job; one who will trust in Him though He slay you.

Eternal issues depend upon it.

**He died for all that they who live
might no longer live for themselves,
But for Him who died and rose again on their behalf**
[2 Cor.5:15]

3

AFFLICTED IN IRONS

JOSEPH WAS SOLD AS A SLAVE. THEY AFFLICTED
HIS FEET...IN IRONS [Ps.105:17, 18]

Beloved Joseph, favored and blessed by his father, was yet jealously despised by his brothers [Gen.37:3, 4]. Loved by a father, hated by brethren. It is a grievous burden to bear.

Daily tumult, cold glaring disdain, and biting bitter tones afforded no peace in Joseph's tent. God speaks and the grief intensifies. The word from heaven further alienates their estranged hearts. Love and truth they would have none of. Joseph partook of both.

Wherein is comfort? Without? Surely not there amidst his hostile home. When the truth came, even the father himself withdrew his affection upon hearing the news [Gen.37:9, 10].

Joseph was left alone with the truth. God had spoken. Therein is comfort though the promised fulfillment was long delayed. **What is this dream that you have had? Shall I and your mother and your and your brothers actually come to bow ourselves down before you?** [Gen.37:10]. Horrific anguish lay between the glad light of that initial promise and its final realization.

The heart knows its own bitterness and a stranger does not share its joy [Prov.14:10]. It is what Joseph knew, plodding along, a

confounded captive across scorching sands. Unwanted property, worth but 20 shekels [Gen.37:28], he was then sold a second time to his foreign master [Gen.37:36]. There he bowed to all with none bowing to him.

Nothing pointed to the realization of God's word of promise. A numbness of grief creeps over the soul during God's delays. Answers there are not, only the mocking bleakness of a hollow monotony.

Yet the Lord was with him [Gen.39:2]. It is so with all His own; never left, never forsaken [Heb.13:5] though they be cast into dismal pits in jealous rage. Victims of treacherous scorn and hateful envy are not abandoned by their God.

Even if forcibly assaulted by lustful crime, God is there [Gen.39:7-10]. See Joseph flee and suffer for it. Vilified, traitorously maligned, and falsely charged, the righteous one was bound in a dungeon of injustice. **But the Lord was with Joseph** [Gen.39:21].

Unknown to him, he was imprisoned in the Lord's training ground. It was here, amidst shattered dreams and woeful sorrows, that he became what he must to ascend the throne. **The chief jailer committed to Joseph's charge all the prisoners in the jail; so that whatever was done there, he was responsible** [Gen.39:22].

Sympathy for sufferers is gained in Potiphar's prison. Small responsibilities faithfully discharged fit the soul for greater undertakings. **He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much** [Lk.16:10].

Joseph was molded by affliction to look to God alone for favor, wisdom, and deliverance. God had spoken and Joseph must wait. No man can force or hasten the hand of Him who has promised. The realization of the pledge lies in the will and good pleasure of the Promiser.

The Lord was with him [Gen.39:23]. What more is needed? Are God and His Word sufficient for us? Will we endure the

dungeon even delighting in the delays?

We all will meet our cupbearer in the midst of sorrow. "Perhaps he can help," trembles our anxious thoughts. **Remember me...mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this house** [Gen.40:14].

A certain elation of anticipated relief revitalizes the wearied soul with a bright expectation. "Soon, yes, very soon now, the bitter shall pass. Surely it is well now," imagines our feeble restless heart.

But it is not to be so. The cupbearer **did not remember Joseph, but forgot him** [Gen.40:23]. Two long years yet remained [Gen.41:1]. Initial days were full of eager anticipation with scenarios imagined and then abandoned for yet another explanation to encourage waning hope.

Days stretched into dismal weeks with no word of relief. A certain cloud of despair settles over the soul whose earthly hopes have been crushed. Grim are the cheering rays of sunrise to the grieving soul.

Cupbearers are a refuge of straw against hurling tempests of sorrow. They cannot effect what only the Keeper of your soul can [Ps.121]. Despite our schemes and earnest pleading, we will abide the full duration of the Lord's design for our individual distress.

Until the time that His Word came to pass, the Word of the Lord tested him [Ps.105:19]. Tested - God has spoken, will we believe Him though nothing in our situation would encourage us to do so? Tested - Is His wisdom and design good, acceptable, and perfect? Tested - Can the evil devices of men actually be servants to Him who is Sovereign over the affairs of this life?

God was with him and delivered him out of all his afflictions [Acts 7:9, 10]. The Word of the Lord cannot fail. Deliverance will yet come after sorrow has done its work.

Humiliation must crush all thoughts of grandeur. Rejection by men teaches the soul to cast itself upon the love of God alone.

Unjust betrayal fits a man to commit all into the hands of Him who judges righteously. Schemes aborted lead the heart to distrust its own devices. At one's wits end is designed to open the fount of Wisdom above. Bitter dungeons are endured to purge the soul of bitterness within.

Character, not comfort, is the aim of afflictions sent from above. They marvelously worked in Joseph. He emerged from his sorrows fit for the throne. Hear his own testimony.

God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction [Gen.41:52]. Hear his assessment of evils heaped upon him by brothers' jealous malice. **It was not you who sent me here, but God** [Gen.45:8]. Listen to his final conclusion at the end of it all. **God meant it for good** [Gen.50:20].

Joseph – beloved, hated, exalted. It is what lies between the first and the last which occupies our years of grief below. It could be no other way if the end is to be realized.

4

CHRIST'S SCHOOL OF SUFFERING

ALTHOUGH HE WAS A SON, HE LEARNED OBEDIENCE
FROM THE THINGS HE SUFFERED [Heb.5:8]

In all their affliction He was afflicted [Isa.63:9]. Truly Christ Jesus our Lord was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief [Isa.53:3].

From birth there was no room for Him except the welcome afforded by sheep and oxen [Lk.2:7]. Chief priests and scribes may know ancient prophesies about the Christ's place of birth, but they have no interest in meeting this King themselves [Mt.2:4-6]. Only a bloodthirsty jealous tyrant wished to find Him that he might "worship" Him – with a drawn sword [Mt.2:8, 13-16].

He fled by night as a fugitive to a foreign land [Mt.2:13, 14] only to return to a lowly despised region of no reputation [Mt.2:23]. Long years of routine physical labor occupied the majority of His life [Mk.6:3]. He toiled, unrecognized and without acclaim, supporting His younger ones who refused to believe Him to be anything other than another member of the family [Jn.7:5].

Though hailed by the Highest in heaven [Mt.3:17], His own nation received Him not [Jn.1:11]. **He was despised and rejected of men...and we did not esteem Him** [Isa.53:3].

Assailed by loathsome evil, the devil tempted Him to the uttermost [Mt.4:1-11]. And men, following in the steps of their father, the devil, vilified and hated Him with mocking disdain.

Do we not rightly say that you are a Samaritan? [Jn.8:48]. **The crowd answered, "You have a demon!"** [Jn.7:20]. Spitefully with venomous malice they spat out the accusation, **We were not born of fornication** [Jn.8:41]. **He deceives the people!** [Jn.7:12]. Even His own people were saying, **He has lost His mind!** [Mk.3:21].

Dear reader, what are you passing through that He has not tasted? What assaults your soul that He was not faced with? This is Jesus, the **One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin** [Heb.4:15].

Christ is He who, **since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted** [Heb.2:18].

He can come to your aid in the blackness of your despair for He has sweat drops of blood in the agony of Gethsemane [Lk.22:44]. He can comfort the wounds of the heart sent from wicked tongues like thrusts of a sword, for men wagged their heads in mocking derision against Him, the Beloved of the Father [Ps.22:6-8].

Grief sent from stubborn insulting loved ones can be borne in the bosom of Him who knew the same [Jn.7:5]. Shattering departure of those dearest to us taken in the icy grip of death's finality is soothed by Him who wept over Lazarus whom He loved [Jn.11:35].

A ravaged heart torn asunder by willful abandonment of those closest to you receives its balm from the pierced hands of Him who cried, **My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?** [Mt.27:46].

Have weary long years of seemingly pointless daily routine bowed the soul, snuffing out hope's glow of eventual spiritual

usefulness? Come to Nazareth and behold your Lord in silent submission those eighteen years at the carpenter's bench [Mk.6:3].

Forgotten and ignored, no sympathy is found to console your anguished soul save that of Him who looked for the same and found none [Ps.69:20, 21].

Poverty grinds away with its relentless scarcity, sapping the soul into anxious pursuits. Come and repose with the Son of Man who had nowhere to lay His head [Lk.9:58]. The grief of the pure in heart who chafe at the unashamed display of godless men surrounding them also deeply assaulted the soul of the Holy One of God [Mt.17:17].

Laid aside, bed-ridden, and prostrate in weariness? Come; find rest and strength from Him who was wearied often [Lk.8:23, Jn.4:6].

In all points He was tempted as are we, but without sin. Only He who has overcome can assist those who must also do the same [Rev.3:21]. Yes, there are things to overcome; grievous pains to be borne, bitter to natural sensibilities, shameful to self-esteem.

They come from Christ. He has designed them that thereby we might overcome, that we will learn obedience through suffering, and that we might know fellowship with the Man of Sorrows. Paul prayed that he might know the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, in order that he might attain to that resurrection out from the dead [Phil.3:10, 11]. To him, suffering was fellowship with Christ. Is it to you?

Suffering, death, and resurrection; this is the necessary sequence. Christ became obedient unto death, even that of the cruelest and most despised, that of a cross [Phil.2:8]. How did He learn such obedience? In the school of suffering of which He is the Master of all would-be followers.

The lessons must be learned thoroughly and remembered well if the disciple would become like His Master [Lk.6:40]. This is His

school. Few endure until promoted on high.

Consider well Him who has endured so great contradiction of sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary, fainting in your souls [Heb.12:3].

While being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously [I Pet.2:23].

Come unto Me, all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest [Mt.11:28].

5

FURNACE OF AFFLICTION

BEHOLD, I HAVE REFINED YOU, BUT NOT AS SILVER;
I HAVE TESTED YOU IN THE FURNACE OF AFFLICTION [Isa.48:10]

Life made bitter by grueling taskmasters makes tears your food, night and day. It is what Israel knew, enslaved in the iron furnace of Egypt under the Pharaoh who knew not Joseph.

But the Israel of God knew him. They could not forget, for his bones were in their possession. **Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, “God will surely visit you, and you shall carry my bones up from here”** [Gen.50:25].

His bones are the token that Egypt’s suffering is not your lasting portion. As with Joseph’s own life history, they are a reminder that the promise will yet be realized though it delay for long. God will surely visit you.

You will yet be carried up from there to a Canaan of rest. Do not lose sight of Joseph’s bones. Let them remind you of the greater and surer reality yet to come. Greater things are at stake than your immediate comfort from the heated furnace of your affliction.

An Amorite’s iniquity has yet to ripen [Gen.15:16]. The overthrow of world powers is pending [Deut.9:1-5]. Hearts are being prepared to move with a pillar of cloud and fire through a trackless wilderness [Ex.13:21, 22].

Do not flee the flames. God will surely visit you. **But the Lord has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, from Egypt, to be a people for His own possession, as you are this day** [Deut.4:20]. The day will surely come, for He who promises cannot fail.

God has spoken unmistakably. He has chosen and gifted you for a wide sphere of influence unto good for this generation. You are a man after God's own heart.

But senseless and self-consumed opponents block your way and pursue your demise like hunters their prey. You are an outcast, a vilified vagabond with no certain dwelling. Dangers and terrors confront you on every hand. Your enemies are more numerous than the hairs of your head.

Where can you flee? Is there no refuge from these relentless afflictions? Come, dear reader, to the cave of Adullam and join David's band. Walk with him through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The Lord is there, even in that dark place, though enemies compass you about on every hand. There is yet a table prepared in their presence.

In the midst of uncertainties, hounded by irrational foes, one token abides, **The Lord said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is he"** [I Sam.16:12]. I am God's chosen one, for God has spoken.

Hiding in Adullam's cave where no throne is, leading an unenviable handful of embittered distressed debtors; hardly could this be called a kingdom [I Sam.22:1,2]. Often without bread [I Sam.21:3, 25:8], the promised table spread seems somehow sparse, even a mockery.

What is your consolation to be in these trying straits? Hear David cry, **How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart all the day? How long will my enemy be exalted over me?**

Consider and answer me, O Lord my God; enlighten my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death, and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him," and my adversaries will rejoice when I am shaken.

But I have trusted in Your lovingkindness; my heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, because He has dealt bountifully with me [Ps.13].

A bounteous dealing by the hand of the Lord awaits all who weep in the desert. His Word will not fail, His servant will never, no, never be forsaken. Let this be your comfort as you pillow your head upon a stone in the dust of your cave.

Tonight, the heavens are black high overhead. It is in dark places that **Thou hast tried my heart; Thou hast visited me in the night; Thou hast tested me, and shall find nothing** [Ps.17:3]. God will surely visit you in the night. May He find in you what He did in David. It is His pathway to the throne.

Is it nothing to all you who pass this way? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow which was severely dealt out to me, wherewith the Lord has afflicted me in the day of His fierce wrath [Lam.1:12].

For these things I weep; my eye, my eye runs down with water; because far from me is a comforter, one who restores my soul [Lam.1:16]. **My eyes fail because of tears, my spirit is greatly troubled; my heart is poured out on the earth because of the destruction of the daughter of my people, when little ones and infants faint in the streets of the city** [Lam.2:11]. **My eyes pour down unceasingly, without stopping, until the Lord looks down and sees from heaven** [Lam.3:49, 50].

It was for being afflicted over the destruction of the daughter of my people that Jeremiah was known as the weeping prophet. Through grief over the state of God's people, we enter into the heart of God Himself. It is by lamentation that the Lord's depth of anguish

over spiritual revolt is discovered in all its hideousness to our hearts. If we thus know God, we can do nothing but weep.

Then those of you who escape will remember Me...how I have been broken by their adulterous hearts which turned away from Me [Ezk.6:9]. We learn to weep over what God weeps over. His concerns become our own as we weep with Jeremiah and Christ Jesus our Lord over the destruction of Jerusalem.

Through the furnace we are made like our God. There is no other way.

6

THE GOD OF DARKNESS

HOW LONG, O LORD? WILL YOU FORGET ME FOREVER? [Ps.13:1]

The gently led nursing flock whose lambs are carried in the bosom of the Good Shepherd [Isa.40:11], have not yet known the God of darkness. Jubilant multitudes whose lips spill over with “Hosanna” are nowhere to be found when three hours of gloom shroud Golgotha’s hill. Even disciples sleep through the agony of Gethsemane.

For a season, observed our Lord about the multitudes’ response to John, **you were willing to rejoice in his light [Jn.5:35].** But were these gladsome throngs huddled about the Baptist’s cell in Herod’s dungeon? They were not, but God was there.

And thus the God of darkness remained hidden to them. They do not wish to meet Him thus. To them, God is Light; not in the sense of blazing holiness and unapproachable magnificence, but rather “light”, that is, pleasant, cheering, and warm. He is a superficial benefactor who ministers comfort and contentment to shallow admirers. To all such, happiness and ease are the hallmarks of spiritual attainment.

It is inconceivable in their minds that God could ever allow, much less send, darkness, distress, confusion, and unanswered silence. Their God of “light” continuously pampers and coddles His darlings lest they dash their foot against a stone. But they have never known Him in the blackness.

He has driven me away and made me walk in darkness and not in light...in dark places He has made me dwell like those who have long been dead...even when I cry out and call for help, He shuts out my prayer [Lam.3:2, 6, 8]. He has hedged up my way that I cannot pass, and He has set darkness in my paths. He has stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head. He breaks me down on every side and I am gone; and my hope He has torn up as a tree [Job 19:8-10].

When confronted with such passages, the light-minded have a hasty and ready explanation for this condition. “Simple,” they claim, “God is punishing them for their sins.” Like Job’s miserable counselors, they can conceive of nothing else. But this is not the case. Jeremiah had not sinned. Job had not sinned. Listen to his confession.

Behold, I go forward but He is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive Him; when He acts on the left I cannot behold Him; He turns to the right, I cannot see Him.

But He knows the way I take; when He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold. My foot has held fast to His path; I have kept His way and not turned aside. I have not departed from the command of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.

But He is in one mind and who can turn Him? And what His soul desires, that He does. For He performs what is appointed for me; and many such things are with Him. Therefore I am troubled at His presence: When I consider, I am afraid of Him [Job 23:8-15].

Even the man after God’s own heart passed through the valley of the shadow of death [Ps.23:4]. Though God was there and David trusted in the Lord, yet the face of God was hidden from Him [Ps.143:7, 8].

The sons of Korah had the same testimony. **You have rejected us and brought us to dishonor...You give us as sheep to be eaten...all this has come upon us, but we have not forgotten You, and we have not dealt falsely with Your covenant. Our heart has not turned back, and our steps have not deviated from Your way, yet You have crushed us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death...Arouse Yourself, why do You sleep, O Lord?...Why do You hide Your face and forget our affliction and our oppression?** [Ps.44:9, 11, 17-19, 23, 24].

God Himself singled out Job as there was **no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil** [Job 1:8]. Yet this very man encountered the God of darkness as perhaps no other man has, before or since. Hear his cries!

The arrows of the Almighty are within me, their poison my spirit drinks; the terrors of God are arrayed against me...but it is still my comfort and in the pain which spares not, I would rejoice that I have not denied the words of the Holy One [Job 6:2-4, 10].

Have I sinned? What have I done to You, O Watcher of men? Why have You set me as Your target, so that I am a burden to myself? [Job 7:20].

He who crushes me with a tempest, and multiplies my wounds without cause; He does not allow me to get my breath, for He fills me with bitterness [Job 9:17, 18]. God has delivered me over to the ungodly and turned me over into the hands of the wicked. I was at ease, but He has shattered me; He has taken me by the neck and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for His target [Job 16:11, 12].

He has cast me into the mire, and I have become like dust

and ashes. I cry out to You for help, but You do not answer me; I stand up and You turn Your attention against me. You have become cruel to me; with the might of Your hand you persecute me [Job 30:19-21].

It is quite true that your sins have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear [Isa.59:2]. This we grasp as reasonable, having a clear connection between cause and effect. We are comfortable with such explanations as they make sense to us.

But this is not what we are discussing here. In this case, the darkness spoken of is not attributable to the consequences of sin; quite the contrary. Only those who are upright and godly will meet God in this way. The immature and casual will not. Neither the halfhearted and negligent nor the willful and complacent will be visited by the God of darkness.

For Him to reveal Himself thus to them would scatter what little faith they possess. They cannot be entrusted with such a revelation. Their devotion is feeble, needing numerous props of comfort, softness, and cheer to propel them on to continue following God.

What is described here is a determined and purposeful withdrawal by God Himself from the soul who trusts Him indeed. It is an obscuring of His appreciable presence, an eclipsing of the light of His countenance.

God is the initiator of this season of gloom and terrors. The devil is not the agent and sin is not the cause. The blackness of darkness spoken of descends upon the soul of the righteous from the Almighty God of love who dwells in unapproachable light, but who now withdraws into the shrouds of night.

Anguish, groaning, and weeping [Ps.6:3, 6], **trouble** [Ps.10:1], **forgotten** [Ps.13:1], **rejection, dishonor, abandonment, crushing, affliction, and oppression** [Ps.44:9-24], **driven away in darkness**

[Lam.3:2], **misery and bitterness** [Job 3:20, 21], **grief and calamity, arrows of the Almighty, poison, terror, and pain** [Job 6:2-4, 10], **set as God's target** [Job 7:20], **crushing, wounds, bitterness** [Job 9:17, 18], **shattering and shaken** [Job 16:11, 12], **darkness, stripped, broken, and uprooting** [Job 19:8-10], **cast into mire like dust and ashes and persecution** [Job 30:19-21].

All of these are ascribed to the hand of God coming upon His faithful servant. No severer trial can be experienced. This plummets one to the roots of the mystery of suffering; the godly seemingly abandoned in dire straits while heaven keeps a silent vigil and sends no relief.

What will we do when the perceptible presence of God is withdrawn? How will we respond when prayers echo unanswered in hollow tones in our grieving ears? Will love wax cold when no cheering affection is returned from on high?

Does trust decline when distress descends and deliverance departs? Can we yet see Him who is unseen though He Himself has hidden Himself in thick darkness? These are the issues raised by the God of darkness.

If we believe only when results are evident, we are yet walking by sight and not by faith. If we love when affection flows with its warm tide of consolation, the root of self-love yet thrives in our breast. When we fall from righteousness when the arrows of the Almighty apparently "unjustly" enter our heart as His target, we betray a counterfeit uprightness; one which is "right" only if things are "right" to us.

God left him, to test him, to know all that was in his heart [2 Chron.32:31]. He who will **never leave or forsake you** [Heb.13:5], does just that: He leaves. Not in any ultimate or final sense, but to all appearances and sensibilities, He forsakes.

Alone, with no discernable support from any created thing, no human sympathy, and with no earthly encouragement, is a severe trial.

But to be abandoned by the Father in heaven, left to act upon inner spiritual resolve and conviction which owes their source and existence to the very God now absent, is the ultimate test. This transcends all afflictions.

It is a test reserved for the mature. Only they will discern the way of escape in this severest of trials. The young, uncertain, and unstable would be **tempted beyond what they are able** if faced with such. The Lord does not, therefore, test them in this way, for **God is faithful** [I Cor.10:13].

But in the darkness, He will reveal Himself in a manner otherwise unknowable. From Heman the Ezrahite's Psalm 88, let us learn from him who was made sick unto affliction [such is the meaning of Mahalath Leannoth - v.1].

Here was a godly man who cried day and night to the God of his salvation [v.1], whose life was full of troubles [v.3], without strength [v.4], forgotten and cut off from God's hand [v.5].

Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps, Thy wrath lies hard upon me, and Thou hast afflicted me with all Thy waves [v.6, 7].

No acquaintance visited or cheered him [v.8] as he daily mourned in his affliction, unanswered by his God [v.9]. It seemed as if his soul had been cast off because the face of God was hidden from him [v.14]. Affliction, fear of death, and terrors were suffered under the hand of God [v.15]. Compassed about with wrath and terrors, with lover and friend removed far from him, is the ending of this Psalm of mournful instruction [v.16-18].

We must take note of several things if we will profit from the visitation of the God of darkness to our souls.

[1] It is godly, spiritual, and mature believers alone who will meet the Lord in this way. We should therefore bow ourselves with our mouths in the dust that we are graced with such a revelation.

[2] It is the God of heaven who casts the soul into this trial of

darkness. It is not the result of personal sin or from satanic attack. God does it. We may therefore submit to it even with thanksgiving for such a visitation.

[3] There is an end. It does not continue interminably. The same David who cried, **Why do You stand afar off, O Lord? Why do You hide Yourself in times of trouble?** [Ps.10:1], also broke forth in joy, saying, **Blessed be the Lord, because He has heard the voice of my supplications. The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped: Therefore my heart greatly rejoices; and with my song will I praise Him** [Ps.28:6, 7]. Thus it is no permanent condition, not even in this life.

[4] The records of these deepest of all human afflictions have been preserved by the Holy Spirit in the Word of God so that **through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope** [Rom.15:4].

[5] Through these passages we observe that the most saintly of men have passed through such unspeakable sorrows under the hand of God and thus we gain courage to face the same. **As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the end of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful** [Jas.5:10, 11].

In the darkness we come to grips with the sovereign God before whom we are helpless. Even godliness, prayers, and suffering do not move Him. **He does according to His will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; and no one can hold back His hand or say to Him, "What have You done?"** [Dan.4:35].

Nothing can be done but to lay our hand upon our mouth and endure in utter trust whatsoever is laid upon us. It is the severest trial; no earthly supports, no human sympathy, and the God of heaven strangely withdrawn from His suffering saint. It is darkness indeed.

It is here that we discover that the God who creates light also brings darkness; blessings of peace as well as calamity [Isa.45:7]. Life flows from His hand, but so also does death [Deut.32:39]. The delight and comfort of health is in His power along with sickness and affliction [Ex.4:11]. He is the God of darkness as well as of light.

It had already become dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them [Jn.6:17]. No, not yet. They were alone in the darkness and **the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew** [Jn.6:18]. It arose from the throne of God and descended from heaven by sovereign decree.

He scatters the cloud of His light: It changes direction, turning around by His counsels; that they may do whatever He commands them on the face of the world in the earth. He causes it to come, whether for correction, or for His land, or for mercy [Job 39:11-13].

It is dark. You are alone in the perilous craft and Jesus has not yet come. And it is here that you will meet the God of darkness.

7

IN THE DUNGEON

BLESSED IS HE WHO DOES NOT STUMBLE OVER ME [Mt.11:6]

A man sent from God [Jn.1:6], indeed, none greater that has been born of women [Mt.11:11] and more than a prophet [Mt.11:9]; this was John. Filled with the Spirit while yet in his mother's womb [Lk.1:15] and coming in the spirit and power of Elijah [Lk.1:17] as the messenger to prepare the way for the Lord [Mt.11:10]; there have arisen none to equal the Baptist.

Fearlessly, he confronted an entire generation like a thunder clap from heaven against the sins of peasants, priests, and princes alike. None were exempt from his withering denunciations and demands for repentance; none, not even the king.

When Herod the tetrarch was reproved because of Herodias, his brother's wife, and because of all the wicked things which Herod had done, Herod also added this to them all: he locked John up in prison [Lk.3:19, 20].

And thus he descended into Herod's dark and dank dungeon. The blaze of heaven's light bursting from him was then plunged into blackness. Multitudes who once rejoiced in this burning lamp [Jn.5:35] thronged to him no more. The voice that cried in the wilderness was silenced behind the confines of cold castle stone.

John is alone. The heralded Messiah of the coming kingdom sends no greeting. Jesus the Christ makes no visit to his cell. No word of cheer reaches his ears.

He whom he faithfully testified of and announced remains

aloof while the wicked king he faithfully testified to abides an afflicting captor. The One that John's whole life had been prepared for and was devoted to does nothing, says nothing.

Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another? [Mt.11:3]. Multiplied anxious thoughts race through fevered imaginations in Herod's dungeon. "The kingdom of heaven was at hand, yet Herod's wicked scepter still holds sway. How is it that the Bridegroom can abandon His friend who rejoiced to hear His voice? [Jn.3:29]. Surely He has come to set the captives free! [Isa.61:1]. Why does He not come?"

And so it was that a deputation of disciples came to inquire of Christ on John's behalf. And thus did Christ respond.

At that very hour He cured many of diseases, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind he gave sight. Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them.

"And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me" [Lk.7:21-23].

Report what you have seen and heard. They saw that many, but not all, were healed. They heard those ancient prophecies of the blind, deaf, and lame being saved [Isa.35:3-6] and of the gospel being preached to the poor by the Lord's Anointed [Isa.61:1-3].

This is what they saw and heard. It was the message that they carried to the downcast in the dungeon. Jesus Himself did not come. The message of truth did. And John was left there with the Truth until his earthly race had run its course.

And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me. It is a blessed condition to not be offended when the Lord Jesus does not perform according to our expectation. We are blessed when His Word alone is sufficient to sustain us in the midst of distressing and grievous afflictions. Blessed are you when you trust what you know is true in

the unrelieved grimness of Herod's dungeon.

He was left alone to reflect on the fact that many were healed, but not all. It was the same Jesus who healed some and did not relieve others. He pondered those prophecies, both of which promised rescue from maladies and pointed to a coming day of vengeance.

That of the 35th of Isaiah promised that the weak and fearful-hearted will yet be visited by God and saved [v.4]. In the 61st chapter, not only is the gospel preached unto the poor, but the captives are liberated and the prison doors fly open [v.1].

They were cheering words to the downcast. But when shall they be realized? When will He come to this, my dungeon?

The fact is, that it may not be in this life at all that your distress is visited and relieved. Perhaps not until the day of vengeance will all of your woes, grievances, and injustices be rectified.

By faith the servants of the Most High escaped the edge of the sword [Heb.11:34]. By faith others, equally His servants, were put to death with that same sword [Heb.11:37].

Elijah was ushered into glory in a fiery chariot sent from above [2 K.2:11]. His faithful companion who possessed a double portion of his spirit, slowly expired in his sickness [2 K.13:14].

By the mercies of God Epaphroditus was healed of his deadly ailment [Phil.2:27]. But Paul's beloved co-worker was left sick at Miletus [2 Tim.4:20].

One of God's notable prophets was delivered and raised from a pit of certain destruction [Jer.38:4-14]. Yet the stalwart and fearless Micaiah was cast into prison and fed sparingly with the bread of affliction [I K.22:27].

In days of famine, one desolate widow was miraculously fed while others foraged about searching for crumbs. **Elijah was sent to none of them** [Lk.4:25, 26].

Black despair burst into light's glowing warmth in Herod's dismal prison-house of death. Fierce guards and flashing swords were

bypassed as if nothing by the liberated captive. Shackles and chains clinked powerless to the ground as Peter was escorted by his heaven-sent deliverer.

Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod [Acts 12:11]. These were the words of Peter.

This is the testimony of James. Then he [Herod] killed James the brother of John with the sword [Acts 12:1, 2]. They were in the same prison, bound by the same Herod, and serving the same Jesus.

Which Jesus do we want? The Jesus of Peter or the Jesus of James? Which Jesus will we love and serve? Which One will we not be offended with?

Will we presume to choose, or even demand, our own means of deliverance? For, truly, both Peter as well as James were set free from Herod's clutches, were they not?

Lonely vigils night and day passed in the Baptist's miserable cell in Herod's dungeon before he was released. The prisoner was eventually set free. The prison doors finally burst forth from their squalor into the brightness of eternal day. It was the Lord's doing.

At the malicious demand of Herod's wanton consort, he sent and had John beheaded in prison [Mt.14:10]. And thus the captive was set free by Herod's murderous sword, yet not even one hair of John's head perished [Lk.21:18].

And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.

8

TRIED BY FIRE

BELOVED, DO NOT BE SURPRISED AT THE FIERY TRIAL AMONG YOU,
WHICH COMES UPON YOU FOR YOUR TESTING,
AS THOUGH SOME STRANGE THING WERE HAPPENING TO YOU
[I Pet.4:12]

If the Master is maligned as Beelzebub, the members of His house must fare even worse at the hands of men [Mt.10:25].
If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you [Jn.15:20].

There is nothing strange, then, about Peter and John being arrested and flogged [Acts 5:17, 18, 40] nor that Stephen was stoned to death [Acts 7:58]. It was the same high priest and council that had crucified their Lord that was responsible for their own afflictions.

Conformity to Christ's character necessarily results in partaking of His sufferings. The two are inseparable. **All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution** [2 Tim.3:12]. Fiery trials are therefore not a strange thing but follow expectedly as a consequence of godliness.

They arise from wicked men but are sent by the hand of God accompanied by the Spirit of glory and of God [I Pet.4:14]. We should not be ashamed to be reviled for the name of Christ and suffer for uprightness [I Pet.4:16]. Men may malign and mistreat while casting shame and slander upon the righteous. But it is no cause to be ashamed.

Rather, it is cause to glory [I Pet.4:16], to rejoice [Acts 5:41], and to be exceedingly glad [Mt.5:12]. Such response demands the

spiritual reality evident in a Paul who witnessed that he was **sorrowful, yet always rejoicing** [2 Cor.6:10]. Will fiery trial turn us from the appointed path?

Skin for skin, yea, all that a man has will he give for his life [Job 2:4]. So says the adversary. What say you? What said three young Hebrew men?

Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace...but if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods... [Dan.3:17, 18].

He is able...but if not...we will not. Their devotion did not depend upon deliverance. Rescued or no, to them, God must be honored, truth upheld, and faith rest unwavering. This is the unyielding allegiance of true consecration.

God is to be glorified as God without rival or compromise though self perish in the process. All of the workings of truth flow to this end. It is why we are tried by fire.

It is why we exult in our tribulations. They produce perseverance and that tested character which issues in hope [Rom.5:3-5]. The godly quality of life resulting from enduring afflictions lends confidence to the soul of its eventual conformity to Christ's image.

That is hope; a hope born in the fire and fanned into a flame of light by the winds of adversity. It is truth and righteousness upheld that are the provocations to heat the furnace seven times hotter and cast the godly therein.

Fiery trials ensue when we are unashamed of Christ and His words in the midst of a sinful and adulterous generation [Mk.8:38]. This, no Nebuchadnezzar can endure.

Cains will arise against the Abels of the land. Pharaohs will increase their afflictions upon the Israel of God who refuse to compromise divine decrees. Testifying the good confession before the Pilates of this world ushers one to Golgotha's brow, while craftsmen of Diana's shrines riot against gospel light.

Suffering for the sake of truth embraced is the portion of the godly in all generations [2 Tim.3:12]. Moses chose to suffer affliction with the people of God...esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasure in Egypt [Heb.11:25, 26].

Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection [Heb.11:35]. Time would fail us to recount the histories of the men whom, valiant for truth, the world was not worthy of [Heb.11:36-38].

Suffice it to say that Paul kept the faith [2 Tim.4:7]. Peter and Apostles must obey God rather than men [Acts 5:29]. John partook of tribulation on Patmos' Isle because of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus [Rev.1:9]. And our Lord Jesus despised the shame and endured a cross for the joy set before Him [Heb.12:2].

Love of truth issues in salvation of those who embrace it [2 Thess.2:10]. At the same time, though, it also issues in persecution from those who love it not [Jn.15:19].

But something happens when we stand stalwart and immovable. The world rises up in haste when it sees One like the Son of God with us in the flames [Dan.3:24, 25].

A testimony is established in the furnace. But we must not shrink from the fire if we would have Christ meet us therein. It is there that it becomes evident to all that it is God, and not self, that we serve.

Brethren, don't be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you which comes upon you for your testing. It is no strange thing. Suffering is our expected portion in this world, but Christ will be with us if we stand erect when Babylon's notes compel our prostration.

9

SUFFERINGS ENDED

THE FIRST THINGS HAVE PASSED AWAY [Rev.21:4]

For in this we groan [2 Cor.5:2]. The body, in time, here on earth, is our present house of sorrow. Here, while the inner man is renewed day by day, the outer man perishes [2 Cor.4:16]. Tears become our food here by day and by night [Ps.42:3], yet they are all, each one, recorded in His book [Ps.56:8].

There are no wasted sufferings in the economy of God. Sorrows for a season effect eternal comforts for suffering saints. **In faithfulness You have afflicted me** [Ps.119:75]. Can you say so? **It was good for me that I was afflicted** [Ps.119:71]. Is this your testimony?

When standing on eternal shores, it certainly will be. When seen from the standpoint of an All-Wise Sovereign, you will say so. If our trust in His kindly wisdom were but more simple, we would say so now.

Should we for a moment be granted all-knowledge with all wisdom to discern, along with all-power to effect any change that wisdom perceived, we should choose for ourselves precisely the circumstance that we find ourselves in at the moment. We would realize that these very afflictions are the best possible situation for our eternal well-being.

This is what God, the All-Wise, the All-Powerful, has done. No better situation than your present sorrow could possibly be imagined in the process of securing conformity to the likeness of

Christ. It is true. And, **After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you** [I Pet.5:10].

He is yet on the throne, a throne from which He makes all things new [Rev.21:5]. All things new; the process begins now, in the heart, in the renewal of the inner man day by day.

Through the dreaded and seeming unrelenting afflictions of life, the Lord's design is to remake all things; and He begins with our hearts. The outward, the physical, the temporal will follow in due course. That portion of external discomforts and sorrows removed will only fully be realized in the coming final Day.

It is only then that every tear will be wiped away. Some may be wiped dry here, but many will yet stain our cheeks. Only in that place will there be no death, mourning, or pain [Rev.21:4]. These are the first things which necessarily afflict before being banished.

Pain precedes pleasure. Rejoicing follows mourning. Death snatches its victim ere God raises His victor. Yes, sorrows abide for a season below, but the Word is sure, faithful, and true: **It is done!** [Rev.21:5,6].

Sweating brows toiling and limp beneath a blazing sun's curse will yet be led to springing refreshing fountains of life [Rev.7:16,17; 21:6]. Overspread is Almighty's shade under which no pangs of lack or tormenting thorns can abide [Rev.7:15-17].

He who overcomes will inherit these things [Rev.21:7]; **an inheritance imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ** [I Pet.1:4-7].

Yes, it is for him who overcomes. All have something to overcome in this world by faith in the Son of God [I Jn.5:4,5]; suffering's distressing spectrum in a sin-cursed world, repulsive temptations from the subtle serpent, and threats of one's own lust to erupt and spew forth its venomous defilements. We must overcome.

There exists only one horrid option; the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. The cowardly who flee sufferings for Christ here will plunge headlong into torments unending in that Day [Rev 21:8]. Those who refuse to account God as true on earth will have the gnawing worm's conscience reminding them of that reality throughout all eternity.

But let us not linger here amid the smoking groans of the damned. **Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb** [Rev.21:9]. Can you see her, brilliant and blissful, honored among ten thousands of the choicest souls of the ages? Behold her, linen wrapped, bright and blameless [Rev.19:7-9]. Gaze at her glittering virtuous crown glorifying her Beloved [Prov.12:4].

Do you hear the thunderous swelling notes resounding in cloudless eternal skies? **Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready** [Rev.19:7].

Yes, she has made herself ready. The Day has dawned and the Lamb receives her as His own. And now at His **right hand stands the queen in gold...**

Listen, O daughter, give attention and incline your ear: Forget your people and your father's house; then the King will desire your beauty...She will be led to the King in embroidered work...with gladness and rejoicing;

They shall enter the King's palace [Ps.45:10-15].

PREACH THE WORD

BASIC TRAINING
IN

GOSPEL PREACHING

DISCIPLESHIP

CHURCH WORK

STEVE PHILLIPS

PREACH
THE WORD

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Freely you have received, freely give [Mt.10:8]

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1 WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

**I am not ashamed of the Gospel,
for it is the power of God for salvation
to everyone who believes
[Rom.1:16]**

There is no other means nor any other power to deliver men from the slavery of sin. It is through the preaching of the Gospel that God is well-pleased to save men [I Cor.1:21].

It is therefore the Gospel that we must preach. But not everything that is preached is gospel. We must examine the Word of God afresh on this vital subject. Its truths cannot be neglected except to the ruin of the hearer and speaker alike.

Pay close attention to yourself and to the doctrine; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will save both yourself and those who hear you [I Tim..4:16].

There are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed [Gal.1:7,8].

THE 4 ASPECTS OF THE GOSPEL

There are 4 parts that make up the Gospel message, apart from which, the Gospel has not been preached. The 4 aspects are these:

THE:
PROBLEM SOLUTION RESPONSE RESULT

The Problem facing all men has is that [1] Man is sinful, [2] God is Holy, and [3] Hell is Eternal. Though each of us face many other problems in this life, this is the true Problem.

The Solution to man's true Problem is Jesus Christ the Lord; His life, death, and resurrection. Trusting a church, mosque, or native doctor to solve the Problem we all face, is seeking solutions in the wrong places: Only Jesus Christ the Lord Himself is the Solution to our Problem.

The Response to God's Solution to man's Problem is to repent, believe, and receive Jesus Christ as Lord. Trying to improve your actions by your own efforts, or by increasing religious devotion and duties, is a false response. Turning to the living Christ of God in faith with a humbled repentant heart is the true Response.

The Result of Responding to God's Solution to man's Problem is salvation, forgiveness, and eternal life. God's promised Result is not that all of your problems in this life will end. In the Bible, some true believers continued sick [I Tim.5:23], many remained poor [2 Cor.8:1-5; Jas.2:5], but all had the true Result of eternal life.

Let us now consider each part of the Gospel message in more detail. A Gospel worker should MEMORIZE at least one verse of Scripture in each of the categories in the following discussion. These will be like useful tools in presenting the Gospel to every man.

THE GOSPEL: THE PROBLEM

The basic Problem of man is that [1] Man is Sinful, [2] God is Holy, and [3] Hell is Eternal. Let us first look at the sinfulness of man.

THE PROBLEM: MAN IS SINFUL

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God [Rom.3:23]

ALL MEN ARE:

GUILTY All men's actions, thoughts, and words have made them worthy of punishment before God, the Judge of all men.

Who can say, "I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin"? [Prov.20:9].

Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself, for you who judge practice the same things. But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things [Rom.2:1,2].

For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he is guilty of all [Jas.2:10].

CORRUPT Sin has defiled man's mind, desires, conscience, and practices to the extent that all is evil and rotten.

What is man that he should be pure, or he who is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? Behold, He puts no trust in His holy ones, and the heavens are not pure in His sight; How much less one who is detestable and corrupt, Man, who drinks iniquity like water! [Job 15:14-16].

There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one...With their tongues they have practiced deceit...whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; Destruction and misery are in their ways [Rom.3:10-16].

[See also Gen.6:11,12; Ps.14:13; Mk.7:20-23; Rom.1:24; Gal.6:7,8; Eph.2:3; 4:17,19,22].

In BONDAGE Sin has made man a slave to it as his master.

Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin [Jn.8:34].

Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? [Rom.6:16].

[See also Rom.6:16-23; 7:7-24; Eph.2:3; 2 Pet.2:19].

In MISERY Sin brings man into a state of sorrow, suffering, and problems.

Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest [Mt.11:28].

When I kept silent [about my sin], my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity [Ps.32:3-5].

The wicked are like the tossing sea, for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up refuse and mud. “There is no peace,” says my God, “for the wicked” [Isa.57:20,21].

Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten after another god [Ps.16:4].

POWERLESS Sinful man is not able to deliver himself from sin and its effects. He has neither the wisdom, ability, or desire to do so.

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly [Rom.5:6].

Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to do evil [Jer.13:23].

The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God [Rom.8:7,8].

No man can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for him. The ransom for a life is costly, no payment is ever enough [Ps.49:7,8].

[See also Job 14:4; Ps.16:2; Isa.64:6; Jn.6:44,45].

In DEATH Sinful man is spiritually dead in sins and will be paid for his service to sin in the lake of fire which is the second death [Rev.20:14].

The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord [Rom.6:23].

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins [Eph.2:1].

It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment [Heb.9:27].

[See also Rom.5:17; Eph.2:5; 4:18; Rev.20:13-15].

ENEMIES Man hates, resists, and fights against God.

While we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son [Rom.5:10].

And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death [Col.1:21,22].

Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God [Jas.4:4].

In DARKNESS The understanding of man’s mind in sin cannot see the truth of God.

Men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed [Jn.3:19,20].

Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light [Jn.12:35,36].

But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned [I Cor.2:14].

The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God [2 Cor.4:4].

[See also Rom.1:21; Eph.4:18; I Jn.2:11].

CAPTIVES All men are under the influence of the ruler of this world, the prince of the power of the air who is the devil and Satan.

We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one [I Jn.5:19].

I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me [Acts 26:17,18].

He has delivered us from the power of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of the Son of His love [Col.1:13].

You once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience [Eph.2:2].

[See also Jn.8:44; I Jn.3:8-10].

THE PROBLEM: GOD IS HOLY

The very nature of God prevents sinful men from being accepted in His presence.

Thine eyes are too pure to approve evil, and Thou canst not look on wickedness with favor [Hab.1:13].

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness [Rom.1:18].

But in accordance with your hardness and your unrepentant heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each one according to his deeds: eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but

to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness – indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil [Rom.2:5-9].

...When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power [2 Thess.1:7-9].

It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment [Heb.9:27].

For we know Him who said, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. And again, “The Lord will judge His people.” It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God [Heb.10:30,31].

[See also Ps.11:4-7; 90:11; Ezek.7:8,9; Nah.1:6; Heb.12:29].

THE PROBLEM: HELL IS ETERNAL

Conscious eternal torment awaits every man.

The wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations who forget God [Ps.9:17].

Then He will say to those on His left hand, “Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels...And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life” [Mt.25:41,46].

The rich man also died and was buried; and being in torments in hell, he...cried out and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me...for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said...between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us [Lk.16:22-26].

He himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy

angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night... [Rev.14:10,11].

[See also Mt.3:7-12; Jn.5:28,29; 2 Thess.1:8,9; Rev.20:11-15].

THE GOSPEL: THE SOLUTION

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

The Lord Jesus Christ is God's solution to the Problem of man. He has satisfied the wrath of God against sinful men and delivers from hell. Everything outstanding against man that hindered his being accepted by God has been cleared away by the Lord Jesus.

The Solution is not in religious ceremonies or systems, external practices or techniques to improve one's behavior. No, Christ Himself provides all that we never could do and is to us all that we could never be. Christ has solved every aspect of man's Problem before God.

He is the justifier of the condemned and guilty. His fulness of resurrection life cleanses the corrupt and relieves the miserable. Slaves to sin are set free from their bondage by the redemption of Christ.

Those without power are strengthened by His Spirit in the inner man. His life replaces sin's death. Enemies are reconciled and made friends and servants. The Light of Christ scatters the darkness of sin and the captives of Satan are delivered and translated to the kingdom of God's beloved Son.

Righteousness, once hated and feared, now can be our portion and delight. Hell's horrors no more await to swallow in its ruin and destruction, but instead, the bright joys of heaven have been secured and opened as an eternal hope.

Yes, it is Christ Himself that we need; not religious codes and practices. **For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life** [Jn.3:16]. This is a glad Gospel indeed. Let us now consider the most important ways in which Christ is our Solution to the Problem of sinful man before the holy God.

PROPITIATION The Lord Jesus satisfied every righteous demand of the holy God against sinful man.

Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus [Rom.3:24-26].

[See also Heb.2:17; 1 Jn.2:2; 4:4].

SUBSTITUTION The Lord Jesus suffered in our place the judgment deserved by all. He was the holy sinless substitute for sinful man.

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him [2 Cor.5:21].

Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness – by whose stripes you were healed [1 Pet.2:24].

[See also Rom.8:3; Heb.2:14,15; 1 Pet.3:18].

REDEMPTION The death of the Lord Jesus has fully paid the price to purchase us for God and to pay for our sins against God.

Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your empty way of life received by tradition from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot [1 Pet.1:18,19].

[See also Jn.19:30; 1 Cor.6:19,20; Col.1:14; Rev.5:9].

INTERCESSION Christ Jesus Himself now represents us forever before the throne of God.

But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them [Heb.7:24,25].

[See also Heb.9:24; 1 Jn.2:1].

RECONCILIATION God has made His enemies into servants and friends through the death of Christ.

Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: We beg you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God [2 Cor.5:18-20].

And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight [Col.1:21,22].

[See also Rom.5:10,11].

JUSTIFICATION God declares righteous all who put their trust in Christ and His righteousness.

Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus...Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law...But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness [Rom.3:22-28; 4:5].

[See also Rom.4:1-9,16; 5:1,9; Gal.2:16,21; 3:8-14; Phil.3:8,9].

REGENERATION God imparts His life by His Spirit through being spiritually born again.

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior [Tit.3:5,6].

[See also Jn.3:3-7; I Pet.1:23].

RESURRECTION The bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus proves His teaching, provides us with His life, and is the reason we are accepted

before God.

[Jesus was] declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead [Rom.1:4].

If Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty...And if Christ is not risen, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins!...But now Christ is risen from the dead...And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam [Jesus] became a life-giving spirit [I Cor.15:14,17,20,45].

[Jesus] was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification [Rom.4:25].

[See also Rom.5:10; 8:11; Eph.1:19-23; 2:5,6; Col.3:1-4].

THE GOSPEL: THE RESPONSE

The essential Response to the gospel is Repentance. This is the common element in all of the following responses noted in the Bible. Without repentance, all other responses are cancelled.

Demons believe but lack repentance [Jas.2:19] as do many men [Jn.2:23-25]. Multitudes received Jesus as King, shouting "Hosanna" one day and "Crucify" almost the next, because they lacked repentance [Mt.21:9-11; Lk.23:20-23].

Many confessed Jesus as Lord, but did not do what He said [Lk.6:46] because repentance was absent. Others came and soon after left for the same reason [Jn.6:24-26, 66]. Judas followed Jesus for gain [Jn.12:6], betrayed Christ, and then felt remorse [Mt.27:3-5], but he never repented. Sorrow for consequences of sin is not the same as repentance from the evil itself [Ps.78:34-37; 2 Cor.7:8-11].

True love obeys because the heart has been changed [I Jn.5:3]. Repentance leads to abiding [Jn.15:4,5], and abiding to fruitfulness.

Repentance was the heralded declaration of John [Mt.3:2] and the first message of Jesus [Mt.4:17]. It is what Jesus commanded that should be preached in all the world [Lk.24:46,47] and was the message of response voiced by Peter [Acts 2:38] and Paul alike [Acts 17:30].

REPENT Repentance is a change of mind and direction of life so that

the old is forsaken and the new pursued.

[Jesus said] **Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish** [Lk.13:3,5].

Peter said to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” [Acts 2:38].

In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent [Acts 17:30].

Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” [Lk.24:46,47].

[See also Mt.3:1-12; 4:17; Acts 3:19; 26:20; 2 Cor.7:9,10; Rev.2:5].

BELIEVE Biblical belief is to trust, put confidence in, and agree with truth so as to obey. Faith and belief are synonyms in the NT.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life [Jn.3:16].

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved [Acts 16:31].

[See also Jn.1:12; 3:36; 5:24; 8:24; 20:31; Acts 10:43; Rom.4:4,5; 10:4, 9-11; Eph.2:8,9; 2 Thess.2:11,12; Heb.11:6; 1 Jn.5:11-13].

RECEIVE To receive Christ is to welcome Him to abide in one's life as Lord, Savior, and Life-giving source of godliness.

As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name [Jn.1:12].

...among those who perish because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved [2 Thess.2:10].

CONFESS Confession is to say the same thing that God does. It is to agree with God with conviction of heart about a matter.

If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation [Rom.10:9,10].

[See also Mt.10:32; 1 Jn.2:23; 4:15].

COME To come is to abandon one's old ways and walk with Christ on the narrow way unto eternal life.

Come unto Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest [Mt.11:28].

[See also Jn.5:40; 6:35; 7:37; 1 Pet.2:4,5].

FOLLOW With Christ as our Example and His Word as our only command, we are led to deny self and follow Him in obedience.

Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me [Lk.9:23].

[See also Mt.4:19; 8:22; 16:24; Jn.10:4,5,27].

LOVE Love is affectionate devotion that is evidenced by obedience to God's commandments.

Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words [Jn.14:23,24].

If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar, for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? [1 Jn.4:20].

[See also Mt.22:37,38; 1 Cor.16:22; 1 Jn.4:8].

ABIDE Abiding is to remain in that fulness of living fellowship that comes by being united to Christ by faith.

Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the Vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and

I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing [Jn.15:4,5].

BAPTISM Baptism is the outward testimony of the inward reality of having died to sin and then being made alive in Christ. It shows others that the old life is dead and gone, buried never to be brought up again, and from now on that the person will walk in newness of life.

Baptism is for those who have repented and believed the gospel [Acts 2:38; 8:36,37]. Infants have neither repented nor believed. There is no command in the Bible to baptize infants. There are no examples of baptizing infants in the Word of God.

Baptism does not save a person, for it is the gospel that is the power of God for salvation [Rom.1:16]. Christ did not send Paul to baptize, but to preach the message of the cross; that is what saves [I Cor.1:17,18].

Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him [Acts 8:36-38].

[See also Mt.28:18-20; Mk.16:16; Acts 2:38,41,42; 8:12,13; 9:17,18; 10:43-48; 16:14,15, 31-34; 18:8; 19:4,5; 22:16; Rom.6:3-6; I Cor.1:14-17; I Pet.3:21].

THE GOSPEL: THE RESULTS

Salvation is the Result of Responding to the Solution to our real Problem. Salvation is complete and removes all the effects of sin, both from the past, in the present, and in the future.

With respect to the past, God, the Righteous Judge, has declared the true believer Justified from his guilt and has thus saved him from the penalty of sin. In the present, the Spirit of God is transforming the true believer into the image of Christ and saving him from the power of sin [2

Cor.3:17,18]. The future will rescue the believer's body from all effects of sin [Rom.8:23-25] and from its very presence [Rev.7:15-17].

SALVATION God rescues and delivers the true believer from all aspects and effects of sin. It is the widest description of the Results of believing the Gospel.

And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved [Acts 4:12].

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age [Tit.2:11,12].

[See also Rom.1:16; Rom.10:9,10; 2 Cor.6:2; I Thess.5:9; 2 Tim.3:15; I Pet.1:5, 7-9].

FORGIVENESS God no longer holds our sins against us but has sent them away, never to be called into account for judgment.

I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, and like a cloud, your sins. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you [Isa.44:22].

Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy. He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea [Mic.7:18,19].

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace [Eph.1:7].

[See also Acts 26:18; Col.1:13,14].

ETERNAL LIFE This is not simply life that will never end, but it is the quality of a life that is everlasting; God's own life, life that comes from Him and conforms to His character.

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment,

but has passed out of death into life [Jn.5:24].

[See also Jn.3:16, 36; 4:14; 17:3; Rom.6:23; 1 Jn.5:11-13].

CLEANSING The blood of Jesus cleanses from the guilt of sin and the Holy Spirit cleanses the heart and mind from its defilement through the Word and grace of God.

“Come now, and let us reason together,” says the Lord, “though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool” [Isa.1:18].

But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness [1 Jn.1:7,9].

[See also Ezek.36:25-27; Jn.15:3; Eph.5:26].

NO CONDEMNATION No judgment awaits the true believer for the guilt of his sin. Jesus Christ paid the full price to redeem us to God.

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus [Rom.8:1].

[See also Jn.3:18; 5:24; Rom.8:34].

POWER God in His might is at work in the true believer both to will and to do for His good pleasure [Phil.2:13].

But you shall receive power when the Holy spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth [Acts 1:8].

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us [2 Cor.4:7].

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind [2 Tim.1:7].

[See also Rom.1:16; 1 Cor.1:18; 2 Cor.12:9; Eph.1:19; 3:20; Col.1:11; 1 Thess.1:5].

THE GOSPEL: BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATIONS

THE ARK

By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith [Heb.11:7].

Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord and was thus delivered from the judgment which came upon the whole world. The judgment fell upon the Ark, the means of his salvation, but not upon him who was saved by abiding in his “deliverer.” He passed through the judgment into a new creation and came forth in newness of life where he worshiped in Spirit and truth. [See Gen.6 - 9].

ISAAC

By faith Abraham...offered up Isaac...his only begotten son...concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense [Heb.11:17-19].

[1] Isaac, the only begotten loved by his father, voluntarily submitted himself to become a sacrifice by the will of his father. He was, in picture, slain, yet became alive again.

[2] Isaac, though obedient to all his father’s will and submissive in every way, nevertheless, was under judgment from his father’s hand that no obedience could prevent. It was only as the eyes were opened to see the lamb provided by the Lord that he was spared from wrath. The lamb was substituted in his place and died in his behalf: That set him free, never to face condemnation again. [See Gen.22].

PASSOVER

For indeed, Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us [1 Cor.5:7].

The only means of deliverance from the judgment of God coming

upon the whole world was in the shed blood of the lamb. It must be applied by faith to the very place in which we dwell and live. The spotless lamb was slain to save those sheltered by its blood. The lamb then became the very food of the people of God which provided strength to depart from the world and its ways. [See Ex.12].

MANNA

And Jesus said to them, "I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst... I am the Bread which came down from heaven" [Jn.6:35, 41].

The bread of God came down from heaven and gave life to the world. All who by faith will receive this bread and feed upon it will never hunger. Christ is the daily portion that sustains the life of the people of the Lord. [See Ex.16].

SERPENT

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life [Jn.3:14,15].

The brass serpent had no poison of its own and was able to withstand the fire to which it was subjected. It was made in the likeness of that which afflicted people in order to deliver them from the certain death awaiting them due to their sin. Salvation was obtained by believing the Word of God about their only means of deliverance. The simple salvation message was, "Look and live!" [See Num.21:5-9].

DAY OF ATONEMENT

Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation [Mercy Seat] by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness [Rom.3:25].

Our great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, has entered the presence of God, once and for all. There He presented His own blood

that has satisfied the righteous demands of the Holy One. The blood on the Mercy Seat covers all remembrance of our transgressions symbolized by Aaron's rod, the tables of the Law, and the jar of manna [Heb.9:3-5]. These show our rebellion against His authority [Aaron's rod: see Num.16,17], the breaking of His Law [the Ten Commandments: see Ex.31], and the despising of provision [the manna: see Num.21:5]. Our sins laid upon the live goat on the Day of Atonement, removes them forever from God's sight. It is the work of the high priest alone to provide atonement. Ours is to humble our souls. [See Lev.16].

THE GOSPEL: PREACHING TO THE SELF-RIGHTEOUS

Unless a man sees his need, he will seek no remedy; unless he acknowledges a Problem, no Solution will interest him. With the Self-Righteous, the great task of the gospel worker is to awaken a sense of concern about his sinful condition before God. The following passages are most helpful to do so. Those references that have already been quoted previously will not be written out here.

Among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others [Eph.2:3]. Though you may not be as bad outwardly as other men, can you honestly say that your inner thought life is free from sin? That secret sinfulness of mind alone is enough to make all men objects of God's wrath.

[Prov.20:9]. Are you the only exception to what God says is true of all men; that all are infected with sin from which no man can cleanse himself?

[Rom.3:8-19]. It is the Lord who has told us that none are righteous, good, or seek after Him. He Himself says that all are useless. Will you then tell God that it is not so with you?

[Rom.3:23]. The standard is not our own ideas about goodness

or righteousness, but His very excellence of Character that we have all fallen short of.

[Rom.5:6,8,10]. Christ died for the helpless, ungodly, and His enemies. Unless you agree that this is your own condition, Christ's death will be of no purpose for you.

We are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away [Isa.64:6]. It is not only our worst deeds that are rejected by the Lord, even the very best we can do are filth in His sight. Will you then set before the King of heaven your offering of smelling filthy rags? Will He accept you then? Will He not rather cast you out of His presence in fury and rage?

[Jas.2:9,10]. Though you may imagine yourself to have kept the whole of God's Law, yet even one slip will make you guilty of all. What then is your hope in your own righteousness?

Jesus answered and said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance" [Lk.5:31,32]. It is not the well who need a doctor, it is the sick. But if you imagine yourself to be well when you are not, you will perish. Ignored, denied, or undetected, the disease of sin within your heart will destroy you.

THE GOSPEL: PREACHING TO THE IDOLATER

THE FOLLY OF IDOLATRY

The foolishness of idolatry is mentioned in several places in the Word of God. Even the idolater will recognize the manifest folly of idolatry when these passages are brought before him.

Our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases. Their

idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they do not speak; Eyes they have, but they do not see; They have ears, but they do not hear; Noses they have, but they do not smell; They have hands, but they do not handle; Feet they have, but they do not walk; nor do they mutter through their throat. Those who make them are like them; So is everyone who trusts in them [Ps.115:3-7]. Idols have no life; they do not exist. They are only the work of men's hands. Why should a man who can walk and speak and reason and see and hear bow himself and serve a piece of stone or wood that can do nothing?

"Present your case," says the Lord, "bring forth your strong reasons," says the King of Jacob. Let them bring forth and show us what will happen; Let them show the former things, what they were, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare to us things to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that you are gods; Yes, do good or do evil, that we may be dismayed and see it together. Indeed you are nothing, and your work is nothing; he who chooses you is an abomination [Isa.41:21-24]. The Lord not only exposes the nakedness of idols, He mocks the complete emptiness and stupidity of it. Any who would choose to follow the nothingness of idolatry is an abomination.

Those who make an image, all of them are useless...Who would form a god or mold an image that profits him nothing?...The blacksmith with the tongs works one in the coals, fashions it with hammers, and works it with the strength of his arms...The craftsman stretches out his rule, he marks one out with chalk; he fashions it with a plane...He cuts down cedars for himself...Then it shall be for a man to burn, for he will take some of it and warm himself; Yes, he kindles it and bakes bread; Indeed he makes a god and worships it; He makes it a carved image, and falls down to it. He burns half of it in the fire; With this half he eats meat...and the rest of it he makes into a god, his carved image. He falls down before it and worships it, prays to it and says, "Deliver me, for you are my god!"...And no one considers in his

heart, nor is there knowledge nor understanding to say, “I have burned half of it in the fire...and shall I make the rest of it an abomination? Shall I fall down before a block of wood?” He feeds on ashes; A deceived heart has turned him aside; and he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, “Is there not a lie in my right hand?” [Isa.44:9-20].

THE TWO WAYS

Though a man has two eyes, he can only look in one direction. His two legs can only walk upon one trail. Only one voice can be listened to at a time though his ears are two. Serving two masters is an impossibility.

There must be repentance from all aspects of idolatry if the Gospel is to be received unto salvation. There can be no compromise between God and Satan. Light immediately scatters darkness so that it disappears altogether. It must be one or the other, not both.

Therefore my beloved, flee from idolatry...What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord’s table and of the table of demons. Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He? [I Cor.10:14, 19-22]. Will the Lord not be provoked to jealousy and wrath if we worship Him one minute and the next turn aside to serve idols?

You turned to God from idols to serve the living God [I Thess.1:9]. Their backs were turned upon their idols when they turned to face the living God. A man cannot face both ways.

Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

Therefore, “Come out from among them and be separate,” says the Lord. “Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.

“I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters,” says the Lord Almighty.

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God [2 Cor.6:14 - 7:1].

Beware that you are not ensnared to follow them...and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, “How do these nations serve their gods, that I also may do likewise?”

You shall not worship the Lord your God in that way; for every abomination to the Lord which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods [Deut.12:30,31].

When you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations.

There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer,

or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead.

For whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord; and because of these abominable things the Lord your God will drive them out before you.

You shall be blameless before the Lord your God.

For these nations, which you shall dispossess, listen to those who practice witchcraft and to diviners, but as for you, the Lord your God has not allowed you to do so [Deut.18:9-14].

No man can serve two masters... [Mt.6:24].

Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it [Mt.7:13,14].

THE GODS OF OUR FATHERS

Many fear ancestral covenants and sins of their forefathers coming upon them. Others are fearful that the gods they abandon will harm them or their families if they forsake them for the sake of Christ.

Persecution from the family and tribe often will result as it did in NT days. The Thessalonians who turned to God from idols suffered affliction because of it [I Thess.2:13,14; 3:3,4]. The temptation is to compromise between idolatrous practices and the Gospel of Christ; trying to maintain traditional practices to not offend the ancestral traditions while vainly holding onto a hope of eternal life from Christ.

Here are passages from the Scriptures that deal with the gods of our fathers and ancestral traditions.

Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your empty way of life received by tradition from your forefathers; but with the precious blood of Christ [I Pet.1:18, 19]. Ancestral traditional ritual and practices are wholly based upon instructions passed down from the spirits of the ancestors. The Word of God says that they are empty ways of life. These are the very things that the blood of Christ has been shed to redeem us from; false practices of false gods. They must therefore be abandoned.

The Lord had made a covenant [with His people] and charged them, saying: “You shall not fear other gods, nor bow down to them nor serve them nor sacrifice to them; but the Lord, who brought you up from the land of Egypt with great power and an outstretched arm, Him you shall fear, Him you shall worship, and to Him you shall offer sacrifice. And the statutes, the ordinances, the law, and the

commandment which He wrote for you, you shall be careful to observe forever; you shall not fear other gods. And the covenant that I have made with you, you shall not forget, nor shall you fear other gods. But the Lord your God you shall fear; and He will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies” [2 Kings 17:35-39]. Other gods are not to be feared by the true believer. They are powerless before the one true and living God. The Lord protects those who fear Him from all enemies, including the false gods of earth.

Therefore hear the Word of the Lord...because you have said, “We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol/hell we are in agreement. When the overflowing scourge passes through, it will not come to us, for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood we have hidden ourselves.”

Therefore thus says the Lord God: “Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; whoever believes will not act hastily...Your covenant with death will be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol/hell will not stand; When the overflowing scourge passes through, then you will be trampled down by it” [Isa.28:14-18]. Ancestral curses and covenants are not to be feared or trusted. They will prove to be a false and empty protection from the sure wrath of God coming upon all who follow other gods. Only those will escape who are resting upon the sure unmoving Foundation laid by God Himself, which is Christ Himself [I Pet.2:4-6].

Keep on, then, with your magic spells and with your many sorceries, which you have laboured at since childhood. Perhaps you will succeed, perhaps you will cause terror. All the counsel you have received has only worn you out! Let your astrologers come forward, those stargazers who make predictions month by month, let them save you from what is coming upon you. Surely they are like stubble; the fire will burn them up. They cannot even save themselves from the power of the flame. Here are no coals to warm anyone; here is no fire to sit by. That is all they can do for you – these you have laboured with and trafficked with since childhood. Each of them goes on in his error;

there is not one that can save you [Isa.47:12-15]. All sorcerers, oracles, and herbalists cannot save even themselves from the wrath of the living God. Their power is weak, evil, and false. They and all who follow their directives, prophesies, and rituals will be destroyed along with them.

CURSES

Many times a traditional worshiper will fear curses coming upon him if he abandons the old ways for the Narrow Way of Christ Jesus the Lord. He may know very well that he is a sinner and in need of salvation, but fear may keep him from truly repenting and confessing Christ. The following passages from the Scriptures address curses and true believers.

Like a flitting sparrow, like a flying swallow, so a curse without cause shall not alight [Prov.26:2]. There is no cause for a curse to come upon a true child of God. No matter what the curse, the power of God is greater to protect His child from that evil.

They hired Balaam...to pronounce a curse on you. However, the Lord your God would not listen to Balaam but turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the Lord your God loves you [Deut.23:4,5]. Here was a professional sorcerer hired to curse the people of God. God is in control of all, not the devil. The Lord turns even the curses of evil men to good for his people, to those who serve him alone apart from compromise with idolatrous ways.

He has blessed, and I cannot change it...The Lord their God is with them...There is no sorcery against Jacob, no divination against Israel. It will now be said of Jacob and of Israel, "See what God has done!" [Num.23:20-23]. Here is Balaam himself who was hired to curse Israel admitting that his curses are powerless against the true people of God. Though he wanted to curse them, he could not. There is no sorcery against the true people of God, for the Lord God is with us.

Take counsel together, but it will come to nothing; Speak the

word, but it will not stand, for God is with us [Isa.8:10]. Here the schemes and incantations spoken against the true people of God fall to the ground harmless. Why? God is with us.

Let them curse, but You bless; When they arise, let them be ashamed, but let Your servant rejoice [Ps.109:28]. The curses of men and of the ancestors do not fall upon the true servants of God. Rather, they rejoice and are blessed.

ABANDONING THE GODS OF OUR FATHERS

Believers in the true and living God are always called upon to completely abandon their traditional idolatrous practices. There can be no mixture between the two. The following passages will show different situations in which this was done.

And Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the foreign gods that are among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments. Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone." So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods which were in their hands, and the earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree which was by Shechem [Gen.35:2-4]. A true believer cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons at the same time [I Cor.10:14-22]. Idols must be abandoned before one can truly sacrifice to the Lord God.

Then I took your sin, the calf which you had made, and burned it with fire and crushed it and ground it very small, until it was as fine as dust; and I threw its dust into the brook that descended from the mountain [Deut.9:21]. Moses broke, crushed, and burned the golden idol that the nation of Israel had made under Aaron's direction. He so completely destroyed it that no traces of it could ever be found again.

Now therefore, fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in

truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord! And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord...If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you, after He has done you good [Josh.24:14,15, 20]. No compromise can exist between idols and the living God of heaven. We must choose whom we will serve. Both cannot be served.

Gideon built an altar there to the Lord, and called it The-Lord-Is-Peace...Now it came to pass the same night that the Lord said to him...tear down the altar of Baal that your father has, and cut down the wooden image that is beside it...Then the men of the city said to Joash, "Bring out your son, that he may die, because he has torn down the altar of Baal, and because he has cut down the wooden image that was beside it." But Joash said to all who stood against him, "Would you plead for Baal? Would you save him?...If he is a god, let him plead for himself, because his altar has been torn down!" [Jud.6:24-31]. If these gods are truly gods, let them arise and do anything against the God of heaven or His servants. The testimony of the servants of the living God is that the small gods of the land are powerless before the God of heaven.

When they left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they were burned with fire [I Chron.14:12]. The everlasting portion of gods and those who serve them is fire. Often idols are burnt by those who have repented from the folly of idolatry.

And the king commanded...to bring out of the temple of the Lord all the articles that were made for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven; and he burned them outside Jerusalem...And he brought out the wooden image from the house of the Lord...burned it at the Brook Kidron and ground it to ashes...Moreover Josiah put away those who consulted mediums and spiritists, the household gods and

idols, all the abominations that were seen in the land...that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. Now before him there was no king like him, who turned to the Lord with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; nor after him did any arise like him [2 Kings 23:4,6,24,25]. Here was a man who had one of the highest commendations ever given to a man. He made no compromise with idolatry. The temple of God and idols have nothing in common.

And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds. Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the Word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed [Acts 19:18,19]. There can be no mighty work of God when idolatry in all of its forms is not utterly rejected. When it is, the believers are protected by the Lord from spiritual assault and their testimony prevails in the land.

SUMMARY OF A SIMPLE GOSPEL MESSAGE

From John 3:16 a simple Gospel message can be spoken that includes all four aspects of presenting the Problem, Solution, Response, and Result. From this verse, man's Problem is that he is about to perish. The Solution is that God gave His Son. The Response is that man might believe. And the Result is everlasting life.

The same can be done from Romans 6:23. The Problem is that death awaits every man because of sin. The Solution is the gift of God in Christ Jesus the Lord. The Response is to receive the gift. And the Result is eternal life.

Many other single verses from the Scriptures present the entire Gospel message in themselves. The following is another simple Gospel presentation taken entirely from the words of the Scriptures themselves. As you read through it, take note of the four aspects of the Gospel that it presents.

People did not think it was important to have a true knowledge of God. So God left them and allowed them to have their own worthless thinking. And so those people do the things that they should not do. They are filled with every kind of sin, evil, selfishness, and hatred. They are full of jealousy, murder, fighting, lying, and thinking the worst about each other. They gossip and say evil things about each other. They hate God. They are rude and conceited and brag about themselves. They invent ways of doing evil. They do not obey their parents. They are foolish, they do not keep their promises, and they show no kindness or mercy to other people. They know God's law says that those who live like this should die. But they continue to do these evil things and approve those who do them [Romans 1:28-32].

The wrong things the sinful self does are clear: taking part in sexual sins, worshiping false gods, doing witchcraft, making trouble, being angry, being drunk, and doing other things like this. I warn you: Those who do these things will not be in God's kingdom [Galatians 5:19-21].

The Lord Jesus said, "I tell you, if you don't repent [change your hearts and lives], then you will all likewise perish!" [be destroyed too] [Luke 13:5].

Jesus is the only One who can save people. His name is the only power in the world that has been given to save people. And we must be saved through Him! [Acts 4:12].

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son. God gave His Son so that whoever believes in Him may not be lost, but have eternal life. He who believes in Him is not judged guilty. But he who does not obey the Son will never have that life. God's anger stays with him [John 3:16,18,36].

Christ Himself died for you. And that one death paid for your sins. He was not guilty, but He died for those who are guilty. He did this to bring you all to God. His body was killed, but He was made alive in the Spirit [1 Peter 3:18].

Christ died for all so that those who live would no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf [2 Corinthians 5:15].

If you use your mouth to say, "Jesus is Lord," and if you believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from death, then you will be saved. We believe with our hearts, and so we are made right with God. And we use our mouths to say that we believe, and so we are saved. As the Bible says, "Anyone who trusts in Him will never be disappointed" [Romans 10:9-11].

2

DISCIPLESHIP

THE TEACHING AND EXAMPLE OF CHRIST

Disciples are yoked to Christ as learners who walk with Him in meekness and lowliness [Mt.11:29]. By definition, a disciple is a learner and pride spoils the process. The goal of such association is conformity to the Master [Lk.6:40] through denial and even hatred of self [Lk.9:23; 14:26] by willingly suffering all for His name's sake [Lk.14:27].

Apprenticeship was ever Christ's method to instruct, train, and equip disciples. His practice was that His followers would learn spiritual principles by observation and participation. His life and teaching both in public and private were observed by them and later explained apart from the multitudes [Mk.4:34]. They also participated in serving men by way of preaching, teaching, healing, and giving to the poor.

For them to be able to repeat mechanically memorized information gained in a classroom setting was never His purpose. Rather, on the shores of Galilee or along the highways and in the marketplace, His school required men to reason about spiritual issues for themselves.

By encountering life situations with the Word of God and by the use of repeated questions, disciples' inner character was developed. The barrenness of a mere academic exercise of mind was not His aim and could never be thought of as training. Paul followed this example of developing men [2 Tim.3:10,11].

Jesus brought no gold from heaven to fund the work committed

into their hands. As He trusted in His Father, so must His disciples. He built no temples, established no ceremonial procedures, and founded no institutions; a maximizing of power with a minimum of machinery. None of these external things can ever maintain godliness, only men who have been transformed by the Son of God.

No human means, entertainment, or enticements were used to attract men to Himself. Christ alone is the single desire of a disciple, not the bait of gain or interests of any other kind.

Jesus Himself was the Apostle [Heb.3:1] and knew what was required to be one. The word “apostle” means “sent forth.” It describes one who by character and understanding can represent the interests of the one who sent him.

Christ did nothing except what He saw and heard from His Father, therefore apostles must go forth with no novelty of message and representation. They are ambassadors, and an ambassador dare not speak or act beyond what he has been authorized to do.

As the Apostle, He only did what He had authority to do from His Father. No independent message and judgment is fitting in an apostle.

I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me [Jn.5:30].

I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak [Jn.12:49].

This is the apostolic process: Men are chosen to first be with Him, separated from the unbroken tradition of their customary life until transformed. They then could be sent forth back into that culture without being overtaken by it when conformity to Christ’s character and message was consistent with His own [Mk.3:14]. This explains why laborers are yet few. The Father does not send just anyone into His vineyard.

In the extension of the kingdom of heaven, Wisdom dictated to perpetuate life by life, not by pen or sword; the number of trees in one pawpaw cannot be counted. Grace dictated that those chosen be from

the mainstream of common humanity and not from the exceptional or elite, that no flesh may boast in His presence.

And thus it was that unlearned fishermen [Acts4:13], a tax collector, a political zealot, and volatile sons of thunder became chosen vessels of worldwide blessing. It was a grassroots endeavor so that whatever noteworthy and commendable would be attributable to Christ and not to man.

Christ’s prayer summarizes His apostolic work, **I have given to them the Words which You have given Me; and they have received them [Jn.17:8].** Two by two they were thus sent forth, vindicating the wisdom of a three stranded strength entwined together with His own [Eccl.4:9-12].

DISCIPLES ARE LEARNERS

Every disciple begins as an ignorant learner; that is what a disciple is. He does not know as he ought, and dare not therefore lean on his own understanding [Prov.3:5,6]. This is a condition that a disciple never grows out of.

Paul himself pressed on **that I might know Him [Phil.3:10].** He admits that **I know in part [I Cor.13:12].** Even when in prison at the end of his days, he was eager to pursue the knowledge of Christ. **The time of my departure is at hand...bring...the books, especially the parchments [upon which the Scriptures were written] [2 Tim.4:6,13].**

It is therefore a life-long process of becoming increasingly conformed to the image of Christ [Lk.6:40]. We become like Him when we are yoked to Him and walk in His path, learning from His meekness and lowliness of heart [Mt.11:28-30].

The Lord Jesus Himself followed in this process of discipleship. Every morning His ear was open to hear from His Father [Isa.50:4-7]. What He heard, He obeyed and did not turn back. Having heard and learned, He could sustain the weary with a Word. This is discipleship.

It requires hating all the influence of natural associations that would draw the heart from Christ as Lord; even, and especially, that of

our own soul [Lk.14:25]. We must distrust our own desires and own assessment. If we are relying upon these, we are not listening to and learning from Christ: We are not disciples.

If we turn back because of the scorn and rejection of men; if we abandon the cross, we shall never die to self: We are not His disciple [Lk.14:26]. And there is no such thing as a disciple who has not lost his life for the sake of Christ [Mt.16:24,25].

All reliance upon our own resources must be given up: Discipleship is relying upon the strength, wisdom, and life of Christ alone. Trusting our own natural abilities, wisdom, and desires simply shows that we are not His disciple [Lk.14:33].

Disciples trust Christ to provide all that is needed to build a tower which will ensure a fruitful harvest in the coming Day [Lk.14:28-30. See Isa.5:1-4]. Disciples rely on Christ for all fruitful results.

How shall victory be secured when our might cannot match that of the enemy? [Lk.14:31-32]. The battle is the Lord's and He alone can defeat the hosts set round about against us [2 Chron.20:12, 15, 17; Prov.21:31]. Disciples do not look to self for victory and power.

TIMOTHY: A DISCIPLE INDEED

Timothy was a disciple indeed. His testimony was recognized and known among the brethren he was in fellowship with [Acts 16:1-3]. He served Paul like a son serving his father; so much so, that sending Timothy was the same as sending Paul, to hear him was to hear the Apostle [I Cor.4:14-17].

There was no one else like him among all the servants of Christ. He was a genuine man of proven character who sincerely cared for the souls of men. **For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel** [Phil.2:20-22]. He is a worthy example of all true disciples.

CHARACTERISTICS

A disciple, a learner, does not know as he ought to know [I Cor.8:2]. He does not lean on his own understanding [Prov.3:5]. He is not a fool, trusting in his own heart [Prov.28:26]. He is quick to hear and slow to speak [Jas.1:19].

Listening to, following, and yielding to reproof give evidence of being a true disciple. **He is on the path of life who heeds instruction, but he who ignores reproof goes astray** [Prov.10:17]. Those who refuse instruction, demonstrate that they are not disciples at all, but rather simply fools. **He who hates correction is stupid** [Prov.12:1].

Many have the outward show of being disciples, but few are genuine. **Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more** [Jn.6:60,66].

A disciple will be like-minded with the one discipling him and will not seek after his own interests: The things of Christ fill his heart and mind [Phil.2:20,21]. He is first of all, a servant of the Lord Jesus and then also of the one discipling him; like a child serving his father [Phil.2:22].

Discipleship is a relationship of love and mutual respect without constraint. Even esteemed fellow-workers do not serve by forced necessity [I Cor.16:12].

A disciple follows the teaching and conduct of the one guiding him [2 Tim.3:10] so that they teach the same things whether together or apart [I Cor.4:17]. During discipleship, the disciple is sent under the direction of the one discipling him: Independence and self-will do not guide his movements [I Cor.4:17; Phil.2:19,23,25,28; I Tim.1:3; 2 Tim.4:12; Tit.2:5].

PROCESS

The one discipling will preach [2 Tim.4:2], speak, exhort, and reprove with all authority [Tit.2:15], and lead [Heb.13:7]. He will prove to be an example [I Pet.5:3], teach [2 Tim.2:24], and correct [2 Tim.2:25].

A disciple will be reminded and solemnly charged [2 Tim.2:14], encouraged [Acts 15:32], and instructed with all patience [2 Tim.4:2]. But the one discipling does not, and must not, lord it over the disciple [Lk.22:25-27; 2 Cor.1:24; 1 Pet.5:3].

Lording it over men makes the disciples to be no longer servants of Christ. It turns them aside to being followers of men and the entire purpose of discipleship has been spoiled [Acts 20:30].

PURPOSE

The purpose of discipleship is to train, instruct, and equip the disciple to become totally dependent upon the Lord Jesus. **Everyone, when he is fully trained, will be like his master** [Lk.6:40].

Conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ is the ultimate aim. **The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith** [1 Tim.1:5]. Development of character and not merely informing the mind is the goal. The Word is to come first to the disciple to instruct, reprove, correct, and train him in righteousness [2 Tim.3:16,17], before he would ever seek to instruct others.

Discipleship's great task is to perpetuate the faith that has been once for all delivered to the saints. **The things you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also** [2 Tim..2:2].

This can only be maintained by faith and love in dependence upon the Holy Spirit of God [2 Tim.1:13,14]. No program, institution, publications, or creeds can ever maintain the true doctrine of God in living reality.

DEMANDS

The demands of discipleship are intense and rigorous [1 Tim.4:15,16]. Diligent watch must be kept over one's own heart, doctrine, and practice [Prov.4:23; 1 Tim.4:12]. Self-discipline is essential [Prov.2:1-5; 1 Tim.4:7,8]. Time is to be redeemed [Eph.5:16; Col.4:5].

Consistent daily reading and study of the Scriptures is mandatory

if one is to be a disciple. **Study to show yourself approved unto God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth** [2 Tim.2:15]. He must be steadfast in the Word in times of departure when men are running after fables rather than sound doctrine [2 Tim.4:1-5].

He is a son who is strong in grace, a soldier disentangled from the affairs of the world, an athlete who strives according to the rules, and a farmer who diligently labors [2 Tim.2:1-7]; for a lazy man should not even be given something to eat [2 Thess.3:10-13].

CAUTIONS

Disciples should aspire to lead quiet lives, mind their own business, and work with their own hands so that they will have a good testimony with those without and not be in any need [1 Thess.4:11,12]. But he shall be free from the love of money [Heb.13:5] which will be the snare to his soul and plunge him into ruin and destruction. This he must flee [1 Tim.6:9-11].

Interaction with the one discipling is to be purposeful, not as a busybody [2 Thess.3:11] nor as wasteful of time [Prov.25:17].

Since the disciple does not wish to give the enemy occasion for reproach [1 Tim.5:14], he will abstain from every appearance of evil [1 Thess.5:22]. Thus the disciple will relate to women in all purity [1 Tim..5:2]. **It is good for a man not to touch a woman** [1 Cor.7:1] nor to be alone with a woman in private so as to avoid temptation and evil suspicion on the part of others [Mt.6:13].

3

THE NT PATTERN FOR THE CHURCH

KEY PASSAGES: NATURE OF THE CHURCH

The church is portrayed in several ways in the NT. Living things cannot be reduced to strict mechanical definitions. They must rather be expressed by illustrations and accurate descriptions. The NT describes who the people of God are as distinct from the world. It also tells of the relationship that exists between these people and their God, and between these people and each other.

In the discussion of the following passages, various NT Greek words will be referred to. They will be identified by writing them in *ITALIC CAPITAL* letters followed by the actual Greek letters themselves.

Foundation [Mt.16:16-19]

No blessing comes to any man who has a deficient view of Christ. Imaginary Christs can do nothing for anyone because they don't exist. Only what is revealed about Christ to the heart of a man by the Father in heaven will result in blessing.

Jesus is the Christ; the Anointed Priest and King. As Priest, there exists no other Mediator between God and man. No other sacrifice will avail to cleanse from sin. He alone is the Priest that can safely represent man before God without rejection.

As King, He rules and governs the heart of His servants according

to the law of His kingdom. No other rulers, no codes or traditions can be accepted by His subjects. His Word exclusively must command His people.

Christ alone is the Rock upon which His church is built. The confession that there is no other King, no other Priest, is the unshakable Rock that all of hell's wisdom and might cannot overcome. Hell cannot undo what has been supernaturally imparted to the heart of a man by the Father in heaven. There is no other means of entrance into this church that Jesus is building.

For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ [I Cor.3:11]. That Rock [PETRA, πετρα] was Christ [I Cor.10:4].

Peter [PETROS, πετροσ] is not that Rock [PETRA, πετρα] upon which the church is built. Peter is a stone [PETROS, Πν.1:42], like all believers are **living stones** [I Pet.2:5], but he is not the foundational Bedrock [PETRA] upon which the church stands: That is Christ alone.

Keys of the kingdom [Mt.16:19] were placed in his hands by the Lord Jesus Christ. Peter was the initiator, a pioneer, who accessed several new gateways into fresh spiritual realms for the saints of God to follow thereafter.

Pentecost found him unlocking the stiff rusty gate of tradition unto the flooding light of salvation and a New Covenant for the Jew. Three thousand gladly rushed through the opened passageway to eternal life, accessed by the Key of the Gospel in his hand [Acts 2:14-42].

Through him doors of mercy swung wide unto the afflicted and sorrowing. Miracles were first introduced through the church to a suffering world at the Temple's Beautiful Gate [Acts 3:1-10], and Peter held that Key of Compassion.

It was Peter who first passed through the door of persecution, imprisonment, and stripes for the sake of the Name [Acts 4&5]. The Key of No-compromise gained admittance to that prison cell of suffering in behalf of Christ.

Reluctantly, a key was withdrawn from an Israelite's robe to extend salvation's blessing beyond the borders of Judea unto the remotest part of the earth. Peter's narrow thinking required arresting by repeated

visions before that key would be inserted to unlock blessing to the “unclean” Gentiles [Acts 10:9-16].

Yet he yielded to the message from heaven. Peter arose without misgivings and threw open the barred door to the heathen in Cornelius’ house [Acts 11:1-18]. Thereafter, every tribe, people, tongue, and nation have thankfully streamed through it to the glory of God.

This final Key pulled from Peter’s robe, was the golden one of Obedience; Peter’s own obedience, which led to **the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name’s sake** [Rom.1:5].

Peter, thus, is simply a servant in the kingdom, but not the foundation of it. Christ alone can support the church that He is building. It belongs to Him. He says it is **My church** [Mt.16:18]. We dare not shift to another foundation, another priesthood, another Christ, another Gospel, or another code of law.

This is the foundation of the church that is Jesus’ possession and is the first mention of the church in all of Scripture. Study it well, the key lies at the door to all that is contained therein. There is no other church membership that will take you to heaven.

Father & Children [2 Cor.6:18]

The life of the Father is the common portion of all His children. He is exalted over all to whom all owe everything within the family. In this family, all are brothers. None have any place of superiority over others. Love and consideration characterize them all and obedience to a Father’s will is their crowning glory.

Master & Slaves [Rom.6:15-23]

Slaves are purchased possessions. They have no rights, and their independent opinions and desires are not the concern of the Master. Their one concern is to know and obey the command of their Master [I Cor.6:19,20].

No man can serve two masters. There exists no place for men to lord it over fellow slaves in the church of Christ. Jesus alone is Lord.

Shepherd & Sheep [Jn.10:1-28]

There exists but one flock with one Shepherd [Jn.10:16]. Men are no substitutes for Christ. His voice alone is heard and followed by His flock. The voices of strangers will not be listened to or followed: Rather, the sheep will flee from any not speaking the Word of the Shepherd.

This identifies what true shepherd care is; speaking with the voice of Christ, leading in His paths of righteousness to feed upon His Word. This is what a shepherd is according to the heart of God [Jer.3:15]. Any who would draw men after themselves, speaking man’s wisdom and tradition, are thieves and robbers [Ezek.34:1-16; Acts 20:30].

Foundation & Temple [I Cor.3:10,11,16; Eph.2:19-22]

In God’s temple, everything says, “Glory!” The outshining of His character is seen, the excellence of His moral perfections shine forth. Truth is dispensed, sacrifices rise, and the Lord dwells in the midst with holiness overshadowing all.

Christ as the Cornerstone is the reference point for all that is built upon Him. He is the foundation that the Apostles and prophets have laid. Everything rests upon Him and He determines the dimensions and scope of the building. Man’s substitutes and carnal contributions are rejected as worthless and not according to the Pattern of Christ.

This is the church that Jesus builds. It is not built with wood and cement. Living stones grow into a holy temple in the Lord. The church of the Lord Jesus is the pillar and support of the truth [I Tim.3:15], upholding and proclaiming the everlasting Word of God of Him who dwells within His spiritual house.

High Priest & Priests [Heb.4:14-16; I Pet.2:5,9]

A throne of grace is open to all who draw near to God through Jesus, the only High Priest who always lives to intercede for His own [Heb.7:24,25]. Each believer has equal privilege and access to the God of

heaven, for all are spiritual priests.

From every believer without distinction, offerings are brought: Bodies are presented as living sacrifices [Rom.12:1,2], praise rises from grateful and fruitful lips [Heb.13:15], and good deeds of sharing abound [Heb.13:16].

No such thing as clergy and laity exist in the NT church patterned after Christ. No separate class of men officiate and rule over the spiritual life and ministry of the believers. All are priests.

Vine & Branches [Jn.15:1-17]

Apart from Me, you can do nothing [Jn.15:5]; nothing to glorify the Father, nothing to truly benefit man. The life of the True Vine courses through each and every branch to produce the fruit of that Life; fruit of **goodness, righteousness, and truth** [Eph.5:9].

Fruit cannot be imitated as spiritual gifts may. Death has its own odor that cannot be masked. The fruitful fragrance of Christ is what is evidenced in all who are in living union with Him. Life produces fruit that no ceremonies, regulations, associations, or traditions could ever do.

Head & Body [Col.1:18]

One Head governs the one body of Christ. There are not multiple heads in His church. No one's body could live and function with two heads.

The members of the body receive their direction directly from the Head, not from fellow members. The hand does not dictate to the foot. If one suffers, that member sends a message of distress to the Head. The Head then orders the response of the other members to relieve the suffering member.

All is orderly and coordinated because the Head governs all. No imposed structure from without directs the church. Christ is truly the Head.

Captain & Soldiers [2 Tim.2:3,4]

Soldiers do not entangle themselves in the affairs of life. Conflict for the sake of the kingdom is their concern. Commands from their Captain are all that they listen to.

Hardship, self-denial, and discipline are what their lives consist of. Pleasing the Commander and gaining victory over the foe fills their waking moments.

The church fights the good fight of faith, not with carnal weapons and fleshly might, but with the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. Error, evil, and hate is fought with truth, righteousness, and love. Only then is victory sure.

Bridegroom & Bride [2 Cor.11:2,3; Rev.19:7-9; Eph.5:25-32]

Affectionate devotion and determined purity are what characterize the bride. She has an eye for none other. Her love is reserved for One alone.

She despises that friendship with the world which would defile her into harlotry [Jas.4:4]. She makes herself ready for the glorious day in which she shall appear spotless and radiant, with no stain or blemish.

Righteous deeds weave the whitened fabric of her beautiful dress while she gladly submits to His good pleasure. And so it is that the true church of Christ can say, **I am my Beloved's, and His desire is for me** [S. of S. 7:10].

KEY PASSAGES: LEADERSHIP

Luke 22:24-27 [Mt.20:25-28; Mk.10:42-45]

Ruling and lording it over the people of God is never to be found in the church of Jesus Christ. He forbids it to be so. Dominating and exercising authority over inferiors is what the heathen do. It is worldliness and completely unlike the Pattern of Christ.

He humbled Himself as the lowliest of servants. This is what constitutes leadership in His kingdom, in His church; serving as a slave.

Leadership is by performing loving deeds of service, not by exercising authority over others. True leadership, according to Christ, is by an example of humbly serving others, not by having others perform my will. The youngest is the greatest.

In Lk.22:26, the word “chief” [KJV], “he who governs” [NKJV], “the one who rules” [NIV], and “leader” [NASB], are all translations of the word *HEGEOMAI* [ηγεομαι]. Jesus here says that the *HEGEOMAI* is a servant. This is the sense in which we must understand the meaning of this term in the church.

Without controversy, servants are not rulers, they are ruled. Therefore, the ideas of chief, ruler, or governor cannot possibly be the proper sense of a *HEGEOMAI* in the NT church. The meanings, “leader, guide,” are correct, as they alone are consistent with being a servant. A servant can lead and guide by an example of devoted care and truthful words. But no servant is a ruler, governor, or chief; that is a contradiction in terms.

Acts 20:28-32

Elders who are equipped by the Holy Spirit to oversee, are capable of shepherding the flock of God. It is the work of God to make a man in this capacity. Man’s appointment and ordination cannot make a man into someone and something that the Holy Spirit has not already done.

Elders [Acts 20:17,18] and Overseers [Acts 20:28] are terms describing the same individuals. An Elder [*PRESBUTEROS*, *πρεσβυτερος*] is an older man of proven spiritual maturity. An Overseer [*EPISKOPOS*, *επισκοπος*] describes the work that an Elder performs. That work is watching over and tending to the needs of the flock as a Shepherd would do.

The work of a Shepherd is essentially two-fold: to lead the flock to good pasture and to watch over them so that the wolf does not attack and destroy. The means provided by the Lord to accomplish both of

these services are one and the same. The Word of God is what the believers are led to feed upon by mature godly teachers. That same Word, skillfully used in the hands of Overseeing Shepherds, is their means of protection against error and evil.

I Peter 5:1-6

Once again, it is the Elders who are performing the work of overseeing. Overseer is not a position or office of higher rank than that of an elder. The two words are simply describing the same individual, considered from different aspects of his qualifications of service to the saints.

Leaders, here called Elders, are among the brethren, not over them. Peter himself does not assume a ruling position over the brethren or other elders. He simply calls himself, **your fellow elder**.

Here it is clearly seen that an Overseer who watches over, must not Lord It Over. Overseeing is therefore never legitimately ruling and exercising authority over the brethren. Rather, Elders/Overseers are to be examples, both in loving and humble service as well as in purity of life and of doctrine. They do not dominate, they demonstrate.

Hebrews 13:7,17

NT church Leaders [*HEGEOMAI*] are not rulers. This has already been seen by our Lord Jesus’ use of this same word in the discussion above from Lk.22:26. They are guides; servants who lead by loving godly care while speaking the truth.

Believers are to carefully reflect upon both the godly lives of their Leaders and the Word that they have taught. It is then that they are persuaded to imitate their faith and submit to their guidance and example.

They obey because the Leaders’ doctrine and lives are persuasive to the spiritual hearts of the godly. The church does not obey because Leaders rule over them with authority as lords. Christ’s Leaders follow His Pattern by guiding according to example, combined with the

persuasive power of truth.

The most frequent word in the NT for Obey is [HUPAKOUO, υπακουω]. It means TO OBEY, in the sense of submitting to authority; such as a believer to the Lord [Heb.5:9], a child to his parent [Eph.6:1], or a slave to his master [Col.3:22].

However, in Heb.13:17, a different word for Obey is used. That word, [PEITHO, πειθω], means TO CONVINCe, PERSUADE, OBEY. The obedience called for in Heb.13:17 is based upon godly spiritual persuasion, not upon submission to one in authority over others.

Thus, the meaning of the command in Heb.13:17 can better be expressed in this way: **Be persuaded by your Leaders and submit.** Their submission is to the truth of their leaders' teaching from the Word that is also evident in the convincing example of their godly lives.

I Timothy 3:1-7

Oversight is a good and desirable work. It is truly a work of service, not occupying a position or assuming an office. The Overseer must possess essentially two qualifications. [1] He must be blameless in character. [2] He must be able to teach.

Thus the Overseer must be a consistently spiritual example and able to teach the Word; the same qualifications as were seen in Acts, I Peter, and Hebrews.

He must be one who Manages [PROISTEMI, προϊστημι] his own household well. If he is not a good example, leader, and caring helper there, how could he possibly be qualified to help the church?

PROISTEMI is a word that means, literally, TO STAND BEFORE, and is translated as LEAD, ATTEND TO [with diligent care], MANAGE, MAINTAIN, CONDUCT, BE CONCERNED ABOUT, CARE FOR, GIVE AID, DIRECT, RULE.

This wide-range term describes someone who is standing before others as an example of devoted service, help, care, and direction to them. [All NT references are: Rom. 12:8; I Thess. 5:12; I Tim. 3:4,5,12; 5:17; Tit. 3:8,14].

The sense in which Overseers are to “rule” [I Tim.3:4,5 KJV]

their household well is explained by the use of the term “take care of” in I Tim.3:5. The word “take care of” [EPIMELEOMAI, επιμελεομαι], is used in only three verses in the NT; Lk.10:34,35 and I Tim.3:5.

In the Luke passage, the good Samaritan did not rule, lord it over, or exercise authority over the man who had been robbed and beaten. Rather, he Attended to, was Concerned about, Cared for, Gave aid, and Directed for the care of the man in need. Provision was made at his own expense for the well-being and blessing of the wounded traveler.

This type of care is what is needed in the church and in the home. If one cannot Attend to, be Concerned about, Care for, Give aid, and Direct the members of one's own family, how could a man ever be of benefit to the church, the family of God? Ruling and exercising authority as a lord does not fit or qualify a man to either lead in his home or in the church.

Titus 1:5-9

Elders [PRESBUTEROS] and Overseers [EPISKOPOS] are addressed as being the same individuals. There exists no hierarchy of one over the other or of either over the brethren.

Any true Overseer must be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict. Such is the work of a Shepherd; to feed with the Word and to defend with the same.

I Timothy 5:17-22

Those Elders who Care For [PROISTEMI] the brethren well are worthy of double honor, not because they are Rulers, but because they Attend to, are Concerned about, Care for, and Give aid to the people of God. They should be worthy, not only of honor, but even of financial support since they are working hard at preaching the gospel and teaching the believers.

I Thessalonians 5:12,13

Leaders are noted for their diligent work of Caring For [PROISTEMI] and admonishing the brethren according to the Word of God. These are the ones that we should draw close to in order to observe, know, and highly esteem their worthy examples and sound doctrine. Because of their good work, we love them dearly.

Here, it is those who are Attending to, Caring for, Giving aid, and Directing the brethren by their laboring in teaching and admonition that the saints are to lovingly esteem. They are not “over you” as ruling authorities, but are Standing Before the church as teachers and examples.

LEADERSHIP: PLURAL OR SINGULAR?

Throughout the NT, leadership in the local assemblies was plural, and not singular. In other words, there was not one man who was the leader of a church or group of churches. There is to be more than one Elder/Overseer/Pastor in a local church gathering.

There is no one “priest,” bishop, reverend, pastor, primate, general overseer, or “man of God” who determines policy or who directs the actions of the believers and affairs of the church. The modern “pastor” as we have conceived him to be from the time of the Reformation, is not found in the pages of the NT.

The following passages show plurality of leadership in the NT church: [Acts 6:1-6; 13:1-3,13; 14:23; 15:2,4,6, 7,12,13,22,32,35; 20:17,28; Phil. 1:1; I Thess. 5:12,13; I Tim. 1:3,6,7; 3:1,8; 4:14; 5:17-20; 2 Tim. 2:2; Tit. 1:5; Philemon 1-3; Heb. 13:7,17; Jas. 5:14; I Pet. 5:1-5].

LEADERSHIP: MALE OR FEMALE?

There is no reference in the NT of a woman being a pastor, elder, overseer, or teacher in the church. The command to Christian women is clear: A woman is not allowed to teach or exercise authority over a man [I Tim.2:11,12]. And this is not a command limited to a particular

situation or culture, but is the directive of God for all believers in every place at all times [I Cor.1:2; 4:17; 7:17; 14:37].

By creation, she is a follower, not the leader; a helper, not the initiator; the responder, not the director [Gen.2:18; I Cor.11:9; I Tim.2:13]. She is indeed a fellow heir of the grace of life [I Pet.3:7], but not a fellow minister in the church as men are. Though one in Christ where there is neither male nor female with respect to salvation and its blessings [Gal.3:28], she is not given the same sphere of ministry by God as are men.

Her God-given realm is in the home; loving her husband and children [Tit.2:3-5], raising her children [I Tim. 2:15; 5:14], and working at home [I Tim.5:14; Tit.2:5] so that the Word of God will not be dishonored [Tit.2:5]. Her sphere of teaching is in practical instruction in godliness to other sisters and children [Tit.2:3-5]. Doing good by helpful works of service [Lk.8:2,3], giving to the poor [Acts 9:36,39], and kindly hospitality [Acts 16:15,40; I Tim.5:10] are some of her great and needful contributions to the work of the gospel; fellow workers, not competitors or usurpers.

BELIEVERS: INFERIORS OR EQUALS?

Christians are addressed as spiritual equals in the NT. There are no classes or ranks among the brethren. None are inferior to some who supposedly are ruling over others. [Acts 17:11; Rom. 15:14; I Cor. 5:12, 13; 10:15; 12:7, 18-27; 14:26, 29-35; 2 Cor. 1:24; I Pet. 5:1; Rev. 1:9].

CHURCHES: ASSEMBLIES OR RULERS?

The Epistles in the NT that are addressed to assemblies, are not addressed to the “rulers” in those churches. They are addressed to the entire fellowship of the brethren, not to an imagined hierarchy within it. [Rom. 1:7; I Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:2; Eph. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:2; I Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1; I Pet. 1:1].

CHRIST THE PATTERN

Paul wrote so that believers would know how they ought to conduct themselves **in the house of God, which is the church of the living God** [I Tim.3:15].

Throughout the Scriptures, there has always been a pattern for the house of God. The Tabernacle had to be built according to the pattern shown on the mount [Heb.8:5]. Solomon's Temple had a divinely revealed plan [I Chron.28:12,19].

The re-built Temple in the days of Ezra was built according to the absolute standard of the plumb line that measured all from above [Zech.4:9,10]. And Ezekiel's Temple of the future has a carefully revealed and measured pattern [Ezek.40:4; 43:10-12].

There exists a Pattern for the church as well, which has Christ Himself as the standard [I Cor.3:9-17; 4:17; 7:17; 11:16; 14:3, 37, 38; 2 Thess.2:15; I Tim.3:15; 2 Tim.1:13,14].

In the NT church, everything revolves around and is measured by Jesus Christ the Lord. He truly has **first place in everything** [Col.1:18].

All life [Col.3:4], direction [I Cor.2:16], enabling [I Cor.1:24], and gift [Eph.4:7,8] come directly from the Lord Jesus Christ, the HEAD of the Body, His church.

As HIGH PRIEST, He is the one Mediator between God and man [I Tim.2:5] that all believers as Priests have equal access to.

Christ alone is qualified to command and rule His Servants as their KING and LORD. **You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men** [I Cor.7:23].

No traditions of men, rules, codes, ceremonies, or formulas can save or improve our condition. Christ is the TRUE VINE and source of all fruitfulness for every believer abiding in Him [Jn.15:5].

The church of the Lord Jesus Christ is built upon nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else than Himself as its FOUNDATION [I Cor.3:11]. With Himself as the CORNERSTONE, the perfect reference point for the church, the whole Building is **growing into a holy Temple in the Lord** [Eph.2:20, 21]. The church is not a literal building made of

cement and wood, and does not depend upon any man, ministry, or denomination for its existence, guidance, or progress.

Sheep in His flock listen to and follow the voice of their one SHEPHERD, Christ Jesus. All other voices and messages are those of thieves and robbers and will be fled from by Christ's sheep [Jn.10:4,5].

Purity from the defilement of the world is evident in His Bride whose devotion and affection is reserved for Christ alone, the BRIDEGROOM of His church.

IN THE NT CHURCH

No man governs and rules. It is the right of the Lord Jesus to have such place among His people.

Christ Jesus dwells in the midst as the focus of every obedient, worshipful, and loving heart [Rev.2:1].

Our Lord leads, commands, directs, and draws out a response of love from those belonging to Him [Rev.19:7, 8].

He is truly honored as Lord as there are no competing "lords" among His people [2 Cor.1:24; I Pet.5:1-3].

Leaders are among the flock, not over them.

Overseers watch over as servants, but do not lord over as rulers.

All is done **decently and in order** [I Cor.14:40] because He is not a God **of confusion but of peace** [I Cor.14:33]. Yet no pre-arranged program is needed to direct the worship of the church. The Spirit of God, whose work it is to glorify Christ [Jn.16:13,14], will lead the people of God [Rom.8:14] to **worship the Father in Spirit and truth** [Jn.4:23].

Unity exists, not by outward conformity and association, but because the Spirit of God joins all to glorify Jesus as Lord [Eph.4:3,4] in a common life of godliness [Jn.17:21-23].

Each one contributes for the edification of all [I Cor.14:26] and all judge what is spoken by any [I Cor.14:29].

Everyone submits to each other in the fear of Christ, whether believer or leader, young or old alike [Eph.5:21].

The Breaking of Bread [Lord's Supper/Communion meeting] is the commanded meeting of the church. **Do this in remembrance of Me**

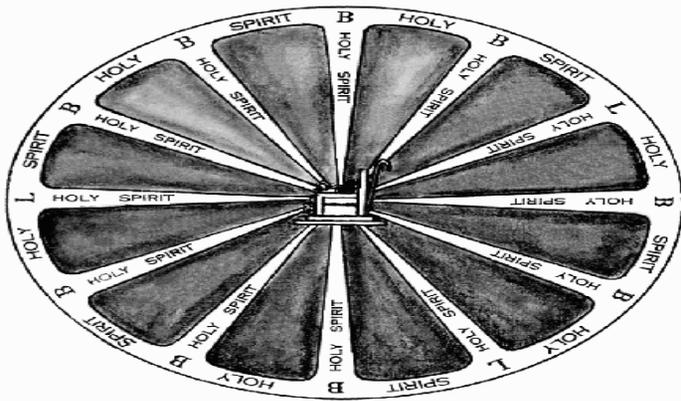
[Lk.22:19]. Other gatherings are secondary or even optional.

Disobedient brethren are lovingly restored back into the way or regretfully removed from the fellowship by the church, not by its leaders alone [Gal.6:1,2; Mt.18:15-18; ICor.5:1-13].

The following diagram illustrates the relationship of Christ to His church and of the believers [B] to Him, one another, and to leaders [L]. Christ is in the midst as Lord represented by the throne. His life extends to every member of His body through the Holy Spirit, the only light amidst the darkness of this world.

Leaders are among the believers, not over them. All have equal access to the Lord Jesus as the Great High Priest over the house of God apart from human mediators. As Head, He directs the members of His body. Since He is the Bridegroom, all devotion and affection is focused upon Christ without rivals. And as Lord, His Word commands His servants, not the commandments and traditions of men.

Believers live in harmony and love one another as brothers since they share a common life in the Spirit of God being joined to Christ as the True Vine. In the church that Jesus is building, He has **first place in everything** [Col.1:18].



BREAKING OF BREAD

Do this in Remembrance of Me

[Lk.22:19; ICor.11:24]

In this simple request is contained the only command from our Lord regarding the meeting of Christians. All other purposes for gathering, however beneficial they might be, are secondary or even optional. This one is not. Several profound truths are contained in this text.

[1] **Do this in remembrance of Me.** The Lord Jesus is the central object and reason for the gathering. The focus is upward, upon Him. While there is undoubtedly benefit and blessing to the brethren, Christ is to have **first place in everything** [Col.1:18]. In our remembrance of the Lord Jesus with thanksgiving the assembled brethren are stirred up to love and good deeds [Heb.10:24,25].

[2] **Do this in Remembrance of Me.** One cannot remember someone he has never known. It is a meeting for true believers. Its purpose is not for other reasons. It is not a teaching meeting, though teaching is there. It is not a prayer meeting, though prayers are surely offered. Evangelism is not the focus though the gospel of the death of Christ must certainly be mentioned. If unbelievers happen to be present, the church's devoted reflection upon Christ will surely bring conviction to their hearts as His person and work is remembered [ICor.14:23-25; 11:23-26].

[3] **Do This in remembrance of Me.** Do this refers to something. The Lord Jesus said these words after He had done something: He had just given thanks. We are to do as He did: We are to give thanks for all that the bread and cup represent. They are symbols of His person, His body, and of His work of redemption, His blood. Who He is and His work at the cross to secure salvation are the cause and focus of our thanks.

[4] **Do this in remembrance of Me.** The command is plural. It is not a

directive for one only to do this while others sit passively by. Each one is to have something to contribute to the collective giving of thanks in the remembrance of Christ [I Cor. 14:26].

In that first meeting recorded in the Gospels, the Lord Jesus was the central focus in their midst [Lk. 22:15-20]. Prayers of thanks were offered [Lk. 22:19,20], teaching occurred [Mk. 14:22-25], exhortation was given [Lk. 22:21-23], hymns were sung [Mt. 26:30], and they shared a meal together [Mt. 26:26].

These are the key elements in our remembrance of the Lord Jesus. No formula or ceremonial pattern was laid down by our Lord to dictate our expressions of love to Him, though these elements will surely be present.

This gathering is actually an acted-out parable of sorts, expressing the life in Christ that is among believers collectively. Jesus Christ has first place in the midst as the adoring object of every worshiping heart. Love to Him as the Bridegroom and obedience to Him as Lord are the basis of unity among the saints.

Each are guided by the Good Shepherd and share a common life received from the Head of the body. Through the one Great High Priest, their sacrifices of praise ascend unto the throne of God. Fellowship and harmony prevail among the children of the one family of God.

Christians did meet for other reasons as well, but we must not neglect what is commanded for that which we think is beneficial. The types of meetings in the NT are shown in the following.

[1] Breaking of Bread [Acts 2:42-47; 20:7-11; I Cor. 10:16-22; 11:17-34].

[2] Prayer [Acts 1:14,15; 4:23-31; 12:12; 21:5].

[3] Fellowship [Acts 2:42-46].

[4] Teaching [Acts 5:42; 8:25; 11:26; 13:1-3, 42,43; 14:21-23; 15:32-35; 16:40].

[5] Mission Report [Acts 14:26-28; 15:3,4; 21:19].

[6] Elders Meeting [Acts 20:17-37; 21:18].

[7] Church Discipline For Doctrine [Acts 15:1-30]. For Morals [I Cor. 5:1-13].

[8] In General [I Cor. 14:1-40; Heb. 10:23-25].

CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Christianity is a fellowship of love; love to God and love to the brethren [I Jn. 4:7,8]. Love to God requires obedience or it is not love at all [Jn. 14:21; I Jn. 5:3]. Love can never be pleased with unrighteousness, but ever and always rejoices with the truth [I Cor. 13:6].

Love therefore is always concerned about and cannot be content when sin is present in its own or another's life. Obedience to truth is to be the characteristic of all believers. The Lord has so composed the body of Christ that **there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it** [I Cor. 12:25,26].

The fellowship of the brethren is maintained only while we walk in the light as Christ is in the light. If sin enters in, that fellowship is spoiled. **If we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin** [I Jn. 1:7].

Filled with both goodness and knowledge, mutual admonition maintains that purity among brethren in loving fellowship [Rom. 15:14]. Those who are overtaken in a fault, are to be restored in gentleness by those who are spiritual [Gal. 6:1]. In this way the burdens of brethren are borne and the law of Christ is fulfilled [Gal. 6:2].

But there are times when erring brothers do not heed loving correction to forsake their folly and live. It is always a serious matter when brethren harden their hearts when reproved. Severe warnings are given against this. **Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God...Today, if you will**

hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion [Heb.3:12, 15].

Such refusal to repent and return to walking obediently on the way of life calls for further correction. If a brother does not heed the first attempts at correcting his sin in private [Mt.18:15], it becomes necessary to bring one or two more along to confirm the mis-deed and impress upon the brother the seriousness of his actions [Mt.18:16].

Some still will not listen. It then must be brought before the entire church that unitedly they might speak to the brother to turn him from the error of his way [Mt.18:17; Jas.5:19,20]. If he will not listen to the admonition of the church itself, he has rejected the Word of Christ who is speaking in the midst of His people [Mt.18:18-20]. He is then to be put out of the fellowship of the brethren until such time that he repents [Mt.18:17; 2 Thess.3:6,14; 2 Cor.2:6-11].

The Lord Jesus says this is a matter finally for the church to decide, not for the leaders only. **And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector** [Mt.18:17].

All believers are to say the same thing with one voice about sin that has not been repented of. **Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment** [1 Cor.1:10]. It is the church itself that is the final decision making body in these matters, not the leaders alone.

Paul speaks to the entire body of believers at Corinth as being responsible to exercise this type of discipline. **For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? But those who are outside God judges. Therefore “put away from yourselves the evil person”** [1 Cor.5:12,13].

Sin that is not repented of, whether moral [1 Cor.5:1-13] or doctrinal [Rom.16:17,18; 2 Thess.3:14; Tit.3:9-11; 2 Jn.9-11], is a serious matter. God takes up discipline of a believer when that of Christ through the church is rejected. **He who is often rebuked, and hardens his neck, will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy**

[Prov.29:1].

Discipline and correction is designed to lovingly restore the erring brother to fellowship and blessing. It is also designed to prevent corruption from spreading within the fellowship of the brethren who might be tolerating its presence rather than disciplining the transgressor.

You have become arrogant and have not mourned instead, so that the one who had done this deed would be removed from your midst...Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Clean out the old leaven...I have written to you not to keep company with any so-called brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner - not even to eat with such a person...put away from yourselves the evil person [1 Cor.5:2,6,7,11,13].

LEADERS WHO BECAME LORDS

Jesus Christ the Lord, who has the central place among the lampstands [Rev.2:1], hates **the deeds of the Nicolaitans** [Rev.2:6]. He hates it because they attempt to take over His rightful place as Lord.

Nicolaitan is a compound word in Greek. It comes from joining the words *NIKAO* [νικαω] TO OVERCOME and *LAOS* [λαος] THE PEOPLE.

Jesus hates the deeds of those who “Overcome the People.” Great men ruling the common people [Laity in English comes from this word] and exercising authority over them is what the rulers of the Gentiles do.

It is what the rulers of the churches do. And it is hated by Christ.

There is a man in the NT who ruled in the church. He was a wicked man. He did not accept the Word of God. He oppressed the brethren who wished to follow the Scriptures. Those who loved the brethren were forbidden by him to do so. And those who would not obey his rule were thrown out of the church [3 Jn.9,10].

The root cause of his evil exercise of authority was that he **loved to be first among them** [3 Jn.9]. He is chief of all church rulers who follow in his steps, loving positions of power and authority .

The Scriptures state that Christ is **to have first place in everything** [Col.1:18]. But Diotrophes loved to have that first place. Yet two cannot possibly both have the honor of being first. One must of necessity occupy second rank.

There cannot be two heads in one body. Two kings have never sat together on one throne. If Diotrophes and the church rulers walking his crooked path would have first place, Christ must be pushed aside to make room for them.

This is the heart of the matter.

4

THE SUPPORT OF THE GOSPEL WORKER

THE PRINCIPLE

*God's Work , Done in God's Way,
Will Always Have God's Supply*

And He said to them, “When I sent you out without purse and bag and sandals, you did not lack anything, did you?” And they said, “No, nothing” [Lk.22:35].

Who at anytime serves as a soldier at his own expense? [I Cor.9:7].

The worker is worthy of his support [Mt.10:10].

If the Father in heaven feeds the birds of the air and clothes the lilies, how much more will He do so for His own children? [Mt.6:25-32]. **Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you** [Mt.6:33].

If workers in the vineyard are paid their wage, how much more those laboring in the Lord's vineyard? [Mt.20:1-6]. Can it be that the God who commands that a particular work be done for Himself not provide what is needful to accomplish that work?

If evil fathers give a loaf rather than a stone in response to their children's requests, how much more will the Father in heaven give what is good and needful? [Mt.7:7-11].

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed [2 Cor.9:8].

And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus [Phil.4:19].

The young lions do lack and suffer hunger; but they who seek the Lord shall not be in want of any good thing [Ps.34:10].

“The silver is mine and the gold is mine,” declares the Lord of Hosts [Hag.2:8]. He distributes it how and to whom He wishes.

THE EXPECTATION
*God's People will Support the Work of the Gospel
It is Their Biblical Responsibility*

And many others were contributing to their support out of their private means [Lk.8:1-3].

You have done well to share in my affliction...you sent a gift more than once for my needs [Phil.4:10-19].

Diligently help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way so that nothing is lacking for them. And let our people also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, that they may not be unfruitful [Tit.3:13,14].

Therefore we ought to support such men, that we may be fellow-workers with the truth [3 Jn.8].

I robbed other churches, taking wages from them to serve you; and when I was present with you and was in need, I was not a burden to anyone; for when the brethren came from Macedonia, they fully supplied my need [2 Cor.11:8,9 and Acts 18:5].

Who at anytime serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat the fruit of it? Or who tends a flock and does not use the milk of the flock? The plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher to thresh in hope of sharing the crops. If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we should reap material things from you? If others share the right over you, do we not more? Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the food of the temple, and those who attend regularly to the altar have their share with the altar? So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel [I Cor.9:6-14].

I hope to see you in passing, and to be helped on my way there by you [Rom.15:24].

For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are indebted to minister to them also in material things [Rom.15:27].

And let the one who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches [Gal.6:6].

And stay in the house, eating and drinking what they give you; for the laborer is worthy of his wages [Lk.10:7].

Perhaps I shall stay with you, or even spend the winter, that you may send me on my way wherever I may go...send Timothy on his way in peace [I Cor.16:6,11].

To pass your way in Macedonia, and again from Macedonia to come to you, and by you to be helped on my journey to Judea [2 Cor.1:16].

And they bear witness to your love before the church; and you will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God [3 Jn.6].

A SECOND EXPECTATION

The Gospel Worker shall Labor at a Vocation when Needful

He stayed with them and they were working; for by trade they were tent makers [Acts 18:3-5].

You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my own needs and to the men who were with me. In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" [Acts 20:34,35].

We toil, working with our own hands [I Cor.4:12].

For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God [I Thess.2:9].

You ought to follow our example...nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we kept working night and day so that we might not be a burden to any of you; not because we do not have the right to this, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you, that you might follow our example [2 Thess. 3:7-9].

A THIRD EXPECTATION

The Gospel Worker will Suffer Lack

To this present hour we are both hungry and thirsty, and are poorly clothed [I Cor.4:11].

In everything commending ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses ...in sleeplessness, in hunger...as poor...as having nothing [2 Cor.6:4,5,10].

In labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure [2 Cor.11:27].

Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head [Mt.8:20].

I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me [Phil.4:11-13].

THE PROHIBITION

The Gospel Worker shall do Nothing to Bring Reproach upon God's Ability to Fund His own Work

They went out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles [3 Jn.7].

Israel said to them [the people of the land], "You have nothing in common with us in building a house to our God" [Ezra 4:3].

I have sworn to the Lord God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take a thread or a sandal thong or anything that is yours, lest you should say, "I have made Abram rich" [Gen.14:22,23].

For we are not like many, peddling the Word of God [2 Cor.2:17].

Buy the truth and do not sell it [Prov.23:23].

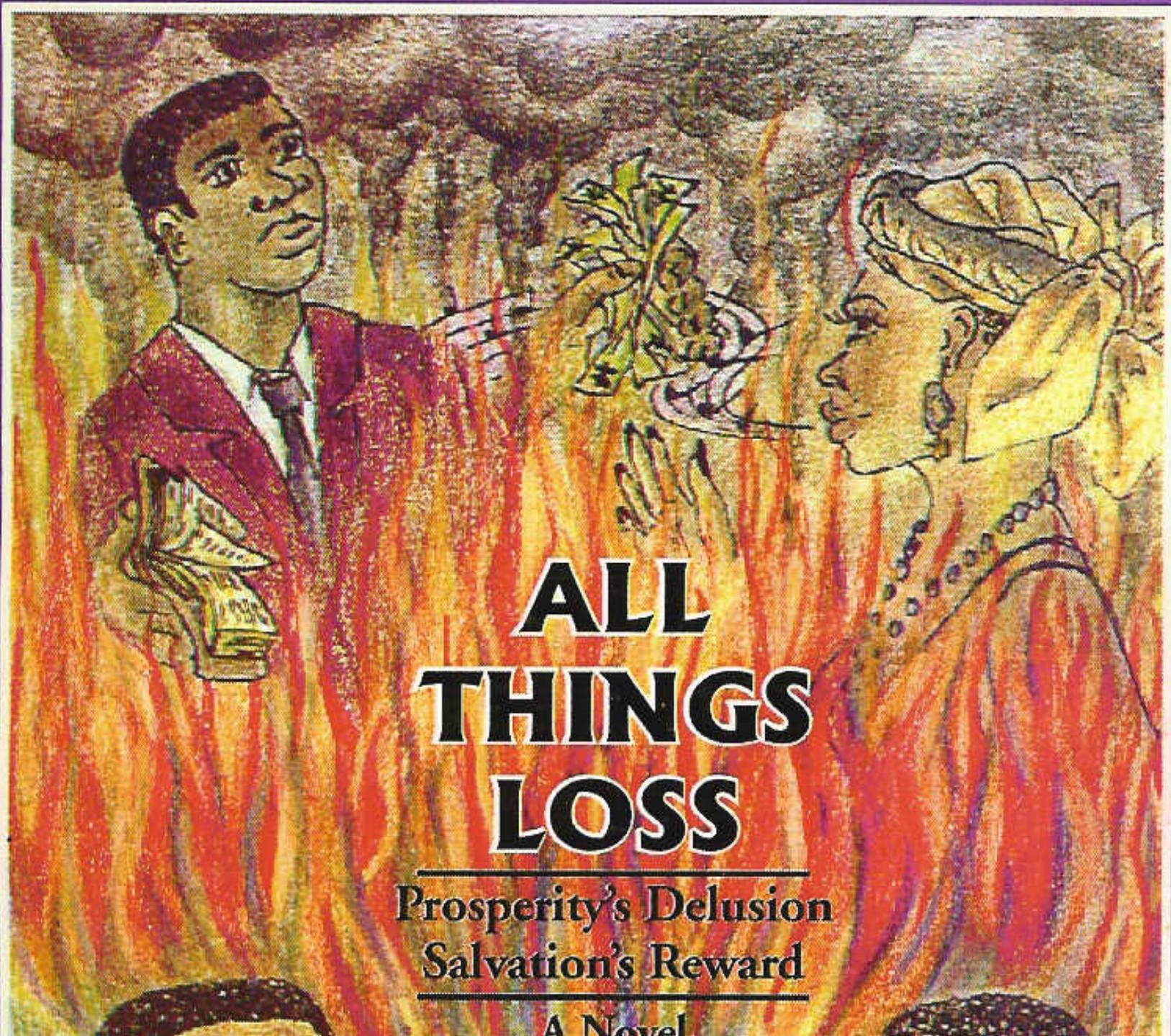
I have been young and now I am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his seed begging bread [Ps.37:25].

I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes [Acts 20:33].

I preached the gospel of God to you without charge [2 Cor.11:7].

Freely you have received, freely give [Mt.10:8].

JESUS SAID, "IF YOU KNOW THESE THINGS,
YOU ARE BLESSED IF YOU DO THEM"
John 13:17

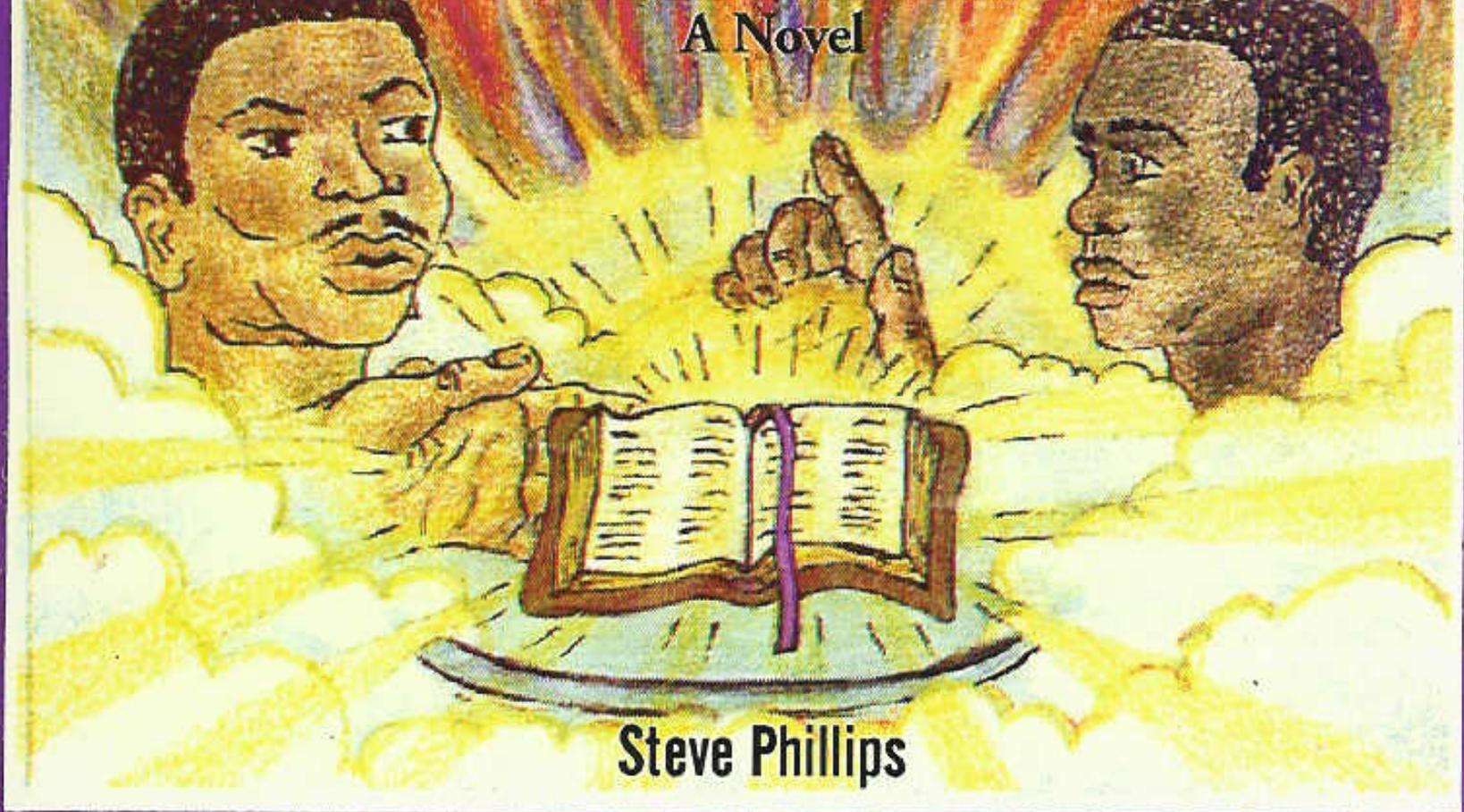


ALL THINGS LOSS

**Prosperity's Delusion
Salvation's Reward**

A Novel

A Novel



Steve Phillips

ALL THINGS LOSS

LIKE COUNTLESS OTHER MINISTRIES ACROSS NIGERIA,
CHRIST'S TABERNACLE OF GLORY SEEMINGLY FLOURISHED
UNDER ITS ANOINTED SET-MAN

MULTITUDES SWELLED ITS SUNDAY SERVICES
THOUSANDS FLOCKED TO THEIR CITY-WIDE NIGHT VIGIL
TESTIMONIES OF HEALING & PROSPERITY ABOUNDED

BUT SOMETHING WAS WRONG, DISTURBINGLY WRONG

REPEATED PROMISES OF BREAKTHROUGHS DIDN'T COME
ADVERTISED MIRACLES RARELY WERE SEEN
SELF-MADE PROPHECIES WERE NOT FULFILLED

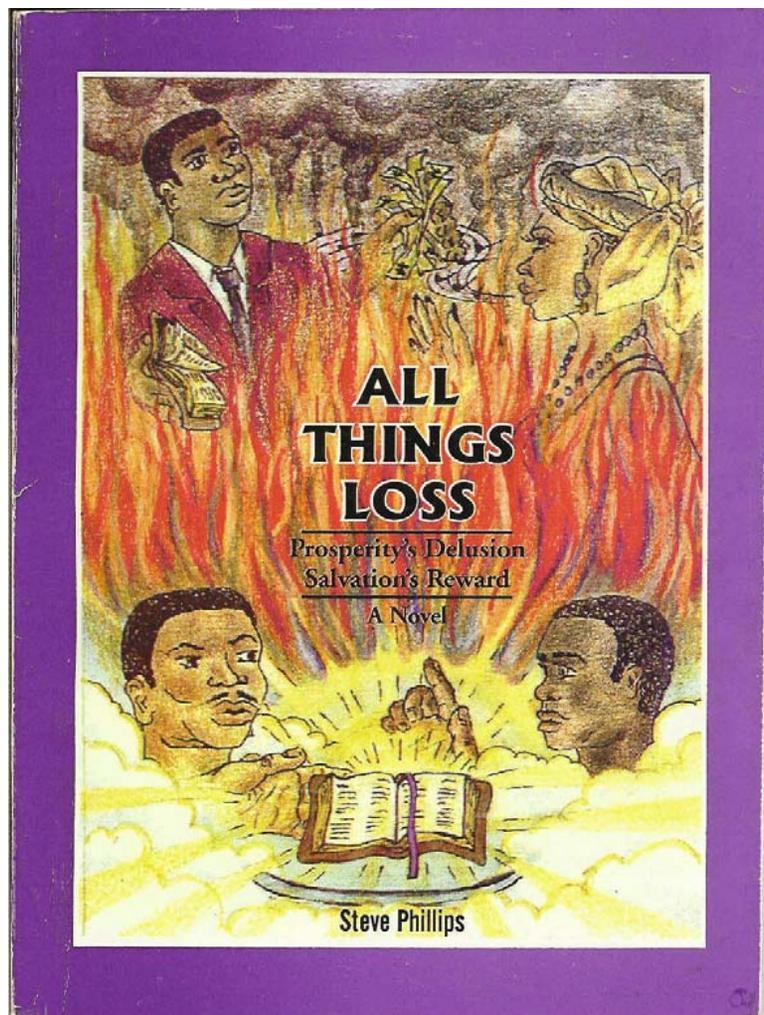
The Word of God

ALL HIS PROBLEMS WERE NOT FORGIVEN
THE WORD OF GOD DID NOT SUPPORT THE CHURCH'S DEEDS

THIS WAS WHAT WAS MOST UNSETTING TO PASTOR FEMI
IT DISTURBED HIM AS IT DOES YOU

JOIN PASTOR FEMI ON HIS SPIRITUAL JOURNEY FROM
PENTECOSTAL DISILLUSIONMENT INTO THE FREEDOM OF
SIMPLICITY IN CHRIST

IN THE PAGES OF ALL THINGS LOSS, DISCOVER THE
REFRESHING BIBLICAL ALTERNATIVE TO THE EMPTINESS OF
THE PRESENT RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE



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SALVATION'S REWARD

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1

Another Sunday.

A cock's shrill rasp mingled with the rise and fall of the mosque's whining Arabic told him it was near 5:30. The wife stirred beside him, sighing but sleeping still, while crowding anxious thoughts raced without seeming direction through Femi's heart in the pre-dawn stillness.

One tumbling upon another, as if in a conspiracy of turmoil, each presented itself and fled, leaving only a pained prodding in passing. He did not know how it began or why, and to control it, he could not.

Something was wrong, disturbingly wrong. He had spoken about it to no one; not to his beloved Blessed and certainly not to his General Overseer, The Rev. Dr. Benson. What could he say, anyway? Confusion clouded his mind while a gnawing distress, like the steady drip of acid, eroded his composure and confidence.

Panic, that desperate hopelessness, swept over him leaving his forehead beaded, his hands clammy. Swallow as he may, the mouth would not moisten and refresh his thickened throat.

What is happening? The hollow unanswered anxiety monotonously re-echoed itself. Has God abandoned me? Have I grieved away the Spirit? Am I backslidden? There was no reply, no relief, only an abiding uneasiness remained.

Suddenly, a flicker of hope flashed amidst the grip of despair enveloping him. *Prayer, yes, let me pray. Surely that will deliver me from this attack.*

Enlivened with renewed expectation, silently, Pastor Femi slipped from the bed and moved noiselessly through the darkness to the parlor. There, closing the door so as not to disturb his sleeping Blessed and children, he sought his refuge.

“Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus. Eternal rock of ages, great King of glory, I worship You, I adore You, I glorify You, I magnify You. There is no other God but You. O God, hear my prayer, in the name of Jesus.

“All foul spirits of confusion, I bind You. O you wicked ministers of doubt, I rebuke you and scatter you, in Jesus’ name! I send you back, I shatter your plans, I destroy, I shred, and banish you to infernal pits, in the name of Jesus.

“I soak myself in the blood of Jesus. I cover myself with the blood of Jesus. You shall not prevail. No weapon fashioned against me will prosper.” He was pacing the floor now, fists clenched with wide sweeping motions while his head rocked and bobbed with increasing agitation.

“Holy Ghost fire, fall! Consume the devils! Burn up all foul messengers of discouragement. Lying fiends of hell, the Holy Ghost

rips you, the Divine acid of heaven consumes you. You are finished, in Jesus’ name!

“I decree, you are finished! I decree, you are finished, I decree, be finished, in Jesus’ name. I confess, I shall live and not die, I shall live and not die, I shall live and not die, in the name of Jesus!

“Thank You, Father. Thank You, Lord. Thank You, Jesus. For it shall be well. It shall be well. It is well, in Jesus’ name! Amen, Amen, and Amen, in the name of Jesus.”

Stained with sweat, his prayer came to an end, but his problem did not. It was not well. No, not at all. Yet for some time, he would imagine that the victory had been gained. The exertion of his energies and enthusiasm of his efforts glazed his perception for a season. Indeed, even a sense of elation coursed through him.

But it was nothing more than a raw emotionalism mistaken for spiritual vitality. Anyway, he felt better at the present. Beyond that, he cared not to reflect. His placebo prayer had issued in no insight entering his heart.

It was how his life had been; seeking solutions, but not a Savior. Satisfied with superficiality, he rarely considered anything deeply, being content with momentary consolations. But, unknown to him, God Himself was turning his world upside down for Femi’s everlasting good.

“You’re up early,” a quizzical glance from Blessed as she entered the parlor expected a response.

“Eh... oh... yeah... I was just praying,” he paused briefly, “preparing for the Sunday service, you know,” his voice trailed slightly and eyes shifted from her own at the last statement. An odd second’s of silence followed.

“Uh, what’s for breakfast?” was the overly light-hearted inquiry.

“Nothing new; akara and pop, as usual,” came the studied response. She held his gaze only just longer than needful before turning to the kitchen.

Femi remained in the parlor’s gradually graying gloom. His former exuberance dampened, a creeping disturbance resurrected afresh. Ignore it, he could not; bury it, possibly.

That was his unsettled determination. He would simply press on. *After all, I’m a pastor. It’s Sunday. What else can I do?*

And, with that, he busied himself with routine petty pursuits prior to the worship performance looming before him.

2

“Shout seven mighty hallelujahs!” bellowed the Rev. Dr. Benson’s raucous voice from his over-amplified microphone. Like so many dutiful bleating sheep, the response resounded beyond the sanctuary walls from the gathered throng.

With a grin bordering on greed, the Reverend strutted the stage and chuckled into his cordless mike, “The Lord is good!” Immediately, from hundreds of smiling uplifted faces, the united chorus rose, “All the time.”

They were expectant. Perhaps today. Their breakthrough had been promised for long. It was why they were there.

It was why Femi and Blessed were there. Though they had never actually voiced it aloud, they knew it was the reason. They had never discussed it, not from a sense of shame, but because it was an assumed perceived fact intuitively discerned as can only be done between husband and wife. It was apparent to both, though others would not have guessed that of them.

Weekly they shouted, pranced to the praise and worship's driving drumming, and rocked, sweating, as the litany of prayer points predictably rolled off, one by one. They were fully immersed in the church; Sundays, and with its demanding nightly programs.

"Praise the Lord!" it was Benson again, the dynamic force behind the church. "Hallelujah!" echoed thunderously the expected rejoinder. "We thank God for the testimony of this sister. Are we glad?"

"We are glad!"

"I said, 'Are we glad?'"

"We are glad!!" the volume had grown by thirty percent.

"How glad?"

"Very glad!!!" they were fairly shouting it by now.

Benson was a master at arousing an audience to a fever pitch. It was always good for the offering.

Without a second's pause, Sister Suki rang out the chorus in her clear throbbing way. The band quickly followed her lead as she danced her way to the altar's voluminous offering box.

The congregation enjoyed her and watched admiringly her swaying sonorous performance, joining in at the appropriate points as they danced forward, row by row, with their offerings.

Rev. Benson smiled his approval, rhythmically clapping his hands in satisfaction at what he saw: money and Suki. He had chosen her carefully as part of his team of workers as all of them had been. He knew what he wanted, and selected every program and each individual for that determined purpose.

"I think we're all here," it was a matter of stating the obvious, not a question. The Rev. Dr. raised a penetrating glance at his assembled workers across his massive polished desk top.

"Yes, Sir," came the instant reply from the junior church assistants gathered for their weekly pre-service briefing. Five pastors, one sound and lighting technician, the head usher, and Suki, the choir director, all attentively awaited their instructions. And given they would be.

Benson was all business as he swiveled his towering leather armchair to face each worker. It made him appear bigger than he really was. He liked the impression that made upon those seated across the distance separating them.

The AC hummed a quiet coolness into the air. Their feet were pillowed on plush carpet with minerals at their hands. On large overstuffed executive sofas of the finest design sat his workers. They ought to have been quite comfortable. But they rarely were.

Stiffly, it was always with a nervous unrest that they entered the Reverend's private chambers. He was not the type to draw one close. Even the placement of the furnishings communicated that.

"I think that all of the equipment is in order," it was Benson's way of making a point that he expected nothing less.

"Yes, Sir. The generator has been serviced and fueled. All spot lights were tested this morning with no problems," was the efficient reply of the technician.

"What of the sound systems?" Benson interrupted him.

"All is well, Sir. The directional mikes for the choir are all in place and adjusted and your own is at full capacity with no distortion. And, Sir," he hastened to add so as not to provoke a second interruption, "the keyboard synthesizer has been calibrated and will be carefully monitored throughout the service."

A short nod from the General Overseer signaled his acknowledgment of the report. The sound man shifted slightly, but not more comfortably, having passed yet another inspection.

“We want the first two rows filled with only the most important guests,” Dr. Benson rotated at the helm to engage the eyes of the head usher, “and with no names missing from the register,” the implication of the tone could not be misunderstood.

“Uh, yes, Sir,” she managed to reply through a flush of embarrassment, “we, uh, have the velvet cords in place to rope off those rows as you’ve directed, Sir. I’m sure all will be fine, Sir,” she sounded more hopeful than confident.

Ignoring completely her comments, his attention was absorbed in the financial report before him. Really, this was the main focus of the meeting as far as he was concerned. All was silent except for the pensive tapping of the Reverend’s fingernails on the glass top of his desk.

“Femi, the tithe report shows a slackening off among the congregation. What do you plan to do about it?” the attitude was more accusatory than inquisitive.

Somewhat taken aback, Femi tried to quickly think of a solution. It was not something he was very successful at, thinking under pressure. He voiced the only thing that came to mind. “If I may, Sir, I can notify the individuals on the report that have been unfaithful,” it was a weak solution, but he didn’t know what else to say.

“You do that. This morning you will also be responsible to raise the tithes and offerings during the service. Give them a strong warning about what happens to those who don’t bring the whole tithe into the storehouse. Understand? Good,” he had not waited for an

answer. There was none needed or expected. The President and Founder had spoken.

Femi only nodded, but managed a “Yes, Sir,” so as not to show disrespect. Benson had already passed him by and moved on to the other things on his mind. Tilting back slightly in his throne-like chair, he inquired in a tone approaching pleasantness, “And what of you, Sister Suki, what do you have for us this morning?”

“Well, Sir,” she spoke softly yet with unmistakable confidence, “the choir is prepared with the special number, ‘Born Again to Win,’ and I’m personally ready to do anything else you’d like,” she replied with a smile.

You couldn’t help but like Suki. She was extremely talented, godly to all appearances, and strikingly beautiful. There was a sense of poise combined with an easily perceived purposefulness about her. It afforded a cautious attraction to her person; an allurements to both draw near but to maintain a distance at the same time. Perhaps this was why the congregation found her fascinating.

“Good, good,” it was almost a complement. “Yes, there is something else I’d like. We’re having three separate offerings this morning; a thanksgiving one following a sister’s testimony, our usual one for tithes and offerings, and a special seed-faith offering after the sermon. We want *moving* choruses to prompt them to give as they should, all to the glory of God. I think you’re most suited for this important ministry.”

“Thank you, Sir. By the grace of God, I’ll not disappoint you or the church” was the sweet response.

“Pastors Chide and Yinka, you’ll be responsible for gathering and accounting for the offerings this morning,” Dr. Benson never placed money into the hands of one man alone. Money was

too important to entrust to any one single person, except, of course, himself.

“Yes, Sir,” they chorused in unison.

“And Emmanuel and Peter,” he rotated the captain’s chair to make his point, “you’ll be the ones to follow up on all important visitors this week.”

“Certainly, Sir,” Emmanuel answered for both.

And so, the briefing concluded. Input was rarely, if ever, solicited from his associates. Effortlessly, the executive chair rolled backwards and the President rose to his feet. The rest, taking their cue from their chief, followed suit.

“Let us pray.” The heads lowered and their eyes closed. They all knew that it was the Reverend who would lead them. The prayer itself was more of a formality, a “Christian” way to round up the proceedings. But there was nothing unusual to them about it, they simply followed their leader.

It’s why they had been chosen, because they were followers. They asked no questions and were expected to initiate nothing. Everything came down from the top in the Rev. Dr.’s empire.

Benson’s approaching voice rounding the corner of his desk, signaled that the prayer would momentarily come to an end. The realization brought relief, not because they were disinclined to pray, but that they would be released from the briefing.

“Praise the Lord!” It was over. “Hallelujah!” came the grateful reply; grateful for a variety of reasons. With the customary, “Thank you, Sir. We’re grateful, Sir,” the team proceeded to the door, filing out one by one.

From behind him, Femi overheard the Reverend call to his choir leader, “Ah, Sister Suki...” Before he could conclude with, “I’d like to see you privately for a moment,” Femi had fumbled his Bic

and turned to pick it from the floor. What he saw in that brief instant alarmed him.

Benson had taken Suki by the hand with more than a fatherly affection. Their eyes testified that they were both pleased with the touch, that is, until they noticed Femi glancing in their direction.

Hands instinctively released their hold, smiles faded, and three pairs of eyes met for only less than a second. Without one word between them, his pen recovered, Femi hastened to complete his exit from that scene.

It had all happened so quickly and unexpectedly. Femi sought to dismiss it from his mind as nothing, really. *Things like that happen everyday. It’s a purely natural way to get someone’s attention and delay their leaving a room. What is wrong with me? How could I imagine that it was anything else, especially about my General Overseer and this fine sister?*

Doubts began to assail him afresh in a replay of earlier that very morning. *Didn’t I bind these spirits of confusion this morning? Sure I did. I must be backslidden then.*

He didn’t know what else to think. The other alternatives seemed sheer impossibilities. But he was not one to reflect for long or deeply upon much of anything. The urgency of the moment led him, once again, to simply press on. He would soon be required to exhort the congregation about tithing. He had very little time to put that together, and, as he was all too well aware of, he did not respond well under pressure. So, he simply dismissed it from his mind.

“Offering time!” it was Pastor Femi.

“Blessing time!” rumbled the customary rejoinder from the assembled multitude.

“Blessing time!” it was Femi again.

“Offering time!” came the liturgical reply.

He was doing the best he could. He knew little of the Scriptures and rarely studied them. His religion consisted of an assortment of imitated behavior gleaned from popular “Men of God.” At the moment, he was a second rate copy of Dr. Benson.

“The Lord says, ‘Bring the *whole* tithe into the storehouse,’” he strutted about gesturing emphatically while rattling biblical sounding phrases off-head. “God says, ‘Test Me!’ That’s right, ‘Test Me!’ You can *force* God’s hand of blessing. He says, ‘I’ll open the windows of heaven for you.’ Do you hear that? The *whole* tithe deposited into the church storehouse will provoke God to open His storehouse in heaven for *you*! Do I hear an ‘Amen?’”

“Amen” most of the congregation responded.

“You sound like you don’t believe it. I said, ‘Do I hear an ‘Amen?’” Femi roared, Benson like, into the mike.

“Amen!” they shouted. They had no choice. They knew what was expected, and thus played their part in the Sunday morning ritual.

“When God gets the whole tithe, you get the whole blessing. It’s divine law. You do your part, and God does His. You can’t find a better deal than that! Amen?”

“Amen!” they were getting into the spirit of things now, maybe even beginning to be convinced.

“But as with any law, there’s a positive side and a negative side. Obey the positive, and you get positive blessing. Do the negative, and you bring a curse on yourself. It’s the law. You’re bound by it and God is too, cuz it’s His law. If you don’t bring the whole tithe, God can’t help it, He has to bring the negative curse upon you.

“But are you here this morning to be cursed or blessed?”

Femi was walking the main aisle now, beckoning with both arms to each side. “The Lord says, ‘Behold, I set before you the blessing and the curse. Choose the blessing that you might live.’ Repeat it with me, ‘I choose blessing that I might live!’ Again, ‘I choose blessing that I might live!’”

They were chanting it rhythmically now. “Stand on your feet and say it again,” he shouted over the din of the crowd. They rose as one man and increased their volume, continuing in cadence as Femi made his way back to the altar.

Suki met him there, and without missing a beat, struck out in her clarion voice the chorus to which they’d dance their tithes down the aisle. The band added their fervor to the event as Suki shook and swayed before them.

Benson was tolerably pleased and even nodded to his pastor a seeming approval as Femi took his place among the white plastic chairs in the front rows. It looked like it would be a successfully increased amount for the church coffers.

Femi stood and clapped along with the church, happy that his contribution passed inspection. It was one of his chief objectives, to please the General Overseer. His divine promotion and promised breakthroughs depended upon it.

Singing, dancing, jubilating with tithes in hand, the congregation crowded the aisles as they pressed forward, eager for the heavenly windows to pour forth. Unexpectedly, a small note was pressed unnoticed by others into his hand by someone in passing. Femi shifted so as to see who had done so and saw brother John grinning back at him.

He liked John. There was something refreshingly genuine about his simple sincere faith. They had often discussed spiritual

things together. They were enjoyable occasions, though his insistence that everything be based upon the Bible could be uncomfortable, even annoying, at times.

Femi quickly glanced at the short note. It simply stated, "Femi, read I Tim.6:5-11. John." *Huh, that's just like him*, Femi smiled as he mused over his friendship with brother John, *I'll look at it during the Reverend's sermon so I won't appear as if I'm not involved in the service.*

Spotlights played upon the Suki Singers and their carefully rehearsed rendition of "Born Again to Win."

"I'm born again, born again, I'm born again to win! From His house of lights, come divine rights. Treasure without measure. O, I believe! O, I receive! I'm born again to win!"

With no improvement in lyrical content, the song proceeded through successive insipid stanzas. Truth was not the aim of the song, impact was. And Suki belted it out beautifully as only she could do with swelling harmonious backup from her choir.

With a rising crescendo of intensity, the congregation's emotions trailed along, mesmerized by Suki's moving sensually appealing performance. Her last full-throated note was held a full eight seconds after the choir and band had ended their own. The effect was electrifying.

A breathless suspense hung over the audience, uninterrupted by a single sound as the last echo of her final note faded into the walls of the auditorium. It was what every minister longs for; an entire congregation placed like putty into his hands.

The Rev. Dr. Benson took full advantage of the situation. He had already mounted the platform where he stood impressively behind the marble and glass podium. With an overly dramatic sober

emotionalism, he launched into the climax of this Sunday's gathering.

"It is a divine truth of the greatest importance; we are born again to win! And I want to tell you this morning the most powerful principle that unfailingly produces prosperity for the people of God. It is the anointed principle of seed-faith planting.

"The Bible says in 2 Cor.9:6, 'He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.'"

Femi took this opportunity of the mention of a Bible passage to open his own to where brother John had directed him. He flipped the pages casually 'till he found the spot and began to scan the text. Before he had finished the first verse, a deep conviction from the Holy Spirit Himself came upon him. By the time he had managed to complete the last verse, the same panicked beads of the morning dotted his forehead.

Swallow he could not. He lost track of what the Reverend was saying in his total absorption in these few verses. *How was it that this Word had such power? Why had John given him this now at this time? Was he pointing these verses at him, or at Dr. Benson, or both?*

Femi didn't know. He only knew that his heart had been arrested by God Himself. This Word was like a fire burning in his bosom. He read it again from his NIV Pastor's Study Bible.

"Constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.

“People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

“But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.”

“Men of corrupt mind think that godliness is a means to financial gain” Femi’s heart pounded in his ears, his thoughts racing. **“...want to get rich...temptation...foolish...ruin and destruction...wandered from the faith...flee from all this...pursue righteousness.”**

Like a burst-opened wall to a fetid dungeon, light and breath from heaven rushed upon him filling him with its blessed life. He heard nothing again of Dr. Benson’s discourse. His heart was elsewhere. He had no ear for anything but this Word of God to his soul.

O, God, I am the one! I’m the foolish corrupt man wandering from the faith! Be merciful to me, be merciful to me! I beg, forgive me, O, my God, forgive me! A tear dropped from his bowed head onto verse 5 of his opened Bible. A second splattered onto verse 9.

Silently, he wiped them from this now precious text. **“A means to financial gain...to get rich...”** The truth, sharper than any two-edged sword, cut deeply, laying bare his thoughts and intents.

It’s true. I’ve used the church, no, I’ve used You, O, God. It’s really what I’ve done; used You to gain for myself. O, how wicked I’ve been! How shamelessly wretched! I cannot even raise my eyes to heaven. I can only beg for mercy. Please, for Christ’s sake, take away my sin, take away this evil, cleanse me, O, my God,

restore me, save me. Do not cast me away in Your anger, in Jesus’ name.

This was, perhaps, the first real prayer uttered from his heart. Up until now, his had been an imitation religion, a mimicking of learned behavior, a shell without substance. Today, a genuine work of God had begun in his soul. A long road lay ahead, but a solid step had been taken.

As if returning from a far place through dense fog, Femi refocused on his surroundings. They were unmistakably commonplace to him, yet somehow inexplicably altered, even odd. He couldn’t account for that sensation, yet it persisted.

What he didn’t realize was that, in many respects, he was a new man. He was listening to the Reverend’s message again, but with a new set of ears. What he heard was passing through a changed heart.

“Listen, Jesus said it. **“A hundredfold in this life.”** Do you hear? In this life! Let me hear you say it, ‘In this life!’” Benson was stirring up the mob-mentality again.

“In this life!” rang the enthusiastic response. Femi had started to join in but restrained himself. *What am I doing? Is this really what Jesus was saying?* Shocked himself at this fresh inner resolve, he sat watching the Reverend’s performance with eyes of understanding which, before now, had not illumined him.

Marching among the aisles, arms flailing as if possessed of some profound mystery, the Rev. Dr. wound up the seekers again and again to chant “In this life!” at his command. Louder, and with increasing abandon, its mighty roar filled the sanctuary.

Then, timed to perfection, he was back behind the opulent lectern. With a solemnity approaching reverence, like the next words were delivered straight from the throne by Gabriel himself, he spoke

slowly with dramatic conviction, “There is no more fertile soil to be found anywhere for planting your seed of faith than Christ’s Tabernacle of Glory.”

Without a moment’s pause, Sister Suki was on her feet, softly and slowly this time, singing a touching solo of worship. With her angelic notes floating through the charged atmosphere, she removed two bundles of N 50 notes from her purse, laying all N 50 thousand on the altar in full sight of the congregation.

Her song continuing, Benson’s hushed but earnest voice came in upon this lovely background. “God bless you, sister, God bless you.” Turning to the congregation with the song of sacrifice continuing to beckon them, the Rev. Dr., with great emotion, implored them.

“You’ve seen with your own eyes this testimony of worship. I tell you, the Scriptures say, **‘with such sacrifices God is well pleased.’** It’s a sign of a soul that’s serious with God. By the anointing that’s upon me, I decree, ‘Your harvest shall be sure!’ in Jesus’ name! I say, ‘Harvest come!’ in Jesus’ name! ‘Hundredfold blessing, come!’ in the name of Jesus.

“What do you want from God? How big is your faith? This woman has laid her demand at the feet of Jesus. And I tell you today, the Bible says, ‘He will not delay long over her.’ He will not delay long over you if you also will heed the command of God, **‘Go, and do thou likewise.’** Come and plant, come and sow. And remember, **‘He who sows sparingly, will reap also sparingly.’**”

At that, Suki joyously broke forth in high gear with full choir and band blaring their support. The people rose, checkbooks and money in hand, rushing to plant their seeds of faith. They were convinced, already tasting of the hundredfold promised return.

Something like revulsion swept over Pastor Femi who, automatically, had already begun to shuffle his feet and clap to the pounding praise number. *Why, this is nothing more than a pre-arranged money-making scam!* And, indeed, it was.

“I like it! I so much like it!” Benson was eagerly putting N 50 thousand into Suki’s hands. It was why he had detained her earlier that morning in private. It was not his idea, but, when he understood it, he was delighted.

Actually, Suki had thought of it. “Reverend, if we really want to motivate the people to give large seed-faith offerings, don’t you think we should set an example for them?” Suki paused for him to reply.

“What do you mean, set an example?” Benson was always cautious when it came to giving rather than getting.

“We’ll just take N 50 thousand from the church funds, and bring it as our seed-faith in front of everyone so they’ll see it and want to do the same,” she spoke it more enticingly than casually.

He stared at her for a moment, then a glint of satisfaction shone in his eye as he asked, “And into whose hands should we place this money, may I ask?” it was a half-serious, half-teasing inquiry.

“Why, into mine, of course,” Suki smoothly answered with an inviting arch of her eyebrow.

Benson only grinned at the expected response, the cleverness of the plan, and her willing participation in it.

The matter concluded, they were on their feet now, proceeding to the office door when Benson slipped his arm around

her waist. They paused and she did not resist. “You’ve used the word ‘we’ several times this morning,” it was an inquiring statement.

Her eyes smiled back into his. “I suppose I have, haven’t I?” her nose wrinkled at him in a promise of better things to come, and she turned and passed through the door.

The Reverend watched her go as she left for the morning service. *Yes, a good choice indeed. Of course, I always choose my assistants carefully.* He added the last thought in the self-congratulating arrogance which so much characterized him.

What he didn’t know was that Suki was even more careful in whom she chose to assist her.

The mockery of the morning message over, and the people milked dry of virtually every Kobo in their possession, all rose to share the grace in fellowship. Femi mumbled along with the rest, hardly hearing a word that was said.

Immediately the band, at full speed and maximum volume, drove the people out of the building where they could at least hear one another talk. There, after a brief space, the sun’s intensity drove them to seek refuge from its relentless rays. Thus, another Sunday had come and gone.

The Rev. Dr. entered his Mercedes, N 327 thousand richer from the morning’s round of offerings, while Pastor Femi proceeded by public transport to his house, no more richer, but justified.

Femi had received the better portion.

3

“You tink I no dey cook well fo you?” Blessed teased her husband in a half-irritated tone as she observed him obviously pre-occupied in thought.

“Ah e na good-o” Femi managed to gather his thoughts from afar, back to the meal at hand and his wife before him. “Sorry-o, I was just thinking.”

“Thinking about what?” she was really a good wife and usually had true interest in whatever Femi had on his mind. Encouraged by this, he decided to tell her.

“I was reading the Word of God during the service this morning and it made a great impression on my heart. Let me read it to you,” he pulled his Bible off the shelf and found the passage in I Tim.6:5-11. “Listen to this,” and he read it off.

When he finished, he looked up expectantly at his wife, anticipating the same impact upon her that it had made upon him. Her blank stare was all that met his gaze.

“Well, go on. Is that all there is?”

Confused now, not knowing why the verses didn't smite her own heart with the conviction that came to his own, he stammered with uncertainty, "I... uh... I guess I was looking at these in a different way, that's all."

Not sure what he was meaning, Blessed looked at him quizzically. "How were you looking at them?"

How can I explain it? I don't even know what happened myself! But he had to say something, so he tried the best he knew how.

"It was as if God Himself were speaking directly to me, saying that I was only seeking to be in the church to get rich; like I was filled with an evil longing for money while pretending to serve God when I'm actually only serving my own selfish desires."

Blessed was eyeing him suspiciously now and with a growing discomfort in her own heart. "Are trying to say that if God blesses you with prosperity that you're an evil person? Is that what you're saying?" He could tell she wasn't happy with the direction of the conversation.

"Listen, Dear," he said pleadingly, "I'm only trying to tell you what happened to me this morning. I'm not sure how to even explain it," the last words were spoken apologetically.

"Continue," was her less than encouraging response as she picked at the rice on her plate.

"Well, it was the deepest conviction of sin I'd ever experienced. I was weeping, crying out to God to forgive me. I confessed my wickedness of trying to use God to get wealth. Its an awful thing. I saw myself to be plunging into ruin and destruction. I asked the Lord to save me," he had told her all.

Suspicion turned to alarm in her heart. *What is the matter with this man? Has he lost his senses?* "So, you are saying that if

God blesses you with riches you are a sinful person!" she didn't wait for a reply. "Have you gone mad? Everything we have hoped for and prayed for and worked for in this church, you're now throwing to the wind? I thought something was wrong with you this morning when I got up and found you in the parlor," it was an accusation.

She was just getting started and left him no opportunity to interrupt. "I suppose that this imaginary conviction of yours sets aside everything you're practiced and believed up until now? No, Femi, don't you abandon your hope and your faith. What would Rev. Benson say if he knew about this... this..." she was almost spluttering looking for the right word, "this crazy notion that's entered your head?"

Stopping short, as if a new thought had just occurred to her, both eyes narrowed as she pressed forward accusingly. "Who put this foolish idea into your head?"

"Uh, no one did. I just read the Word of God and the Holy Spirit spoke to my heart."

Not to be easily put off once she believed she was on to something, Blessed continued, "Why did you begin to read that particular part of the Bible in the middle of a Sunday service?"

Femi knew where she was driving and knew he couldn't truthfully evade the inevitable. "Someone in the congregation put a note in my hand asking me to look up those references."

"And who, might I ask, was that?" her hands were on her hips and the tone stinging, certain that she already knew the answer.

"It was brother John," Femi said quietly. He knew what would follow.

"I thought so! How many times have I warned you about that cloth-trading 'Bible brother'? 'The Bible says this, the Bible says that,'" she ridiculed sarcastically. "Well, I've never heard of a

cloth-trader who knew more than an anointed Reverend Dr., but you seem to have met one,” her last words were biting.

“Blessed, its not what John says that matters, its what God says in His Word. God spoke to me through His own Word. John didn’t say one thing to me. It was the Holy Spirit,” Femi was trying desperately to have Blessed understand what he had seen from the Scriptures.

A pair of glaring eyes met his. A determined finality framed her next words. “I am a member of Christ’s Tabernacle of Glory. That is where divine blessing is. That is where the anointed Man of God is whom the Lord is using and speaking through. I will not be disobedient to the heavenly vision. If you want to join some cloth-trader tabernacle, be my guest. But don’t expect me to follow you in such deluded madness.”

“But Blessed, no one is saying they’re leaving anything and joining something else. And why are you so angry at brother John?” Femi was pleading with her, more grieved than upset.

For some seconds she stared at him, flushed and agitated by her outburst. Really, she had nothing against brother John and she truly loved her husband. But the love of things and the love of her husband’s position with all of its prospects pulled strongly at her heart. John, actually, John’s Bible, seemed to her to threaten all of that. It was a great sacrifice she was not prepared to make at the moment.

“You heard what I said,” and with that, she noisily gathered up the plates and disappeared into the kitchen.

4

“Fem, Fem” before he could even see the waving hand through the criss-cross of early morning taxis, he knew who it was. No one else called him by that nickname except brother John.

Weaving amidst the maze of momentarily slowed traffic, Femi and John soon clasped hands together with a resounding clap. They were glad to see each other.

“What brings you down this way?” John cheerily inquired.

“Oh, just to drop off some preliminary proofs at the printer’s for the upcoming city-wide night vigil.”

“Yeah, I heard some rumors about that. Big time stuff, eh?”

“I guess so. Big time preparations, anyway,” Femi was slowing in his conversation, growing serious. “Say, John, do you have a minute so we could talk together?”

“Sure, why not? Let’s go to my shop.” It was a short trek to where he traded cloth. John bought a couple of minerals along the way. He popped the lid off of one, setting it before his friend who

was straddling one of the benches inside, surrounded by endless bolts of material.

“Thanks for the note on Sunday,” he paused reflectively, staring at the bench top, aimlessly swishing around the Coke in its bottle. John didn’t interrupt. Femi heaved a great sigh and turned his face away slightly from his friend as if ashamed. “The Lord used it, John,” his voice developed a slight note of strain. “I’m a sinful man, brother,” there was definite sorrow in this short, slowly spoken statement.

Inwardly, John voiced heartfelt thanks to God at how marvelously the Lord had used these Scriptures to answer his oft repeated prayers for Femi. He continued, though, silently listening, knowing that more would follow. He had learned that true spirituality is never a matter of force or formula.

He was not mistaken. “My stupid tithing message kept ringing over and over in my ears. It was like torture,” Femi turned and squarely faced his friend. “This whole thing of Prosperity is deception and wickedness, isn’t it?” it was more his own conclusion than actually asking a question and was spoken in earnestness.

John studied Femi’s intense and sober face for a moment before quietly replying, “I’m afraid it’s one of the greatest deceptions that has come upon the church in our time.”

“Cai! cai, cai,” Femi burst out indignantly, his voice trailing in wonderment at each successive repetition. Silence settled for some moments. John sipped at the Coke, waiting patiently. “Listen, John, I’ve seen it. I really have. The Lord just exposed the whole thing for the evil that it is. God, forgive me. How many people have I deceived?” it was a sincere question, one that truly disturbed his heart.

An answer wasn’t really expected, he was merely declaring a profound realization. “Then Rev. Benson is deceived too, isn’t he?” he voiced it aloud and reflected upon the implications of that for awhile. It was a big statement to make.

“Look, John, this is serious. I need to know more of what the Word of God says about all this,” Femi was, probably for the first time, truly hungering and thirsting after righteousness. It was a blessed condition to be in.

Smiling, John reached for his Bible, and, noticing that Femi didn’t have his own, pulled another one down and handed it to him. “Which kind of pastor is this that doesn’t even carry a Bible?” John teasingly asked his friend.

Femi started to laugh but caught himself before he did. His smile fading, a holy seriousness came over him. Quietly, and with conviction, he confessed, “Not a very good one, I guess. From now on,” he held up the Bible, “this is my constant companion and guide.”

John’s heart thrilled at the transformation of his friend which he witnessed before his eyes. He only said, “Fem, let’s pray.”

“Father, we bless You for sending forth the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus seen in Your most excellent Word. Where would we be without it? Lord, we simply ask that you would open our eyes yet more and more that Your Word might guide our feet in Your everlasting path. For Jesus’ sake, Amen.”

Refreshing, yes, that’s the word, refreshing. His prayer was nothing like the acrobatic bravado I’m used to. Thank God for brother John.

“Prosperity is really another gospel. It twists the Scriptures and denies all that real Christianity is.”

“Hold on, John. Gimmie paper. I’ve got to write this down

so I can show it to Blessed. She wasn't exactly happy about I Tim.6, you know," he said that with an unpleasant recollection, at the same time hoping that John might give him some advice about what to do. John understood the unspoken appeal and reminded himself to bring it up before Femi left.

"Jesus said in Lk.16:13-15," both flipped the pages of their Bibles 'till they found the place, '**You cannot serve God and Mammon.**' The religious leaders scoffed at Jesus because they loved money. Jesus told them that their highly valued money was an abomination in the sight of God. These are the basic issues with the false gospel of Prosperity: Whom will you serve, God or riches? You can't do both, regardless of what the reverends tell us."

"It seems so clear now. Why haven't I seen it before?"

Femi was truly puzzled.

"Because Jesus said that '**the deceitfulness of riches choke the word**' John simply replied.

"Where did He say that?"

"In Matthew 13," Femi was already turning the pages, "Let's see," he paused, scanning the text 'till he came to v.22, "Here it is," and he read the verse aloud.

Femi let that sink in for a moment, then asked, "I see it now, all right, but what is this Mammon Jesus spoke about? I need more explanation on that one."

"Mammon was the name Jesus gave to the false god of riches. It was like the spirit of wealth personified. All gods govern the lives of their followers, having them perform whatever behavior that will serve their purposes best. "Wealth does the same. That's why you cannot serve both; the Lord Jesus directs your heart to the things above while Mammon fills you with its evil desires for the things of earth. They're mutually exclusive deities. One is the

Way, the Truth, and the Life while the other is spiritual wickedness and deception."

"But why do these preachers always talk about God delighting in the prosperity of His servant?"

"Let's look at it. I think its in Psalms thirty something. Let's see," John was glancing through successive verses rapidly, "Here it is, Psalm 35:27, '**The Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of His servant,**' at least that's how the King James Bible puts it. What does your's say?"

Femi found it in the NIV and read, "'**The Lord be exalted, who delights in the well-being of His servant.**' Cai! That's completely different than what we've been told all this time! This is not talking about money at all! Its talking about things being well spiritually in the hearts of God's people. That's what the Lord delights in," Femi was shaking his head in amazement at his discovery from the Word of God.

"That's it, Fem. Its why we must always obey what the Lord commanded us, to '**Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil.**'"

"Where's that one?" Femi interrupted.

"That's I Thess.5:21, 22. It's what we find the Bereans doing in Acts 17:11," the pages were rustling again, "Listen to this, '**They received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.**'"

Femi was making rapid but careful notes while John spoke. He glanced up with a flash of insight and remarked, "Those simple believers judged what even the Apostle Paul said by the Word of God, didn't they?" John nodded in agreement sensing that his friend had more to say.

"If they did that with Paul, why haven't I been doing this all

along with everything I've heard from ministers of God?" it was a revelation to his heart that needed no reply.

"Its one of the biggest problems in the church, brother. We've been putting our confidence in the man of God instead of the Word of God; in the messenger rather than the message," it was a profound observation for Femi to consider.

"That's why I've been deceived, isn't it? Its my own fault because I *wanted* to be deceived. Instead of obeying the Bible's commands to be discerning and believe only what the Word of God clearly teaches, I just listened to whatever agreed with my own desires," Femi soberly reflected aloud. "Habah!" was his only remaining comment.

"Just look at the lives of the true men of God in the Scriptures. What was Paul's experience? Was he living in prosperity?"

Femi gave him a blank stare in response, "I don't know, I guess I've never really thought about it," he sounded a little sheepish about his ignorance.

John only smiled encouragingly and said, "Well, let's find out then. Read I Cor.4:11."

Pages were turning again 'till Femi's finger struck the spot, "I've got it. **To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless.**"

The reading was complete. "What kind of prosperity is this?" Femi exclaimed indignantly, "I suppose the reverends would claim Paul just didn't have enough faith to 'possess his possessions,' huh?" sarcasm fairly dripped from his last query. "I've known their secrets now," he added with disgust.

"Paul's not the only one. What about all of the faithful men of God through the ages? All of them had a testimony through their

faith, but were not prospering in the least. Look at Heb.11:37-39. Listen to this," John began reading while Femi jotted down the references.

"They went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (men of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes of the ground. And all these, obtained a testimony through their faith."

Femi was shaking his head in amazement once again.

"The Lord never promises prosperity to people if they have 'faith,'" John concluded, "in fact, he warns us against prosperity in all of its forms. Jesus put it this way, **'Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed, for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.'** That's Lk.12:15," he added before he could ask.

"Huh, greed and possessions, coveting and prosperity, they all kind of go together, don't they?" Femi observed.

"In fact, coveting is called idolatry twice in the New Testament, in Col.3:5 and Eph.5:5. Its serving Mammon instead of God."

"Then its really another religion and not Christianity at all," Femi mused slowly. It was a staggering assessment, almost too big to grasp.

"Listen, brother, its an ancient one. Jesus contended with money changers who were making the house of God into a place of merchandise. Paul said *many* were peddling the Word of God for profit. That's in 2 Cor.2:17," he added as he watched Femi busily scribbling down notes, "and Peter tells us that these false teachers will entice *many* to follow their shameful ways and bring the way of truth into disrepute. This is how they do it, **'in their greed, they will**

make merchandise of you with false words.’ Uh... that one is found in 2 Pet.2:2, 3.”

“We’ve gone far, brother, really far. Cai! It’s almost too much to take in,” Femi glanced at his watch and added, “Hey, I need to be going. Thanks a lot, John, this has really been a blessing.” As an afterthought he ventured, “How do you know all of those verses, anyway?”

John just smiled as he held up his Bible, “Oh... this has been my constant companion for sometime now.” Femi grinned back knowingly.

After prayer, as Femi rose to go, John had not forgotten about Blessed. “You were saying about Blessed...” A look of remembrance lightened Femi’s eyes with a hopeful expectation, “Let me ask you this, Fem, How was it that you came to understand what you do now?”

Femi reflected a moment before responding, “I guess the Lord just opened my eyes through His Word,” he looked at John to see if he agreed.

He only smiled in agreement then concluded, “I know you’re eager for her to see what you have, but be patient small. Wait for the Lord to show her these things while you continue to pray. She won’t grasp it in a day.”

It was good advice for which he was grateful. “Thanks, brother. Hey, here comes your first customer. I’ll let you know how things go,” he waved back as he entered the street and headed for the printer’s.

“Um! Something smells good in here,” he greeted Blessed as he entered the parlor.

“Oh, Femi, you’re home!” Blessed called back from the kitchen where stew was on the fire for lunch. She quickly came out bringing water to meet her husband. “How’s morning?”

“No problem. I had to go into town for some printing for the night vigil coming up. After lunch I’ll go back to the church office so we can make the final changes before the handbills are printed.”

“Okay, good,” she said over her shoulder as she headed back to the kitchen, “Continue, I just need to finish up the stew.”

John was correct. Femi was eager. His heart was filled with a light and freedom like he hadn’t known before. He longed for his wife to share in it with him.

“Listen to this, Dear,” Femi had taken his Bible and found Lk.16:13-15. He read out loud the key points of the passage. **“No servant can serve two masters...you cannot serve God and money. The Pharisees, who loved money heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. He said to them, ‘You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God’s sight.’”**

Only silence answered him from the kitchen. Unknown to him, a mighty wrestling had begun in his wife’s heart.

The Word of God had entered her as a sword, piercing deeply and exposing her own thoughts and intents. Stunned, a Maggi cube dropped from her hand onto the floor. Blood was pounding in her ears as she stood still with shortness of breath.

This is the Word of God! It’s true, I can’t deny it. I can’t serve God and riches, I know it. A sense of desperation gripped her. She didn’t want it to be true. She yet loved money, yearning for

prosperity, but she knew it was wrong. The Lord had spoken to her heart.

Thus the struggle began, which necessarily must, whenever truth is resisted. Mechanically, she stirred the stew, her mind racing with colliding and conflicting thoughts.

Not knowing exactly what to make of the silence, Femi was hopeful that it was a good sign and went on with his reading from Phil.4:12, 13.

“Apostle Paul said this, ‘I know what it is to be in need, and I know how to live in prosperity. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.’”

A clattering spoon was the only sound that met his ears. Conviction from the Holy Spirit had settled upon his wife.

To be in need...being content...hungry...all things through Christ. She was deeply affected, convinced but still unyielding. *Why now? Why not after God prospers us? It's not fair! It's just not fair!* Truth continued to ring in her ears, yet her will continued stiffly against it. She was in a miserable state now, not wishing to abandon her desires.

“It is such a wonderful relief to simply trust the Lord for whatever He is pleased to provide. There's a peaceful gladness in submitting all to Him, a real rest and freedom from striving.”

She heard every word and was pricked all the more. She couldn't take anymore at the moment. Finding some strength somewhere, from a troubled breast she managed to haltingly say, “Femi, let's not quarrel. I've heard what you've said, and you heard what I said this morning,” the last statement was uttered through thick guilt, knowing that it wasn't right.

Femi's heart sank, little realizing that his words were greatly used by God to influence his wife for her everlasting good. He thought about John's last words to him and regained enough courage to reply, “Okay, Blessed, if that's what you want.”

It was and it wasn't. She didn't want to be at odds with her husband and she certainly did not wish to fight God Himself. But she couldn't bear to part with her longing for riches, not now, not yet.

They ate together in silence. Femi finished first and stood up. “Uh, I'm going to the church office now.” Blessed only nodded without looking up. With a final glance at his wife, picking at her food without really eating, he headed for the door.

But he stopped short and returned to the parlor. He had almost forgotten his new constant companion. She watched him pick up his Bible and pass outside. There was no rest for her thoughts.

Suddenly an alarming anxiety gripped her.

What if he loses his job over this?

A cloud of misery descended upon her as she sat alone in the cheerless parlor.

5

“Pastor Femi, you’re welcome!” Mary greeted him in her bubbly motherly way. She was the church secretary who brooded like a mother hen over all matters entering her domain.

“Good afternoon, Ma’am, how de day?”

“Busy, busy, busy!” she said enthusiastically. Femi knew she wouldn’t stop there. Mary loved to talk, but no one seemed to mind her bustling maternal manner.

“Oh, this vigil with all the phone calls and contacting this one, that one, and the other one keeps me going, morning to night.” The cluttered array of papers strewn across her desk lent credibility to her claims. Really, her desk always looked that way. Mary was somewhat absent-minded and not overly efficient either, but, nevertheless, managed to get things done in spite of it.

“Now, I suppose you’ve come to weigh me down with burdens too great for a poor old soul like me to bear,” she clucked good-naturedly. Femi grinned back at her.

“No, nothing like that,” Femi protested, “I just need to drop off some printing proofs for Rev. Benson.”

“Well, in that case, you’re *highly* welcome!” she chuckled at her own teasing humor. “Go on in, Pastors Emmanuel and Chide are already there. The Reverend himself will soon be around.”

After customary greetings, their conversation turned to the upcoming vigil. “This is going to be a mighty move of the Holy Ghost. It will probably be the greatest single gathering of powerful anointed men of God that this city’s ever seen!” Emmanuel reported with an enthusiasm approaching that of pride.

He was the most ambitious of the junior pastors, always alert and eager for any opportunity that might promote his own advantage. “Rubbing shoulders with some of the city’s big ministers will be good exposure for all of us,” he added, with himself particularly in mind. Such self-promoting ambition didn’t disturb him in the least.

“The stadium should be packed. We’re expecting tens of thousands from everywhere, all anxious for their miracles,” Pastor Chide chipped in his comments, “and willing to bring their offerings to get them!” he added with a tone of obvious relish at the thought.

In times past, Femi would have overlooked, or even enjoyed, the trend of the discussion. Today, however, he bristled with disdain at the casual carnality of his peers.

“God is not interested in mere numbers and certainly is unimpressed with what men think themselves to be,” Femi interjected with a quiet but firm reproof whose sting was felt. “And is getting people’s money why we’re holding this thing?” The question was left hanging like an unsettled cloud in the uncomfortable silence following.

It was Emmanuel who spoke up presently with what he thought would implicate Femi and excuse themselves. “What kind

of comment is that coming from such an expert at raising tithes and offerings?” he retorted sarcastically, “What do you have to say about that?”

Shame coursed through him momentarily at the thought of his performance in the worship service. “What I did on Sunday was not pleasing to the Lord. It was nothing more than deceived and deceiving disobedience to God and His Word from which I have sincerely repented,” Femi replied contritely with conviction.

Stunned by his frankness and unexpected confession, Emmanuel and Chide only looked at each other in bewilderment before shifting their eyes to the floor. Neither one wished to face Femi at the present in the tenseness hanging in the Reverend’s private chamber.

Finally, it was Chide who broke the strain of the awkward moments. “What do you mean, Femi, ‘disobedience to God and His Word,’ what are you trying to say?” It was more of a challenge to defend himself than an honest inquiry.

Without hesitating, Femi launched directly into an explanation of what had happened to him as he had read the Scriptures. Amazement mingled with guilt, stirred in their hearts at what they heard coming from his mouth.

“Afternoon, gentlemen,” Benson was back, striding commandingly past them to ascend his position of power behind his desk.

“Good afternoon, Sir. You’re welcome, Sir,” all three had instantly sprung to their feet, almost with military-like posture before their “commander.” The Rev. Dr. noticed the opened Bible in Femi’s hand and sensed an atmosphere of discomfort between them.

“Have your seats.”

“Thank you, Sir.”

“Having a little discussion are you?”

“Uh, yes, Sir,” Emmanuel quickly broke in, “Pastor Femi was just trying to tell us that taking tithes and offerings is sinful,” Emmanuel took the opportunity to present Femi in the worst possible light. “We were challenging him on these strange ideas when you met us,” he added to present himself in the best possible light.

The General Overseer tilted back pensively, rocking slightly, as his eyes narrowed darkly in a steady gaze at the news. Leaning forward now, with elbows upon the glittering desktop, he simply said, “Well, Pastor, what do you have to say?”

Normally, Femi would have been scattered in his thoughts by the intimidating scene of which he was the center. Somehow, though, a peace that passed all understanding was guarding his heart and mind as he spoke.

“What I was actually explaining, Sir, is that the Word of God warns us about and condemns the love of money. It says so right here,” and he proceeded to read I Tim.6:5-11 aloud for the second time that afternoon.

Terror gripped Benson’s heart as he forced himself to maintain his outward composure during the reading. It had exposed the secrets of his inner motives, leaving him desperate to extinguish the light which streamed from the divine text.

But, over the years, he had mastered the technique of violating his own conscience in order to justify his longings. Defeat would not be obtained by a single assault such as this, so entrenched was he in his bastion of self-will.

Quickly quenching the Spirit’s conviction, he smugly responded, “This is why you’re a junior assistant and not yet a Man of God,” he let the impact of these words sink in, “The blessing of

God through prosperity and the love of money are two different things altogether.

“I don’t think you are wishing to call into question the obvious divine principle upon which this ministry has been blessed by heaven, are you, Pastor?” it was spoken accusingly, as a reproof for daring to even say what he had in his presence.

Femi had the uncomfortable feeling that he was being charged with crimes of which he was not guilty. But he was not to be daunted by the thoughts of man by whomsoever they were uttered. Once a man has seen the light, you cannot convince him that darkness and light are the same again. Femi determined to simply press on, not as before, in compromise and confusion, but now with inner resolve borne of the Spirit of God by His Word.

“I’m only wishing, Sir, to honor the Lord Jesus in obedience to His Word. Jesus Himself said, **‘You cannot serve God and wealth.’** It was the Pharisees, who loved money, that scoffed at this Word from God. The Lord told them that what they were doing was detestable in God’s sight.”

Femi’s quiet and respectful reply was received as if it were a slap in the face to the furious President and Founder. With an abrupt violent jolt which sent his throne bounding into the wall behind him, Benson fairly stormed around the desk positioning himself threateningly before him.

“Listen to me, small boy,” he hissed loudly through clenched jaws, “I’m the anointed Man of God in this ministry, you hear! You want to follow the Bible, do you? Well, then, hear what the Lord says, **‘Touch not mine anointed and do my prophets no harm!’**” his voice had risen significantly and taken on a tone of disdain, “So, you had better pay closer attention to that Bible of yours,” he scornfully mocked him, “and *never* quote that thing to me again,” it

was a threat, and then added in spite, “as if you had the slightest idea of what it means, anyway.”

The discussion, if it could be called that, was over. Emmanuel sat by approvingly at the Rev. Dr.’s reproof of his insolent co-worker. *Who does he think he is, anyway, to dare to question a Man of God? Its just wicked rebellion, and more than that, suicidal to one’s own ministry.*

“Now, did you have any reason for being here this afternoon, except to spread your confused and half-baked notions?” Benson was still seething.

Femi knew it was useless to protest or seek to explain any further, so he meekly extended the documents in his hand saying, “Sir, these are the proofs for the handbills that I picked up at the printer’s this morning.”

Without acknowledgment, he tossed them onto the desktop with a loud smack as they landed. “Anything else?”

“No, Sir.”

“Then there’s no need for you to interrupt the business of God any further today.”

Femi knew what that meant and rose to his feet without a word other than, “Yes, Sir. Thank you, Sir.” Crossing the room, as he opened the door, there was one parting shot from the Reverend.

“Oh, Femi, I don’t think that you would like it at all if I were to hear from any of the members that you were continuing to sow seeds of discord among the congregation.”

Hand still on the latch, he had paused for his final admonition. With a heavy heart, he nodded and passed into the outer office. Suki was seated there awaiting audience with the President, patiently trying to act interested in Mary’s non-stop banter. She had heard Benson’s last word through the opened doorway.

“Pastor Femi, how are you? How’s the wife and children?” Suki inquired pleasantly.

“Fine, fine,” was his less than enthusiastic reply. He guessed that she must have overheard the departing declaration and hastened to exit that scene, away from the churning distress of the past minutes.

Suki only smiled at him as he made his retreat to the outside, carefully making a mental note of what she had witnessed.

“The last of the 10,000 cassettes are nearly ready for the vigil, Reverend,” Suki proudly announced after Emmanuel and Chide had left.

“That’s the best news I’ve had all day,” was his only tense comment. Then, as if hearing what she had said for the first time, he blurted out, “10,000? Why so few? We can sell more than that!” He still sounded slightly upset, but controlled himself the best he could, not wishing to offend her in the slightest.

“Settle down, settle down,” she smiled with a tone of ever increasing familiarity which had grown between them. “At N 50 profit per tape, that’s N 500 thousand of pure profit in one evening,” she coolly added with an enticing glance. It had its effect as he reclined back in his magnificent chair.

Without losing a moment's momentum, she continued, “Besides, if everyone can buy as many tapes as they’d like, who then would need come to Christ’s Tabernacle of Glory to purchase any?”

He paused to reflect on that a moment. *It was true, if they had to come here for the tapes, membership would grow, tapes would still sell, and offerings would increase, all at the same time.*

It was a clever scheme, dreamed up by Suki herself. She had convinced the Rev. Dr. to purchase top-of-the-line recording equipment for the increasingly popular Suki Singers. He was reluctant at first, until the details unfolded before his eyes. Then, when the greedy potential was grasped fully, he fairly rushed to comply with the investment. And it was paying off handsomely.

A slowly growing smile creased his face, the former storm having abated for a season. “I’m liking you more and more all the time,” his smooth tongue flattered her with seductive oiliness.

Not to be outdone, Suki leaned forward alluringly, “The feeling is mutual, Benson, Dear,” and she puckered her lips at him invitingly.

He grinned back at her with burning desire, both for her and at the growing success of his ultimate plan.

She returned a teasing smile with growing satisfaction at the undetected progress of her own devices.

6

“Shan-ta-rapusa-medasko. Oooh, shulio-bababa. Tanka rakusko debusho,” the Rev. Dr. Benson’s head shook, rolled, and bobbed with convincing intensity as he led the tens of thousands of expectant night vigil attendees. A cacophony of conflicting shrieks, howls, and groaning of unknown tongues from the throng did battle with each other, competing to be heard over the roaring din. Benson’s own blared above them all through the powerful public address system strategically placed throughout the stadium’s capacity crowd.

Spotlighting, perfectly kept his every stride across the mighty platform in crisp focus. From brilliant globes behind him, shone an impressive assemblage of anointed ministers, seated, Sanhedrin-like, on the stage’s high-table. Flanked on the right side of the glittering podium was the fifteen-member band ensemble, heavily manned on the rhythm and percussion end. To the left, gorgeously bedecked upon their three tiered mini-stage, were the Suki Singers, and Suki herself, out front, stunningly adorned for the

occasion.

“Victory Vigil” was emblazoned across the top of the professionally computer-designed handbills. Their appealing four-color-process splashes of brilliant tones announced a supernatural extravaganza of Deliverance, Signs and Wonders, Healings, and Breakthroughs for Prosperity.

“Your Miracle is Waiting!” promised the circulars. Especially featured were impressive bigger-than-life photos of the Rev. Dr. Benson shouting a prophetic word from God into his mike. The other side portrayed Sister Suki, eyes closed, hands raised heavenward, in an ecstasy of divine aspiration.

Below, it was clearly stated, “Hosted by Christ’s Tabernacle of Glory.” Concluding it all was the highlighted text, “Suki Singers cassettes available for purchase.”

They were plastered in every conceivable location throughout the city. One could scarcely turn without encountering their brazen over-confident claims. But they were effective tools as was evidenced by the overwhelming response of the multitudes. Benson was delighted.

“I want you to begin to take dominion. I want us to come against every stronghold of the enemy,” he blared militantly. An instantaneous rumble rose and gathered to deafening proportions from the assembly of spiritual soldiers.

“Tear down the habitations of darkness. I decree, no spirit shall stand against this mighty army of God! Blood of Jesus! Sweep them away in your overflowing flood! Funtirala baska. O tanto reshunda mekesko,” Benson’s own “tongues” faded into a series of indistinguishable popping and hissing noises, periodically punctuated by outbursts of “Blood of Jesus!” or “Yes, Lord!”

In utter abandon by now, the perspiring jostling masses ranted and raved repetitively the formulas they had absorbed over time by endless exposure to their Reverend's repeated prayer-points. As if the correct button on some electronic gadget had been pressed, the people sounded forth at full volume what they were programmed to say.

It emboldened them with a sense of courage and supernatural energies beyond their normal capabilities. Whether true or not, they felt as if they had gained a tremendous victory; and that feeling was what mattered more than anything to most of them. Without it, the pathway would not have been cleared for their promised prosperity to come. And that, after all, is why they were there.

"All witches and wizards, every spirit of poverty, you devouring demons of doubt, I bind you! I cast you from your high places to the lowest pits of hell, in Jesus' name!" The Rev. Dr. was rounding up his introductory prayer ritual.

"Amen!" the multitudes interjected.

"I come against, I scatter all your schemes; every evil devise, every weapon fashioned against this program, I pull you down. You are destroyed, in the name of Jesus!" he commanded with almost realistically sounding authority.

"Amen!"

"Thank You, Father!" Benson boomed the benediction.

"Thank You, Lord!" retorted thousands of prayer warriors.

"We know You've heard us, Daddy, for we pray in Jesus' name!"

"Amen!"

"P-R-A-I-S-E THE LORD!!!"

"Hallelujah!" they thundered with the excitement of fans gathered for a Super Eagles match. Actually, it was difficult to

discern any difference between the emotionalism of either.

"The Lord is good!"

"All the time!"

Crashing cymbals and pounding percussion paved the way for the rollicking Praise and Worship which followed. Suki was in the saddle now and riding the mounting wave of enthusiasm with skill. Varied colored spotlights riveted the attention of all upon her every move as they rocked in rhythm to her medley of favorite choruses.

Bluster, noise, and fantastical promises filled the hours between 10 PM and 4 AM with an ever revolving kaleidoscope of brilliantly flashing guest ministers. Each seemed to capitalize on the last in a mounting crest approaching the pinnacle of the evening.

The people believed what they were told. It was the anointed men of God, some of the most noteworthy in the city, who had spoken, and their words must surely come to pass. Who could ever question what God had ordained them to say and do? It would be unthinkable. To doubt their prophetic word was the same as denying the Lord Himself who, they had come to accept, was speaking through them.

Thus, they hung upon their every word, attentive to even the smallest of details of the techniques presented by each for securing the blessings of heaven. There was really nothing innovative, insightful, or even useful in what they spoke. But it was not so much what they said that was significant to them, it was the fact that a Man of God had given a divine formula.

Steps to Success, Formulas of Faith, Laws of Liberation, and Principles of Prosperity. They were really all one and the same, merely reshuffled, rephrased, and re-packaged with each ministry's distinctive label.

Like so many competing bath soaps, clamoring for the buyers' selection, they presented their own with all the appeal of carefully chosen appearances, fragrances, and price tags. But they were really nothing more, nothing different, than mere soap. The basic ingredients remained unchanged.

And so it was this evening. Each minister made the most of his opportunity to sell his own brand of spiritual cure-all, subtly, of course. No one was brazen and foolish enough to openly advertise his own ministry. It would not be tolerated. But, afterwards, none of these reverends would object if members from another ministry were siphoned off into their own. None, that is, except the reverend whose sheep had been "stolen." He would not be happy. But doing unto others as you would have them do unto you was not their concern.

As the program progressed, a virtual explosion of spiritual pyrotechnics erupted with its dazzling array across the night's sky. Overly exaggerated exploits followed, one upon the other, with increasing acrobatic agility, each more highly acclaimed than the former.

Hot, and hotter still, Holy Ghost fire was commanded to fall, and fall again. Satan, if we would believe the reverend gentlemen, was so thoroughly bound, destroyed, and banished that he had no hope of ever troubling anyone again, even on the day of Armageddon.

Thirst for displays of raw power coursed through the crowd, intoxicating them, inflaming their breasts with its heat. Like as if in the final minutes of a closely contested football match, the audience was on its feet, thrilling at the anticipated victory soon to be realized.

Benson took command. They were ready and the time had come. The way had been prepared through the pre-monitored

testimonies of blessings received through correctly applying the divine laws of Prosperity. Several of these had been skillfully interwoven at strategic points throughout the program. Their seed-faith offerings had already been collected by his carefully instructed squadron of ushers. The stage was set for the miraculous, and he was not about to disappoint them.

"A powerful anointing of God has come upon me," he announced with dramatic intensity with his right arm raised in a gesture of blessings flowing as if from his fingertips. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to set the captives free!" was his shameless distortion of the biblical text to promote his own agenda.

"I have seen the Holy Ghost descending as a dove upon this very platform. The ministering angels of light have gathered themselves together and are present at this very moment awaiting their God-given assignments," the proclamation was made as if heaven was at his beck and call.

"Thus says the Lord God," it was the moment they had been longing for. Benson paused, hands raised, eyes shut as if in deep meditation, "There is a woman to my left in the back section who has been suffering from waist pains. I tell you by the authority that's in me, 'Rise and be healed, in Jesus' name!'"

Necks were craning to see the miraculous wonder manifest before their very eyes. True to his word, a woman slowly emerged from the crowd repeatedly pressing her hands around her middle with an astonished look of surprise. "I..I...I'm healed!" she finally stammered, "Thank God! I'm healed!"

The crowd went wild. "Ushers, let this sister come forward for prayer," boomed Benson's authoritative command over the cheering commotion filling the stadium. As she was escorted to

center stage, smiling and waving to her enthusiastic admirers in passing, the Rev. Dr. continued.

“We want to do deliverance for all who are oppressed by the devil this night. I decree, ‘Be thou loosed! Be thou loosed, in the name of Jesus!’ Ushers, bring them forward and our fellow anointed ministers of God will meet them here and cast out every foul spirit of bondage.

The reverends on the high-table made their way to the front as multitudes pressed the aisles seeking deliverance. “Pray! O ye warriors of the Lord, pray! Begin to confess their liberty, join in the battle, Pray! Pray! Pray!” dictated the Reverend Benson like an army chief of staff.

Pandemonium broke loose from the charged militia congregated on the stadium’s battle field. The promised victory of the vigil was being realized.

Pastor Femi watched the proceedings from his front row seat where all of Benson’s junior pastors were seated. He was puzzled. *I thought that Satan and the demons had already been bound and cast out before now by all the anointed Men of God. Why are there still evil spirits here at the end of the program?* He had no answer for that, however. But it made him observe the deliverance session from a different standpoint than he had done previously.

“Come out! Come out! Come out!” one of the reverends repeatedly shouted as he whirled in wide circles with hands on the head of the poor creature he was attempting to deliver.

“I shake you from your stronghold, thou foul fiend of fornication,” another minister had grabbed a woman by the shoulders and was rattling the teeth in her head with his violent tossing her about.

A third, seemingly without ever taking a breath, shot out the phrase, machine-gun like in rapid succession, “Blood of Jesus! Blood of Jesus! Blood of Jesus...” It didn’t appear to Femi that anything particularly was being accomplished by this for the person who had come for deliverance. The “sufferer” continued to moan and roll his head from side to side with no apparent relief.

A recently ordained Pentecostal Bishop, joining the occasion from his ministry-base in Lagos, was sought after by many for the reputation he had gained in the spiritual warfare realm. His was a fascinating routine.

With the person’s eyes closed tightly and arms raised high over their heads, the Bishop doled out his recipe time after time. The results were remarkably the same on each participant.

“Contra masheekika shunta bobundala. Jesu orabindala tanto debundah,” it was identical with each one. Then, as if a mighty surge of spiritual power was being transmitted from on high, his hands would jerk upon the head of the delivered, sending him falling backwards to the floor, “slain in the Spirit.”

Benson found himself elevated on his seeming island of a pulpit, surrounded by a virtual sea of slain victims of spiritual deliverance who lay across the platform at his feet.

It was a convincing display for the assembled multitudes, but not so for Pastor Femi. He couldn’t understand why, if the spirits had already been cast out, how they could still be here. Or, if they were not cast out previously, why were they not? If the first round of prayers was ineffective, why would this one prove to be any more successful?

From his vantage point in the first row, it seemed to be more acrobatics than anything else. Still, the proceedings went on uninterrupted despite his uncertainties about the whole affair.

“Jehovah-Rapha, the Lord that healeth thee, manifest Thy glory! Come! Heal Thy people! The Lord’s hand is not so short that it cannot deliver. The anointing is flowing in the stream of God. Come and drink. Come and bathe. Come and be swept along in its mighty current of blessing,” Benson was imploring the sick, the lame, the blind, and the barren to come forward to the altar of deliverance.

Multitudes rushed forward in the hopes of laying their hand upon the anointed spot that blessing might be transferred to them thereby. Some would have the great privilege of actually having an anointed Man of God lay hands on them.

“Jesus is the same, yesterday, today, and forever! He who healed the multitudes by the Sea of Galilee is alive and present with us here this very night. You can receive, if only you believe. The Bible says, **‘Be it done unto thee according to thy faith,’**” Benson misapplied one of his favorite texts.

He never omitted to do so. It was the insurance that, no matter what happened, he could not be blamed. If a person was not healed, it only showed that *they* had no faith, not him.

It was why he could promise the preposterous and no one ever questioned his claims. The very fact of questioning only proved that one was faithless. Thus, healed or not, no spot could ever stick to the Man of God.

And thus they came, fervently trying to banish all doubt and generate within themselves that faith to receive what God was ready to dispense, if they only met the qualifications. Positive confession was the vehicle they rode which promised to carry them through to their destination of blessing.

“I am healed! I am healed! I am healed!” could be heard from hundreds of lips, not because they actually were, but because,

if they did not confess it, they certainly never would be. It was a type of mental gymnastics; a Pentecostal form of psychological self-hypnosis.

To the remainder of the throng yet in the stadium it appeared that miracles were being distributed on a wholesale basis, free for the taking. The reverends, in the height of their glory, were visibly prominent, rushing about from one to another as if they were the vessels from which the blessings flowed.

Barren received the power to conceive. Headaches fled before the anointing. Barriers to breakthrough were banished. Walking sticks were thrown aside with exultant shouts of victory.

For more than a half an hour the scene repeated itself as seekers, one after the other, eagerly pressed forward chanting their mantras of positively confessed desires. Femi watched them come and go; shouting, jubilating, as they became caught up in the frenzy of it all.

To his right he noticed a withered and obviously malnourished elderly woman. Her left arm was twisted and deformed, probably that way from birth. The leathery wrinkles of her face were what riveted his attention.

Earnest tears coursed down her cheeks as her lips trembled successively, “O God, have mercy on me. I do love You, Lord. Please look upon me in Your pity. Have mercy on me, O God. Heal me, I beg. I believe You, I believe You, I do believe, help me in my unbelief.”

Femi’s heart was smitten with compassion and conviction, longing to do something for this helpless soul. But he could do nothing. The reverends did nothing for her. The Rev. Dr. Benson ignored her altogether. And so, after some time, she returned to her

place in the bleakness of a sorrow which she attributed to her own lack of faith.

Burned indelibly into his memory was the sight of that face, the disfigured arm, and her immortal words of true faith which went unheeded both by man and God. He watched her slowly fade into the crowd. He never saw her again.

“I decree by the anointing that is upon me, every blessing you received will be permanent, in Jesus' name!” Benson had decided to round up the night's session as the hour of 4:00 AM was drawing near.

“Amen!”

“Place your right hand upon your head and stretch forth your left and begin to self-prophecy, ‘I am blessed! I am healed! I will prosper! I will be the head and not the tail! I shall never lack!’ in Jesus' name,” it was Benson's way of drawing things to a close.

The stadium erupted with the thousands of self-appointed prophets all decreeing their own destinies. Femi had started to elevate his left hand when a vivid vision of the gnarled old lady flashed into his mind's eye. *Which kind of left hand will she stretch forth?*

His own dropped limply to his side. He could not bear to participate in such a charade after what he had witnessed. He listened to the multiplied prophets, all prophesying for self and not one of them blessing his neighbor. Femi lowered his own head and offered a silent prayer that God might hear the heart cry of that old mama.

Benson had turned the mike over to the father of the day, the visiting Bishop from Lagos, for the concluding prayer before the attendees would be dismissed with God's blessing.

They were jubilant as they shuffled slowly out the exit gates where enterprising transport drivers awaited passengers to convey those willing to pay their increased rates to their various destinations. Many lingered to drink in the latest release of the Suki Singers which continued to loudly beckon buyers to the cassette tables where business was booming.

Many others plodded along, weighed down with the discouragement born of a seemingly deficient faith. Confess as they may, they nevertheless went home with empty hands despite the reverends' promises and regardless of how many times they decreed blessings which never came.

Femi was among the latter group. Unanswered questions plagued his mind. Particularly troublesome to him was his encounter with the old mama. *What would become of her? Why had the Lord ignored her?* He didn't know.

“God has spoken to me by prophetic revelation regarding our future,” Benson faced Suki in his private office. Immediately after handing over the mike to the visiting Bishop, he and Suki had slipped away, unnoticed, backstage and entered his waiting Mercedes. No one had seen her, seated in the back, obscured by tinted glass, as he pulled away from the stadium grounds.

It was now 4:30 AM and they were alone in the blackness, save for the glow from one small florescent lantern in the corner. He had studiously engineered this moment as part of his carefully contrived scheme.

Stripped of all pretenses, only three things motivated the man: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. It

is why he wanted Suki. She would fulfill all three of the longings of his heart.

Burning passion for her ravishing beauty raged like a wildfire within him which, he thought, could only be quenched by indulging his desires. Secondly, was the lust of his eyes for gain and an increasing source of vast treasures. He saw that her shrewdness and talented popularity would provide much wealth for himself. Finally, pride crowned it all. He would be the envy of every man and every minister. She would make him look exceedingly fine in the eyes of the world.

And so, a prophesy was hatched, like that of an adder's egg, in his corrupted mind. So inflated was he with delusions of his own grandeur, he actually believed that she would be seriously impressed with the divine weight of his pretense of a prophesy.

"Thus says the Lord God, not many days from now, I shall join you in holy matrimony; and you, Benson, and you, Suki, will serve Me together as husband and wife. This shall be for My everlasting glory and the good of My people to whom I will send you with anointing and blessings uncountable. As I have decreed, so shall it be. For nothing shall be impossible with God," Benson recited his prophesy as if he had received it fresh from the portals of heaven.

Suki drew closer to him, gazing with wonderment into his eyes, "But, how can these things be since you are a married man?"

Benson was ready for the question. "What is impossible with man, is possible with God. His word cannot fail, for He does all things well. Do not fear, He will make the way plain in His good time."

She seemed satisfied with this as she slipped her arms around his neck, "May the Lord's will be done," she breathed softly before she pressed her lips to his.

Benson was not a man of the Word of God. He never studied the Scriptures and actually knew little of their content. The Bible, for him, was an accessory, a prop for his weekly religious pageant. It remained closed at the pulpit as he marched about spouting scriptural sounding jargon which lent a degree of credibility to his religious act.

Had he known the Scriptures, he would have fled this wanton woman. He would have known the guidance, protection, and conviction that the Word of God brings to a soul as is promised in Proverbs 6:20-22. This Word would have entered his heart and preserved him from the soon awaiting disaster.

"For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light: and reproofs for discipline are the way of life, to keep you from the immoral woman, from the smooth tongue of the adulteress."

But this had not entered his heart, only lust had, and a lust which was to be the snare of his soul.

Suki's eyes captivated him, drawing him to abandon the cautions of decency and restraint. His defiled will was no match for the allurements of her beauty, the touch of her body next to his.

He could have been saved if he loved the truth. But he did not. He never recalled even reading Proverbs 6:23. Had he done so, he would have been warned against the very evil he was plunging into. **"Do not lust in your heart after her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes."**

Captivated, however, accurately described him as they embraced in secret. She was following the long established pattern

set by wayward women outlined in Proverbs 7:13, 18. **“She took hold of him and kissed him and with a brazen face she said: Come, let us drink our fill of love until morning; Let us delight ourselves with caresses.”**

Whatever reluctance he retained was rapidly eroding before the onslaught of passion rushing as a flood in his bosom. He began to welcome her increasing advances according as it is written in Proverbs 7:21, **“With her many persuasions she entices him; with her flattering lips she seduces him.”**

Suki had slowly pulled away from him, never shifting her seductive gaze from his eyes. In a few tantalizing moments she had lain upon his sofa, her inviting bare skin beckoning him to join her, “Behold, your handmaiden, be it done to me according to your word.”

“Suddenly he follows her as an ox goes to the slaughter” - Proverbs 7:22, never realizing how literally the words of the Scriptures would be fulfilled in his own case. **“The one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense; whoever does so destroys himself. Blows and disgrace are his lot, and his shame will never be wiped away”** - Proverbs 6:32, 33.

Thinking that she had succumbed to his delusion and that his own ends were gained, he rushed headlong into the pit which he had dug for himself.

Suki’s own plans were proceeding like clockwork.

7

Streaming sunlight bathed the still slumbering couple in its late morning heat, warming them uncomfortably. “Ugh,” he groaned groggily, “what time is it anyway?” It took some moments for his blurry vision to focus. “After 11:00, O-wow-o,” Femi rolled over to tell his wife who could have wished he hadn’t bothered to inform her.

“It was a long night after an exhausting week,” sighed the still weary pastor. Blessed had just begun to adjust to her awakened state and the reason they had slept so late that morning.

“Oh, that’s right, the night vigil,” she blinked as if that might help to clear the fog whirling in her still sluggish brain. “It was really a mighty success, the Lord really moved didn’t He?”

Femi only gazed at her with a dull unimpressed stare, but made no reply.

“I mean, you could just feel God’s presence with the thousands of Spirit-filled worshippers,” Blessed continued somewhat apologetically, sensing that her husband didn’t share her enthusiasm.

“And the miracles, there were how many testimonies of healing! It was wonderful!” She paused as if her last exclamation had told it all.

After studying the cracks in the concrete floor for some moments, he quietly asked, “Did you see the mama who came to the altar for prayer?”

“Why, I, uh, saw different ones; there were many who came out, yes, there were many, weren’t there?” Blessed responded nervously as she observed the strange solemnness of her husband.

Without particularly noticing her answer, he began to relate his encounter as if fetching the memory from a far place. “She was the one with the withered left hand, older and thin, not fed properly, in the stained T-shirt and worn-out wrapper; shoeless,” his voice had a distant hollow tone to it as he recalled her haunting image.

She shifted uneasily, not knowing what to make of her husband’s comments. “No, I don’t remember seeing her,” was the only hesitating thing she could think of to say.

He was studying the cracks again, almost oblivious to his wife’s presence. Then, as if uttering a profound reality, he sighed, “She wasn’t healed.”

What is he trying to tell me and why is he so disturbed by this one old woman? Probably there were many people who weren’t healed. Then it occurred to her what the reason was. “Well, I guess she just didn’t have faith, that’s all,” was her relieved conclusion which, she thought, would dismiss the matter and move the conversation on past this bumpy juncture.

“She had faith,” Femi stated matter-of-factly, “You should have heard her prayer,” then, as an afterthought, he added, “She had more faith than the reverends who were praying for her, but she wasn’t healed.”

Blessed’s mouth dropped open, both in amazement and protest, but she found no adequate words to voice her inner objections. So, she merely stared at him with the growing tenseness which is born of confusion’s turmoil.

Actually, she was quite disturbed. There was a mounting misalignment between what she had been told by her church and what she was starting to see in the Scriptures themselves. She was realizing that what the reverends promised and what the people received were two different things altogether.

No one is comfortable in an earthquake. The very ground, once firm and immovable, begins to heave and roll uncertainly, sending chills of fear into even the sturdiest of men.

It was what was happening in Blessed’s soul. The very foundations she had stood upon for long were beginning to shift from underneath her, and she didn’t like the feeling at all.

“Do you remember when we were told to stretch out our left hands and self-prophecy?” He glanced up from his contemplation of the floor in time to see her nod. “I couldn’t do it. I just kept seeing in my mind her own useless arm all twisted and deformed. The thought wouldn’t leave me and I asked myself over and over, ‘How could she ever stretch her’s out?’ What must she have been feeling?” The question was left hanging.

“Sorry, Femi, I’m sorry,” Blessed finally managed to utter the words in barely above a whisper.

There was little else that could be said.

Another Sunday.

“Offering time!”

“Blessing time!”

“Blessing time!”

“Offering time!”

Femi was again expected to perform his routine role of reminding the congregation to give, and give very well. Today, however, would be different. Something new had entered Femi’s heart; a love for the suffering and needy had replaced the love of money which formerly had reigned there.

“Our Lord Jesus said, **‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’**” No one was particularly listening to this oft quoted verse. They had heard it many times from the ministers as a ploy to get them to give more. And they expected that they knew what was coming next. But what was to follow, though, made them sit up with keen interest and surprise.

“The reason for our giving is not so that we will financially gain in return, it is for the purpose of helping those in need,” Femi had their attention now, Benson included.

What in the world is he doing?! The Reverend was fairly bristling with alarm at the negative impact he sensed this would have on the morning’s offering.

“The apostles in Jerusalem asked Paul to remember the poor. Gal.2:10 tells us that this was the very thing Paul was eager to do. In our giving, we should be eager to be a blessing to the less fortunate and not for our own advantage.

“Prov.22:16 says, **‘He who oppresses the poor to increase his wealth and he who gives gifts to the rich - both come to poverty.’**” This last passage struck a responsive chord in the hearts of many who nodded and mumbled their agreement in low tones. Light, once seen, cannot be confused with darkness again.

It also had entered the heart of Blessed as a whirlwind,

scattering what she had neatly arranged in her mind, sending her thoughts in a flurry of disorder. *The Scriptures are plain, but what of my prosperity? If I give it up, I won’t prosper, but if I pursue it, this verse says I’ll come to poverty. Oh, why is Femi doing this? Why doesn’t he just leave well enough alone? I’m so embarrassed. People are looking at me. Dr. Benson isn’t happy at all. What if he loses his job?! Oh, my God, what if he loses his job!!*

She was right. The G.O. wasn’t happy at all. The sword of the Spirit had entered his own soul and judged the thoughts and intents of his heart encountered there. Benson was terrified, panicked, and furious all at the same time.

He was terrified because his puny god of Mammon was powerless against the Word of God’s two-edged sword. Racing in his heart was the panic of losing Mammon’s reward through the morning offering. And fury raised his blood to the boiling point that his underling pastor would dare defy him and his god within their own sanctuary. He knew he must act quickly.

“Eph.4:28 tells us that what we have is to be shared with the one who has need, not for our own personal gain. As Christians, we are to live and to give for others, not for self. If we turn to...”

“P-R-A-I-S-E the Lord!” Benson had taken the mike from Femi in mid-stream, cutting off any further damaging “blasphemies.” In command now behind his pulpit, the Rev. Dr. said, “Thank you, Pastor Femi, you may be seated.” Then, turning to the congregation, he launched into his recovery plan.

“It is very true that we do not give for selfish reasons. Our giving is to the glory of God! Amen?” he was desperately trying to recapture the moment and salvage the impending disastrous effect upon the upcoming offering.

“Amen!” came the weak half-convinced reply from many of the members. Many, however, said nothing.

“We know that God is glorified when we abound, as the Scriptures say, ‘The Lord takes delight in the prosperity of His servant.’ He’s delighted when we prosper and so He’s delighted when we give; for in *giving* is the sure way to prosperity,” his logic was faulty and his quotations were distorted and misleading, but he blundered and thundered ahead nonetheless; hoping that his bluster and self-imposed authority would compensate for his spiritual deficiencies.

“Who was blessed, the man who kept his talent, or the man who *gave all* as an offering to God? I tell you, he who gave all five, was he who *gained* five more,” the President and Founder was a master at twisting the Scriptures off-head.

“It is in giving that we are blessed which will guarantee our hearing, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant’ at the end of the day. So, as we give, let us not be selfish but self-sacrificing to the glory of God.”

He had done what he could to make the best of a bad situation. Almost imperceptibly, he signaled to the watching Suki to lend her aid in reviving what remained in the congregation’s confidence and enthusiasm.

She was good at it. People are moved more by emotion and bodily desires than by appeals to reason. And her performance aroused their flagging feelings and longings that Femi’s words had threatened to squelch.

Her songs were extended longer than usual before the head usher was given the cue to swing into action. It was needful to overwhelm their reluctance to contribute and to drown out Femi’s damaging words. When a sense of gay abandon was evident once

again, the ushers began their row by row ritual of choreographing the seeming now willing offerers.

The results were slightly disappointing, but only slightly so. Much money was still gathered into the Tabernacle’s storehouse. It would have made most men happy, but not the Rev. Dr. Benson. A brooding melancholy had descended upon him. The reality was that his own assistant pastor was no longer under his control.

“We bless the Lord for your words on giving this morning, Pastor Femi,” Pastor Peter greeted his co-worker after the morning service, glancing around to make sure that no one overheard him. Peter was Mary’s, the secretary’s, husband, a timid and compliant man, as he must necessarily be, married to the kind of woman he was. But he was sincere enough, being genuine and simple in his faith, though not a prominent noise-making type.

“Thank God, Sir,” Femi replied to the past middle-aged fellow pastor.

“We need more genuine exhortations from the Word of God. It helps us to keep things in proper perspective, doesn’t it?” his gentle consistent regularity gave him a soothing appeal and an attractiveness which made him likable to nearly all.

“Yes, Sir. It certainly does, Sir. I’m grateful, Sir, very grateful.” Their eyes met in an understanding way and something like mutual respect passed between them as their hands gripped each others’ warmly before departing.

Lord, I bless you for this humble brother and the encouragement he has brought to my heart. May he not lose his reward in Your coming kingdom. These were Femi’s peaceful

thoughts and prayer as he boarded the transport bus for home that afternoon.

“Trouble in the kingdom, dear?” Suki had joined Benson in his private chamber following the service. Not even her teasing manner brightened his moodiness.

“There’s trouble all right, big trouble,” his glance shifted to the left side of the desktop with a sullen disturbed expression. The jaw muscles of his temples flexed and unflexed with the tenseness of repeated clenching of teeth.

“Then why don’t you do something about it?” her tone was a mild challenge mixed with a subtle mockery.

His pride was provoked as she knew it would be. “And what exactly do you suggest I do, sister Suki?” was his offended reply in a way which suggested that there was nothing else to be done than what he was doing.

“Buy me a car, of course. I have it coming to me, you know,” Suki coolly replied with unruffled boldness.

“Oh, that’s just great, Suki, a brilliant solution,” Benson blurted out sarcastically, “Femi sabotages the offerings and now you want me to spend on you what I haven’t even received. Any more helpful suggestions?” he finished with frustration.

“We planted a seed of faith, and its time I saw the harvest,” was the steady and studied reply which bordered on command.

He nearly glared at her for the daring demand, while his calculating mind raced trying to discern which way to proceed. *Is this blackmail? Is she using our adultery to try and manipulate and threaten me? She doesn’t seem to fear me like others do. What if she*

talks? She could ruin my whole ministry. I don’t know if I can trust her, but I don’t have any other choice. Before he could organize his scattered mind, Suki spoke again.

“Hasn’t Femi been spouting off to you and the other pastors that prosperity isn’t biblical?” she asked, obviously in control of the conversation at this point.

How does she know about that? “Yeah, but what of it? What’s that got to do with a car?”

Ignoring his question, like a persistent prosecutor, she pressed her next point home. “And didn’t he tell the congregation that the idea of giving so that they might gain from it wasn’t according to God?”

“Of course he did. We were all there this morning,” he was, with difficulty, maintaining his composure during the interrogation.

“And haven’t you promised for long that there would be breakthroughs and prosperity for planting seeds of faith?” She was in charge and driving at something that he hadn’t discerned as of yet which left him irritated and humiliated, as well as suspicious.

“Yeah, yeah, yeah, but I don’t see...” Suki cut him off.

“And didn’t I plant a N 50k seed of faith some time ago?” and without waiting for the obvious answer, she landed her final conclusion, “Then I want to harvest a car.”

“Look, Suki, don’t push me. I’m in no mood to have you telling me what to do,” Benson sulkily warned her with a touch of anger.

Suki smiled with satisfaction. She had him where she wanted him; in her hand, fearing to say no to her, and ignorant of her schemes. And her smiling at him made him feel like a schoolboy who hadn’t learned his lessons well.

Suddenly she laughed out loud, “Don’t you see it yet? Listen, what better evidence could there be to prove that seed-faith giving is from God than me driving to church in my new car?” She was pleased with the impact this made upon him. “Femi is trying to tell everybody otherwise and I’ll simply be living proof that what he’s saying isn’t true,” she rounded up with a note of triumph.

Benson’s worried and agitated expression relaxed significantly only to be replaced with one of caution. “Won’t they know that its only a set-up if I buy a car for you? That would have just the opposite effect. Everybody will think its just another 419 scam,” he replied as if he had discovered the serious flaw in her proposal.

She only smiled again, “That’s why it will be anonymous anointed men of God from the Victory Vigil that will pay for the car.”

He looked puzzled still and the cloud of anger could be seen mounting on the horizon. “And just who might that be?” he asked displaying his ignorance once again.

“Its you, silly. You put up some money, go to those other big men, and collect the balance from them. You know, ‘God has decreed a thing which must surely come to pass.’ You’re good a that kind of thing, I believe,” she added with a mischievous arch of her eyebrow.

Benson didn’t enjoy taking the place of the tail and not the head or of being out maneuvered by anyone, especially Suki. Yet there was a fascinating attraction to her ingenuity and an overpowering allurements to her person, not to mention her body, which had blinded him from the moment he had set eyes upon her.

Self-restraint had long since left him, so completely had his own corrupt desires consumed him. He could not resist. There were really no other options open to him at this point but to go along with her and follow his own defiled impulses.

In his warbled thinking, the plan itself seemed like it would work. *It ought to give the impression that “faith” giving would bring eventual prosperity. I have to do something to rectify the damage done by Femi’s influence.* That, at least, seemed clear enough to him. *Besides, I may be able to convince enough of the other reverends so that my own portion will be minimal or eliminated altogether.* He consoled himself with this last consideration.

But the manner in which Suki had spoken, or rather, demanded from him, left him extremely unsettled. He knew that he was in a very vulnerable position. *If she talks to anyone about our secrets...*

It is said that there is no honor among thieves. This is true, but there is even less among adulterers. Someone who is willing to violate the most sacred vow of life to gratify a moment’s lust, can never be trusted in anything.

An adulterer regards no one, spouse or consort alike, but only the indulging of his own passion. No trust exists between the treacherous two. It could never be for adulterers are lying coveting thieves ruled only by their own wicked interests. And this is what both of them alike were.

Skillfully she used her body, fame, and promises of increased riches to allure him for her own ends. They are very effective tools. In fact, none better, nor none others exist, to gain what one wants in this world. Truthfully, it is all that is actually contained therein (I Jn.2:15-17).

“I’ve heard you,” he finally said, “I think there are possibilities with your idea, with some modifications, of course,” it was a bluff in order to make it appear that he was still in control. But he really had no better plan. “So, let me work on it and I’ll let you know,” he wanted her to feel like he was calling the shots again and not at her mercy.

“Make it a Honda Accord,” she interjected as if completely ignoring his supposed command of the situation.

The last statement stung his pride like a scorpion while re-kindling the low burning coals of irritation which still smoldered within him. Before they could burst into flames, though, Suki had slipped into his lap and was whispering in his ear with affectionate smoothness, “You wouldn’t want anything less for the future Mrs. Benson, would you?”

Very effectively, this quenched the rising anger and fanned into life a second stronger flame which consumed all else in its path. Quickly his former concerns and cautions faded as he focused his aroused energies upon the immediate satisfaction of the desire before him.

He was really a very foolish man, and she, a very cunning woman.

“Hey, preacher,” it had to be John. Femi grinned involuntarily to himself. He had really been wanting to see John since the vigil and discuss the troubling things he had observed that night.

“Well done-o. How now? Longest time!” Femi greeted him warmly, even affectionately. They weren’t merely friends, they shared genuine fellowship together.

“Fine, fine! What of the wife and children?”

“No problem, they are all fine.”

“Too bad you didn’t have chance to finish your sermon last Sunday. It was sounding good until you were rudely interrupted,” John half-teasingly remarked.

“Yeah, I was just getting warmed up, when, Pyam!, the whole thing was just scattered!” Femi laughed good-naturedly. It really hadn’t bothered him like he thought it might have. There was a peace and gladness in speaking the truth that he hadn’t known previously which left him composed and joyous even in the midst of opposition.

John was heading to the shop, “Want to come along?”

“Sure, why not?” so the two fell into step together, happily chatting about family, business, and local news as they jostled about the busy streets.

Soon the familiar benches were pulled up inside the cloth shop and Femi launched straight into the perplexities bothering his heart.

“Look, John, you were at the vigil, eh, you saw what was happening. I mean, well, some people were healed, I think, but others weren’t. I think you understand me? Like, there was this old mama with a deformed arm who came out, but she wasn’t healed. I guess I just don’t understand why. But I know she had faith. She loves the Lord, I know she does, I heard her prayers. Really, I’m kind of confused about the whole thing. I mean, if God wants everyone healed, and the anointed men of God were there, and the woman had faith, then what happened? Why wasn’t she healed?” his

words poured forth like the cascade of a waterfall during rainy season.

“Hold on, brother, hold on! One thing at a time,” John laughed at his friend’s zeal. “Let’s take a look at several things which, I hope, will help to clear things up. First of all, why do people get sick? Is it true that all illness is either from evil spirits or from our own lack of faith? Is that true?”

“Well, I suppose so, I mean, I think so, isn’t it?” Femi inquired hesitantly. It’s what he had always been told, but he’d never really stopped to think about it much and certainly had never searched the Scriptures to see if it was so.

John smiled at him, “There’s only one way to find out, brother. Oh good, I see that you brought your companion along,” he quipped, glancing at Femi’s Bible.

Femi grinned back at him, “Well, it won’t do us any good lying there closed, will it? Continue!” was his eager reply with pen in hand.

“The Word of God presents four causes for sickness, each with its own remedy. Let’s look at each one. The first is illness caused by purely natural means. Look at Prov.25:16. If you eat too much honey, you’re going to vomit. That’s no evil spirit at work, it’s simply a natural consequence of something that has entered your body.”

“Okay, I can see that. Natural causes have natural cures, kind of like mosquito bites that cause malaria. It doesn’t make any sense or do any good to cast out a demon of fever when you really need to take some Chloroquine or something.”

“Exactly, now the second cause is the will of God. It may be God’s will that a person be sick, even for many years. Turn to John 9:1-3. This man was blind, even from birth, but it wasn’t because

either he or his parents had sinned. It was clearly the will of God for him to be in that condition.”

“Huh, its true. If some reverend wanted to cast out the spirit that was causing his blindness, he would be casting out God Himself! What kind of “deliverance” is that?” Femi was beginning to see the folly of ascribing all sickness to the work of spirits or one’s own sin or lack of faith. But he still needed to ask, “But surely there are some diseases caused by evil spirits, aren’t there?”

“That’s the third reason for some sicknesses. We find that taught in Lk.13:11 where a spirit caused a woman to be bent over for eighteen years. No chemist could cure that one!”

“It’s true. There are some diseases, as you’ve said, which only the Lord Jesus can heal because they have no natural cause and certainly aren’t God’s will,” Femi was catching on and becoming settled somewhat in his mind with the explanation. “I’m going to guess, the fourth reason is lack of faith or sin or something like that. I’m I right?”

“Well done. The final reason that sickness may exist is because of personal sin. And that’s totally different from natural causes, the will of God, or the influence of evil spirits. We see an example of this type in the man who had been sick for thirty-eight years. When Jesus healed him He told the man to ‘**sin no more that nothing worse may happen to you**’,” John explained.

“Where’s that one found, in the gospels somewhere, huh?”

“That’s right. Let’s see, here it is, Jn.5:5, 6, 14.”

Femi paused, reflecting upon these things for some time. It really answered many puzzling questions. But still he was unclear about the role of anointed men of God in the healing process. “That’s all right, I think I’ve got that much. But what about men of

God who have the gift of healing? Can't God heal through them anytime?"

"No."

"No? Why not? If God has all power and He's the same yesterday, today, and forever, why can't He? I thought all things were possible with God?" Femi was really baffled now but he knew John had a reason for what he had said.

"You left out the key ingredient in the whole healing process, Femi."

"I did?" his confusion was deepening, "I give up, what have I left out?"

"The will of God. It is not God's will that all people be healed of all diseases at all times, not even among his faithful followers," John was wanting to confront these false notions head-on so that there would be no mistake about them.

It had its intended effect upon his friend. "Well, you'd better do some explaining on that one, brother. That was quite a mouthful to swallow."

"I was hoping you'd say something like that," John was already happily turning the pages of his well-worn Bible. "No one, even if he has the gift of healing, can heal anytime according to his own decision. Elijah, Elisha, and Paul were all mightily used of God to perform signs and wonders, but none of them could do so unless it was God's will.

"Look at Lk.4:25-27. How many widows and lepers received miracles from the Lord?"

"Why, just one widow and one leper."

"Didn't Elijah and Elisha have the power to perform signs and wonders?"

"Sure they did."

"So why did only one widow and one leper receive blessing from God at that time?"

"Well, the verse says, '**Elijah was sent to none of them**' except to that one widow. I guess that God Himself didn't send him to any of the others," Femi stopped here to ponder a moment then added, "Then that means that it wasn't God's will that all of them receive those blessings from His hand."

"That's right. It also shows us that neither Elijah nor Elisha could perform miracles anytime they chose. Miracles come from God, not from men, no matter how greatly gifted or anointed they may be. They had to wait upon the will and mercy of God."

"But what about Paul, you mentioned him before. Didn't he heal people everywhere he went?"

"God did use Paul to bless many people in this way, but Paul could not heal whenever he chose. Many people weren't healed even though they were some of his closest workers. He says, '**Trophimus I left sick at Miletus**' and he told Timothy to use a natural remedy for his '**frequent illnesses**.'"

"Huh, is that so? Where are those references? I want to write those down."

"The first one is 2 Tim.4:20 and the one about Timothy is found in 1 Tim.5:23. Healing is granted, not by someone's spiritual gift, but by the mercy of God. Epaphroditus, Paul's close fellow-worker, nearly died, but God did not use Paul to heal him. And it wasn't because either he or Paul were lacking in faith either. Not at all. Rather, he was healed because '**God had mercy on him**,' that's in Phil.2:25-27. That's how all supernatural works come to us, by the mercy of God alone."

"So the manifestation of the miraculous isn't really dependent upon us at all, is it?"

“You’re only saying what the Word of God has plainly stated in Rom.9:15, 16, **‘I will have mercy on whom I have mercy...So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.’** Mercy is not an obligation on God’s part nor is it obtained by the will and effort of man.”

“So what was really happening at the vigil? Those reverends looked like they were handing out miracles like people pass out handbills.”

“It looked that way, didn’t it? But are you sure that this is what was really going on? You were on the front row seat, what did you observe?”

“Now that you mention it, some of it seemed to be nothing more than a routine technique that the man had developed on his own. One of them would pray the same exact words in an unknown tongue and then jerk his hands on the head of the person as if the power of God was moving through him, and all the people fell down on the stage. I think that was more acrobatics than anything.”

“Listen, Femi, spiritual displays of ‘power’ are never an indication that the man doing them is spiritual in the least. The Corinthians lacked no gift (I Cor.1:7) and spoke in tongues more than any other church, yet Paul said that they were carnal (I Cor.3:1-3). In fact, there will be *many* who will claim to have cast out demons, prophesied, and performed signs and wonders, *all in the name of Jesus*, whom Jesus said He *never* knew at all, not ever at anytime.”

It was a sobering thing to contemplate, which he mused over silently. The implications were staggering to his fragile Pentecostal frame of reference. But he was past the point of blindly holding onto religious tradition. He truly wanted the truth and its liberating results

to his heart.

He glanced at his notes and realized that he didn’t have that last passage written down. “What was that section about doing all those things in Jesus’ name and Him saying He never knew them? That one was a technical bomb.”

“Mt.7:20-23.”

Femi leafed backwards through his New Testament and found the place. He carefully read it over again and noticed something else in connection with those deceivers mentioned in that passage. “Verse 20 says that we’ll know them by their fruits. How does this fit in with their 419 ministries?”

“Fruit is the only sure evidence of a man’s spirituality. That cannot be imitated, miracles can. The fruit is what we find mentioned in Eph.5:9, **‘The fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.’** If these things are not evident in a man’s life, he is not spiritual, no matter what his title, reputation, or powers.

“Spirituality is not determined by whether one performs signs and wonders or whether a man is healed or not. John the Baptist, the greatest of the prophets, **‘performed no sign’** (Jn.10:41), yet was obviously one of the most spiritual men of all time. Paul himself preached the gospel to the Galatians **‘because of a bodily illness’** (Gal.4:13) and had a physical infirmity which God Himself refused to remove (2 Cor.12:7-10). The Man of God, Elisha, died from a sickness which neither he nor God cured (2 Kings 13:14). And I don’t think that we would want to find fault with any of their own faith, do you?”

“Never! Its clear, brother, very clear. Habah! We’ve really been deceiving people haven’t we?” was Femi’s concluding comment. “But what of all those who were shouting, ‘I am healed,

I am healed'? Didn't they possess what they confessed?"

"Positive confession is a delusion not to be found in the Word of God. Most of the people were only chanting what they *wanted* to see happen, not what *really* had occurred. It's what we've been told to do in order to claim our blessings, but its not biblical."

"But I thought the Scriptures said that we should command God and that we are what we think and that death and life are in the power of the tongue and that if we decree a thing, it shall come to pass?" Femi earnestly rattled off the most frequently abused Bible texts of the reverends of Positive Confession.

John looked amused at how expertly he had recited this barrage of "proofs" for the techniques of this error. "Is that what the Word of God actually says, brother?" he was testing him to make a point.

"Why, sure, I think so, yeah," he didn't sound very certain when asked point-blank like that.

"Where?"

"What?" Femi was not expecting to have to defend himself.

"Where? Where in the Word of God does it say what you just told me? Do you know the references?"

His mouth opened as if to answer but no words came out. He self-consciously closed it again and tried to think, but he couldn't produce even a single one. "Uh, I guess I don't know" he admitted with a slight humiliation.

"If you don't know where to find these verses, and you haven't studied them for yourself in the Bible, then why are you so confident about what they supposedly say?"

John was right. "I guess I just believed what I was told, that's all. Not a very good reason to believe something is it?" Femi confessed with a sense of shame.

"Let's look at them, one by one. You decide for yourself if what you've been told is true or not, okay?" John spoke with gentleness, knowing that his previous point had entered his friend's heart with conviction from the Lord.

"Fem, does a clay pot quarrel with the potter or tell him how to do his work?"

"It could never be."

"What will be done to a son who quarrels his father and mother because they gave birth to him?"

"He'll be rebuked and probably beaten."

"Do we then command God and tell Him what to do?"

"It sounds pretty foolish when you look at it like that, doesn't it? No, not at all. God commands *us*, but we don't command *Him*. But where is that in the Bible, you haven't told me yet."

"Well done. Don't believe what is not clearly taught in the Scriptures. What you just said sounded fine, but we are not to lean on our own understanding according to Prov.3:5. So, no matter how reasonable something sounds, we shouldn't believe and practice it unless it can be demonstrated from the Word."

It was Femi's turn to look amused. "That sounds fine, John, but where do you find those illustrations of the clay and the son in the Scriptures?" he asked with a twinkle in his eye without suppressing a smile.

"Okay, okay, so I need to get the log out of my own eye first, right?" They both laughed together. "Read Isa.45:9-11 and you'll see it."

Femi was impressed as he read the text. It was all there, and besides that, John knew where it was and explained its true meaning as well. "But this doesn't say anything about commanding God, it only shows God's anger at those who would dare question Him or

command Him about anything,” Femi still wanted to know where the false teachers of Positive Confession got their reference.

“You’re reading the NIV, I think,” Femi nodded a “Yes.”
“Let me read v.11 in the KJV, ‘**...concerning the work of My hands command ye Me.**’ That’s where they get it, but I think its obvious from the context that the meaning they give to it could never be.”

“I agree, how can a puny sinful man command the Almighty Creator? Its foolishness. But what of the verse that says, ‘As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he,’ doesn’t that teach us to think positively and confess what we think and it will come to pass?”

“You tell me. Read Prov.23:1-8 and let me know what God is saying.” Femi eagerly took up the challenge.

“Well, God is warning us about being greedy and how our greed can delude us into being deceived by men who speak one thing and do another,” he looked at John to see if he approved thus far.

“Go on, go on,” John encouraged.

“So, the wicked rich man may say very pleasant things, but in his heart, he is thinking something altogether different. We shouldn’t be misled by such lying hypocrisy,” he concluded with confidence that he had understood the passage.

“So where is Positive Confession found in this text?”

“Huh!” he exclaimed with contempt, “No where. No where at all. Cai-o! I’ve never even bothered to read this before. Ah-ah, we really need to examine everything carefully, eh?”

“It’s true, brother. Now, you mentioned Prov.18:21...”

“I did?”

“Yeah, you just didn’t know it,” John grinned at him, “Proverbs has much to say about the tongue and our words, and chapter 18 needs to be understood in light of that. If we have this

broader background as our context, we will see how 18:21 summarizes the general truth it expresses about the tongue.”

“Okay, so what is this broader context you’re talking about?”

“Turn to Prov.12:13. What kind of words does an evil man speak?”

“Sinful words.”

“And what happens to him?”

“He’s trapped by them.”

“Look again in Prov.13:3. What do we learn about our words here?”

“Well, some people control their tongues and are blessed in life, but others just speak anyhow without regard for anyone but themselves and it destroys them,” Femi was already making the connection with 18:21 in his mind, “So, our words really give expression to whether we are righteous or wicked and whether we have eternal life or not.”

“That’s it, brother, its the same thing that Jesus Himself said in Mt.12:34-37. Let me read it, ‘**Out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.**’ It’s the same thing that Prov.18:21 is telling us.”

“I can see it clearly. It seems that these men just kind of pull a verse from the Bible out of the air to support whatever funny doctrines they invent.”

“It’s exactly what has been done. I think you’ll see the same thing as we look at Job 22:28.”

“What does that one say?”

“Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee.”

“Isn’t that a direct promise from God?”

“Was God the One who was speaking to Job, or was it someone else?”

“I don’t know. I just assumed it was the Lord, the way I’ve always heard it quoted,” Femi was curious now, suspecting that it wasn’t God’s promise at all.

“It wasn’t God who spoke that to Job, it was Eliphaz. He’s the one who has been speaking from verse one throughout this whole chapter. His basic message was that all the calamities had come upon Job because of his sin and departure from the Lord.

“Look at his accusations against this righteous man. He said that Job’s wickedness was great (v.5) and that he had never done any righteous thing to others (v.6-9). So, he called Job to yield to God (v.21), receive instruction (v.22), return to the Almighty (v.23), and cease pursuing his own riches (v.24). Then he said that Job would be restored (v.23), God would hear his prayer (v.27), and what he decrees would come about (v.28).”

“Well, wasn’t what he was saying true?”

“Not according to the Lord. Look at what God said about Eliphaz’s words in Job 42:7, **‘The Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, “My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends, because you have not spoken of Me what is right as My servant Job has.”’**”

“So, all his accusations and solutions weren’t really correct at all then?”

“You’ve seen it. Eliphaz was telling Job that no one was honoring or obeying him any longer because of his sinful departure

from the Lord. People thought that God was cursing Job and so they didn’t want anything to do with him. It is what Job himself was lamenting in chapter 19:13-19.

“Eliphaz was saying, in effect, ‘If you would just quit sinning, then people would honor you once again and do the things you command them to as they did formerly.’ But there is nothing in this passage that even remotely resembles Positive Confession.”

“Huh, Positive Confession,” Femi remarked sarcastically, “Its more like Positive Confusion. We really need to just stick to the Bible and nothing else, isn’t it?”

“That’s it, Fem, **‘To the law and the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because they have no light,’** John quoted and then added before Femi could open his mouth, “You’ll find that one in Isa.8:20.”

“Good morning! Anyone around?” it was John’s first customer of the morning.

“Good morning, Ma’am, how de day? You’re welcome!” came John’s friendly reply as he moved to the front of the shop. Femi remained seated, half paying attention to the scene in the shop before him as he continued to rehearse their previous conversation.

The woman had found some cloth which appealed to her and began the bargaining process to beat down the price to her liking. But she had a surprise coming as she had not traded with John before. His first price was only N 100 above his final.

She had been to many other shops before visiting his own. She knew her prices and was shocked to hear how low his first one was. She even said so, “That’s a very good price, Sir, much lower than the opening prices I’ve met elsewhere.”

“We give the glory to God, Ma’am, the Lord Jesus taught us to do unto others as we would have them do unto us. It’s how I try to run my business,” was John’s simple reply.

Femi was paying much closer attention to the transaction now.

The woman seemed taken aback, no, more of moved in her heart by John’s response. She only bargained to lower the final price by N 50 less than his first quote. John measured and wrapped her purchase and then counted the money extended to him as she quietly watched him, showing some evidence of an inner burden unexpressed as of yet.

“It’s complete, Ma’am, thank you very much, I’m grateful.”

“Yes, thank you, Sir, you, uh, have an unusual approach to doing business,” she ventured to remark with a disguised but deep longing to speak to someone who might relieve her personal turmoil.

“The Lord Jesus said that, to the extent that we do something to the least of His brethren, we’ve done it unto Him. I try to treat every customer as if I’m serving Christ Himself,” he replied with all humility.

It was all that the woman needed to hear. She had found a genuine man of God in this humble brother. “Please, Sir, I don’t want to annoy you or waste your time, but may I bother you about a matter that is troubling me?” she asked hesitantly.

“Please, Ma’am, its no bother at all. Please, take your seat, if I can help in any way, I’ll be happy to. What’s on your mind?” was John’s kindly reply.

Femi sat in fascination, unseen from the back of the shop, as the woman unfolded her situation for some minutes. John patiently and skillfully referred her to one passage after another from the Scriptures, pointing out her true need to repent of her sins and

receive Christ Jesus as Lord. Then to his utter amazement, he heard John leading her in a prayer of commitment of her life to the Lord Jesus.

The woman wept and then rejoiced. Her burden had vanished. She had become a new creation in Christ; the old had disappeared, behold, all things had become new.

John welcomed her to fellowship in his home on Sunday afternoon, “My wife will be too happy to know you and have you join with us and other friends as we worship God together. May the Lord bless you.”

She assured him that she would and collected the address from him before leaving.

Femi was dumbfounded. In all of his time as a pastor, he had never actually led anyone to Christ. He wasn’t even sure of how to go about it. *I’ve got a lot to learn. And this simple brother puts me to shame. God bless brother John. I’m so blessed to have him as my friend.*

“John, thank God, brother, thank the Lord. That woman just got truly saved, didn’t she?”

“I believe so. There’s no greater joy than seeing someone respond to the Word of God,” he said with a knowing glance in Femi’s direction, “even among those who have known it for some time,” he grinned at him directly this time.

Femi was embarrassed but happy to think that John had noticed some progress in him. He was curious about the Sunday fellowship as he hadn’t known of its existence before now. “So, you have a Christian meeting in your home Sunday afternoons? How long has that been going on?”

“Oh, for some time now, I guess, I can’t remember exactly. Why, do you want to join us?” he asked with a hopeful note in his voice.

“Sure, why not? I’ve got to keep track of what my friends are up to anyway,” Femi teased with a smile and then threw out a question that had, just at that moment, popped into his head, “Why didn’t you invite her to Christ’s Tabernacle for Sunday service?”

John was silent for a brief moment then flatly stated, “I didn’t want her faith to be stumbled by the love of money she’d meet there.”

Femi only sighed and hung his head. It was a sad but true indictment. Love of money reigned there as the undisputed lord of the place; well, almost undisputed. Those who dared challenge Mammon do not last long in his environs.

And Femi’s days were numbered, though he, as yet, did not know it.



“God is soooo good! I, I hardly know what to say,” Suki fairly gushed into the cordless mike. “It pays to serve the Lord! Amen?”

“Amen!!” came the thunderous rejoinder from the capacity crowd at Christ’s Tabernacle. They knew already what had happened to Suki, about her new Honda Accord. Now, with great relish, they awaited the juicy details, and Suki would be sure to dish them out a full portion.

“You all know how, some time ago on Sunday morning, right here in Christ’s Tabernacle of Glory, I planted my seed-faith offering of N 50k. Oh, Hallelujah! Hallelujah! H-A-L-L-E-L-U-J-A-H!!”

They were shouting it with her in wild abandon. What they had all been longing for, what they all envied and coveted in the depths of their souls, was parading before their very eyes; living proof that God rewards seed-faith offerings. They were beside themselves with ecstasy, anticipating their own breakthroughs.

“Doesn’t the Scripture say that God will do exceedingly abundantly beyond anything we ask or think?” Suki had learned well how to twist the Bible herself.

“Yes! Yes! Yes!” They were all asking and thinking as big as they dared so that God would exceed even that for them.

“It was like God just dropped my car right out of heaven. I don’t even know where it came from except I was told that some anonymous anointed men of God dashed it to me,” she reported with wonderment so as to emphasize the supernatural mystery of it all.

“What I do know is this, God decrees that what you confess, you will possess!” she mouthed the worn-out slogan of every Prosperity preacher who has ever lived as if it were Gospel.

“A-M-E-N!!” they wanted it to be true whether it was or not

“We’re here to celebrate! We’re here to jubilate! We’re here to give thanks! We’re here to plant and to water! The harvest will come! The harvest will come! Say it with me now, ‘The harvest will come!’”

Like so many programmed mechanical robots, the vast assemblage repeated the phrase as if chanting to their god, “The harvest will come! The harvest will come!” The hall rang and reverberated with the cadence.

They were convinced. They had seen it with their own eyes, at least they thought they had. What was actually true was not their concern nor what the Bible truly taught. Enough “evidence” had presented itself to justify their own greed to their deceived minds.

But they were only deceived because they wanted to be. The congregation were victims of nothing except their own desires. Their coming to church was not to learn to deny themselves, but rather to

indulge the deadly longing for riches which had gained a stranglehold upon their souls.

And now, Suki, a Goliath-like goddess, was before them to champion their cause. They hailed her, adoringly, awaiting the command to advance and take possession of the promised land.

“Let’s bring them now! The sacrifices of praise! Thank offerings! Seeds of faith! Let them not be small, for He is worthy! He is worthy of the biggest and the best! Do not disappoint Him and He will not disappoint you! Come! Come! Rise and be blessed! P-R-A-I-S-E THE L-O-R-D!!” Suki’s advertisement slid directly into an explosive song-fest.

On their feet immediately, they pressed forward zealously to give in order to get. They viewed themselves as shareholders in a divine investment plan with more certain returns than any lottery or stockmarket could ever promise.

Blessed was among them, swaying joyously while being swept along by the mighty current of worshipping seekers who flowed to the altar with offerings waving aloft. She was elated, even rapturous. Her long awaited breakthrough was just around the corner, she was certain.

Femi turned and looked at her from his front-row pastor’s seat as she danced up the aisle. For just an instant, his sober grief-stricken eyes met her excited anticipating gaze. Immediately, like cold water poured upon glowing coals, her enthusiasm was quenched and a cloud of conviction rose in its place.

“**Those who want to get rich fall into temptation...**” spoke the Holy Spirit to her heart. Her husband was not the only one who was grieved, so was the Spirit of God, and she knew it. With a look bordering on desperation she was gone, helplessly swept on by the mighty current of worshipers surging behind and all around her.

At the moment, there was no turning back. Her now defiled gift was laid at the altar in honor of whom or what she no longer knew. The program, like an impersonal machine, pushed her along to her appointed place and deposited her there and proceeded on, oblivious to its individual participants.

The participants had a function to perform, that's all. Fulfill it, and all was well, from the program's standpoint, that is. All was not well in the hearts of the participants, though. The disparity between the program and the Word of God could not have been more complete and many were aware of it.

Within Blessed's soul, the struggle she had suppressed for some time resurfaced with full intensity. *Its raw selfishness, what I just did. O, how can I continue like this, torn between two things? Seeking riches is evil, the Word of God says so, but why can't I give it up? Why does it have such a hold on me? Why do I keep returning to it? May God help me.*

She was merely disturbed at the conflict raging within her. Mammon's hook was still lodged in her heart and it would require major surgery to remove it. Only the Great Physician can perform the operation successfully. But he can only apply His skill on repentant patients. And Blessed, as of yet, was not one of them.

Benson smiled at what he saw, Suki and money. All suspicion had vanished from his mind about her sincerity. She was serving his purposes admirably, or so he thought.

In fact, I was not only able to buy the car, there was money left over for me to pocket when all was said and done. Of course, what she doesn't know won't hurt her. She's got what she wants, and I've got what I want. What else matters?

“Evil men will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being

deceived” 2 Tim.3:13. That matters.

“And to what do I owe the honor of your presence here this morning, my dear Pastor?” Mary was already chuckling to herself in her typical manner as Femi entered the church office.

Bowing low with a theatrical flourish, he joined in the lighthearted greeting, “Why, my most high secretary general, it is surely only to visit you and pay my due respects.”

Mary bubbled over with glee at that, “That's a good one! Most high secretary general, indeed. Wait till I tell Peter. I don't think he knows just who he's married to!” she was laughing again at her own humor.

The talk turned to newsy mundane things and eventually to the real reason for his visit. But Mary loved to talk, so Femi indulged her for some time.

“I tell you, that was a mighty display of the Lord's power in the miraculous provision of Sister Suki's Honda, wasn't it?” she went on as if it was so obvious that no reply was needed. “Its a real testimony. I'm so happy for her. She's such a sweet thing and so talented. We're really blessed to have her here on staff,” she chortled on as if every thought found an immediate release through her tongue.

Mary was a simple soul, trusting and always thinking the best of everyone. She and her husband both were long on kindness and short on discernment, not to be critical, but to state things as they actually were.

Its why Benson had chosen her to be the church secretary and why Peter headed up the weekly visitation program. They both

performed their tasks without asking questions while making all people feel welcomed and at home.

“And her cassettes are such an inspiration to thousands. It was really of the Lord that we bought that fancy recording equipment. I don’t know how the ministry could have expanded as it has without her—” she was interrupted by her husband’s entrance into the office.

They were creatures of habit. Every day at precisely 12:00, he pulled up in their ancient Peugeot 504 and they both went off together for the ten-minute drive to their flat for lunch.

“Oh, Peter, is it time already? I’ve been so busy here this morning, I guess time just got away from me. Let’s see, where’s the house key?” she rummaged through her desk drawer where she kept their one house key stored. They were rather frugal and so decided that one key was really all they needed.

“Ah, here it is. Sometimes it slips off this old key chain. We really should get another one sometime, Dear. But, we can do that later. Pastor Femi, we’re off to lunch now so you just make yourself at home, okay?”

“Thank you, Ma’am. Good afternoon, Sir. How has your day been?” Femi actually had grown to like Pastor Peter.

“Fine, thank you. We’ve really been busy lately, though, with all the new people coming to the church since the vigil. Well, we thank God in everything. It keeps me out of trouble, anyway,” he added with a smile.

“Trouble? Which kind of trouble do you get into? Are you keeping secrets from me?” Mary was laughing again at her own joke. She was really her own best audience.

“Please, Ma’am, before you go, I did wish to see the Reverend about a few things.”

“Oh, no problem. Just go on in. He and Sister Suki are just listening to some tapes to decide which songs to feature on the upcoming program,” Mary called over her shoulder as they turned to go. “Oh, Peter, you should have heard how Pastor Femi greeted me this morning. It was so funny. Do you know...” the door closed upon their exit cutting off her near constant banter.

Femi turned to the inner office door where the Suki Singers could be heard at rather high volume from within. He knocked before entering and, upon hearing no response, knocked again and swung the door open according to Mary’s instruction.

Benson and Suki were embracing on the sofa, totally unaware of his presence. Femi froze in shocked disbelief. Instantly the scene of their holding hands flashed through his mind. *So, I wasn’t imagining things after all. I knew that their love of money wasn’t of God but I didn’t know that this was going on as well. This is wickedness.*

Suki was the first to open her eyes which flashed in fear but quickly filled like two black pools with hatred. Benson sensed her reaction and turned to glance behind him. Femi stood stiffly, gazing at them resolutely.

“What in the—how did you get in here?!” Benson bellowed like a wounded bull.

“Mary told me to just come in. So I knocked, and when you didn’t answer, I entered,” Femi replied firmly and with surprising composure.

“That stupid woman. How many times have I told her—Get out of my way,” Benson roughly pushed Femi aside as he charged into the outer office to set Mary straight.

Surprising even himself, Femi turned to Suki and said, “What you are doing is not good-o.”

With curled lips, hyena like, she snarled, “Says you, small boy!” Suddenly Femi saw her for what she really was, an ugly evil beast of a woman. This realization emboldened him the more.

“I Cor.7:1, 2 says, **‘It is good for a man not to touch a woman. But because of immoralities, each man is to have his own wife.’** You need to repent.”

Suki only turned her face away in disgust and said nothing.

Benson had burst outside the office when he didn’t find Mary at her desk. Muttering a low curse, he turned and roared back into his private office to face Femi.

Benson slowly circled Femi, seething with rage like a caged lion, knowing he was trapped, but furiously searching for a way of escape and finding none. Finally, he sprang.

“Listen, you worthless dog,” the Rev. Dr. was trembling, shaking an accusing finger of warning in Femi’s face, “if you breathe one word to *anyone*,” his arms swung wildly to emphasize his point, “you will wish you’d never been born.”

Femi withstood the blast unshaken. He calmly fixed his eyes upon the G.O.’s heaving frame and simply said, **‘Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the bed undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge’** (Heb.13:4).

He may as well of hit him with a club. Benson actually took a step back as if staggered by this hammer from the Word of God. Almost as if dazed, he stared for some seconds until an untamed sound like a low growl emitted from his throat. His eyes had taken on a strange reddish tone and his breath came with short jerks. Then the volcano erupted.

He rushed at Femi swinging madly, but purposefully, to knock his Bible from his hand to the floor. “I’ve told you once, don’t ever quote that thing to me,” he rasped with disdain. “Now get

out or I’ll throw you out!” he hissed, serpent like, through clenched teeth.

Femi retrieved his precious companion from where it had so ruthlessly been scattered and, with one final look of rebuke at them both, passed through the door to the outside into God’s open air.

Inside, the godless couple sat, each brooding silently over what had just transpired. Each were lost in their own separate worlds, thinking only of self. No loyalty passed between them, no concern for the other, for it did not exist. What consumed them both was the preservation of their own schemes, both of which seemed to be threatened.

“So what do we do now?” it was Suki who broke the silence, this time with no immediate solution at her finger tips.

“Do? Don’t worry. I know just what to do to derail this Bible boy. When I’m finished with him, he’ll never have chance to disrupt this ministry again,” Benson spoke with a determined, even chilling, finality.

“You’re not going to do anything, well, I mean, drastic, are you?” she was not wishing to have hand in violence or any such thing.

He whirled and faced her squarely, “I know what I’m doing and this time, you’ll just have to wait and see,” the matter was closed as far as he was concerned.

He liked the regained feeling of command it gave him to see Suki subject to his plan, not even knowing what it was. Yes, he liked that very well.

The curtain pushed aside as he entered the parlor, sending light streaming across the floor which silently announced his arrival. Blessed had glimpsed the flash of light and called out, “Femi, is that you?”

“Yeah, its me,” he replied wearily with a note of discouragement.

She soon joined him with the customary cup of water brought for her man. “How was the morning, dear?” she had noticed his tone of voice upon entering.

“Oh, not too bad. That Mary can sure talk! You’d better be prepared to listen when you come around the church office,” he forced a grin, not really wanting to discuss what he had witnessed at the moment. He was tired of conflict presently and didn’t want to provoke one in his own home at this time.

Blessed seemed satisfied with that and thought he was probably just a little tired. So, she turned the conversation to other things, hoping to cheer him up a bit and then served up lunch.

He enjoyed the peace in his home this afternoon. It was absolutely the opposite of what he had just come from and he basked in its warmth while he could. He loved his wife and he knew that she loved him, a complete contrast to what he had just experienced.

They ate and chatted away about things that he couldn’t even remember afterwards. But it didn’t matter, really, because love was there and trust and delight in each other’s company, which comes from that pure bond of oneness called marriage.

He was greatly comforted and full of thanks for this most tender of God’s mercies in this life, a faithful loving wife and devoted companion. He reached out and gently stroked her cheek, “I truly love you with all my heart.”

Gladness shone through her quickly misting eyes while within her breast fluttered the thrill of hearing those words once again. His words had both delighted and humbled her. She knew that she was not all that she could be and certainly not all that she should be, and he loved her still.

She was certain of it and this was a steadfast consolation to her soul in the midst of all of life’s storms they faced together. “Oh, Femi,” she leaned her head upon his shoulder, “I am so fortunate to have you for my husband. You’ve been so good to me,” she nuzzled close in deep gratitude. “I truly love you with all my heart,” she whispered in gentle affection.

Femi felt the drop of a warm tear upon his hand. “Say, what’s this all about, little lady?” his words were tender, not chastening, but showed his loving concern.

Self-consciously she wiped at her eyes which had uncontrollably spilled over their joy. “I’m just happy, that’s all,” she composed herself somewhat and added meekly, “and very humbled. I’m not worthy of such love,” the tears were flowing again, not bitterly, but in wonder and thanks.

Gently he tipped her chin so their eyes met. “Worthy or not, you are loved and I thank God for you,” Femi spoke with all affection and truth.

Blessed’s arms entwined about his neck where they remained for some time, resting in the shade of her beloved whose banner overhead was love. Neither did he hasten to disrupt the quiet and holy peace of those moments. It was as a soothing balm to both of them. It was as it should be.

The purity and trust of marital love and faithfulness is a true sanctum for spiritual graces. In this fertile environment, there is encouragement without condemnation, correction without arrogance,

and assistance from the mutually dependent. It was this atmosphere that prompted Blessed's next exclamation.

"I was so ashamed of myself on Sunday. Oh, why did I do that?" she was expressing true remorse, not merely frustration. Real love excludes pretense but nurtures honest disclosure of the heart's secrets and longings.

"Do what, Dear?" Femi softly inquired, suspecting that he knew already what she referred to.

"I just joined in with everybody else. I let myself be carried along with the crowd, though I knew in my heart I wasn't truly worshipping God. Really, it was nothing but greediness and envy. How could God ever approve of that!"

Lord, I thank You for this conviction of the Holy Spirit to my wife's heart. Surely Your Word does not return void. "It's true, dear," he answered with kindness in his voice, **'Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart,'** he quoted I Sam.16:7.

"But when I look at you, I see an inner strength to stand for what you know is right. That, I don't seem to have," her eyes were pleading with him for help. "Like when you spoke about offerings that one Sunday, what you said I knew was true, but I was so embarrassed by what people might think or say about me. I just wanted to hide. You're not like that," she looked at him with admiration.

Please, Lord, give me wisdom to lead my wife into Your light. "Blessed, Dear, God's strength is made perfect in our weakness. His grace is sufficient for the helpless," he began, testing the waters to sense her reaction. She continued to lift longing eyes, awaiting more.

"Its when we lose our lives that we find that which is truly

life indeed. Unless you deny yourself, you cannot be Christ's disciple," then hastily added, "It was Jesus Himself who said it," hoping that she wouldn't think he was "preaching" at her.

"It always comes back to that, doesn't it?" she said pensively as she sensed that struggle within begin to surface again.

"Yes, it does. The Scriptures warn us that the double-minded man is blown back and forth like a wave of the sea. That kind of person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord," Femi boldly, but calmly, spoke to his wife.

This time, there was no offended or defensive reaction. She quietly submitted to the words spoken by her husband, pondering them in her heart.

"Where can I read that passage about being double-minded? That seems to describe me pretty well. I," she paused, knowing that she had not been faithful in Bible reading, much less in actual study, up until now, "I want to read it for myself in the Word of God," she finished, expressing both shame and a new determination.

"Uh, let me see if I can find it," Femi reached for his own and began racking his brain for the reference. The pages flipped almost randomly as he silently prayed for the Lord to help him find it for his wife's sake. "I just read it the other day, in the Epistles, I think," he scanned through some of Paul's letters, but this didn't sound like something Paul would have said.

He quickly passed on through Hebrews. *No, this is not it. Lord, please show me. Blessed really wants to know Your truth.* Turning the page, the word "double-minded" seemed to leap off the page at him.

"Here it is," he exclaimed with glad relief, "James 1:6-8."

Blessed looked at him with deepening respect. *Why, he's a true man of God. I hadn't thought of him like that before. He knows*

the Word of God and isn't afraid to speak it, to me or to anyone. I really love this man.

“Thank you, dear,” she had made a note of it, “You’ve really been a help to me,” her eyes reflected the appreciation and respect that filled her heart.

“Thank the Lord, sweetheart, He’s the only One who can enable anyone to do anything good,” Femi humbly replied.

As if returning to a restful haven, Blessed leaned her head on Femi’s breast, surrounded by the comfort of his strong arms. Minutes passed in this calm repose before her question sent gentle ripples upon these still waters.

“The Lord asks a lot from us, doesn’t He?”

Another calm settled upon this holy scene before he simply said, “No, He doesn’t ask a lot, He asks for everything.”

Ripples from this stone would continue to move upon her soul until she yielded completely to the Great Shepherd who was calling her to follow Him.

And that decision, though she had come far, had not yet been made.

Many buyers were jostling one another as they examined first one cloth and then another in John’s ever increasingly popular place of business. Femi was hoping to have a few private moments with him, but it was obvious that it wouldn’t be now. He wandered about, distractedly fingering various weaves, waiting for an opportunity to speak to him.

“John, I really need to see you right away about a serious matter,” Femi spoke in low tones during a brief break in the rush of customers. More had just entered the door.

“Meet me at the house this evening by 5:00 for our home-church meeting. We can talk afterwards. Okay, bro.?” John replied before two women fought their way in his direction, each trying to be attended to before the other.

“No problem. See you then,” Femi called over the arguing women’s heads as he beat a hasty retreat from the crowded shop.

No small boy who dares to challenge a President and Founder will be believed by anyone, especially when he has no witnesses. All of them know he’s already tried to contradict the pillar of Prosperity that this ministry is built upon. Even if he does say something, they’ll only think he’s resorting to slander in his continued rebellion.

I’ve got nothing to worry about from this pest of a pastor. But I’ll eliminate him anyway. No one, I mean no one, dares to talk to me like that! There’s too much at stake not to remove him.

He’ll know who he’s dealing with, soon. Yes, very soon.

“Welcome, brother!” before he knew it, John had given him a warm hug upon Femi’s entering the parlor where several unfamiliar faces had already gathered. “Let me introduce you to some of the brethren.”

As they made the rounds, he discovered that each one expressed a heartfelt welcome to him. There was a holy seriousness about them undergirded with a purity of joy in this loving fellowship. He couldn't help but contrast it with the impersonal self-seeking weekly performance at Christ's Tabernacle.

He was introduced as brother Femi, with no mention of what church he attended or that he was a pastor. Those kind of things didn't seem important to them in this simple gathering. It was kind of refreshing to him, not to have to fill an expected role.

Femi didn't know really what to anticipate. His only frame of reference was the Pentecostalism he had been immersed in for years. This was certainly new and strange to him, though appealingly so.

"Brother Femi, you're highly welcome!" it was John's wife, Priscilla, a gentle quiet woman, full of love and hospitality. "Blessed not with you this evening?" she remarked, glancing around the room, "I hope she's fine. Send her my love and greetings," it was genuine concern and kindness, not a mere formality.

"Thank you very much. No, she stayed home this evening, but she is doing fine, thank you," he was touched by her sincerity.

Another couple arrived. The wife looked familiar somehow but he didn't recall seeing the husband before. *Where do I know this woman from? Has she been to Christ's Tabernacle? No, that's not it. Where do I— That's it! She's the woman whom John led to the Lord in his shop that morning!*

They were introduced to Femi who could see that this woman had continued in the faith. Inwardly, he rejoiced at the goodness of the Lord in saving and in keeping His own.

When he could ask John privately, he voiced his curiosity.

"I thought that you had a Sunday afternoon fellowship. Why are you meeting like this in the middle of the week?"

"Oh, several of the brethren had special programs at their churches this week, so we all agreed to shift it to this evening. All of us wanted to do that rather than cancel it out altogether."

Femi was impressed. *You could never do that at our church. The Reverend would never allow anything to interfere with his program. Even if it was rescheduled, no one would show up anyway.* But these people were there because they wanted to be there. It was not by force, no, something else was motivating them. Femi was more than curious, he was intrigued.

"Who's going to lead the praise and worship this evening?" Femi wanted to know.

John just smiled at him, "We hope that the Lord Jesus does."

The answer took him by surprise. He had never witnessed a meeting without someone being designated to lead the congregation. *What kind of meeting is this, anyway?*

"Well, then, who is bringing the sermon tonight?" It seemed like a reasonable question to him. Surely someone had been appointed beforehand.

"We won't know until after the meeting is in progress. We'll just have to wait and see how the Holy Spirit leads the various brethren. The Lord won't disappoint us," was his confident simple response.

Femi had no category to place that answer in. It was completely foreign to all he had previously experienced. He started to ask another question but only closed his mouth instead. *I guess I'll find out soon enough what this thing is all about.*

"You're welcome to encourage and exhort us with anything that the Lord has put on your heart, brother," John sincerely informed

his friend.

“Uh, thanks, John, maybe I will.” *But how will I know what to say? I haven’t prepared any message for these people.*

Someone began a chorus taken from the Psalms and everyone joined in, seemingly singing from their hearts as unto the Lord. Femi enjoyed it. There was something different about their singing that he couldn’t account for at first.

Its not the song itself or the volume, and its certainly not a performance or religious noise making. There’s an intensity of devotion about it. That’s it, devotion. These people are devoted to Christ.

A brother led the group in a quiet prayer of thanks to the Father for the greatness of His majesty as God. The others prayed along in silence, only contributing an “Amen” at suitable moments. Femi was deeply moved by the simplicity of his reverence.

“Hallowed be Thy name.” These brethren speak to God as if this is really true. A fearful holy respect for the Lord and a humble lowliness among themselves is very evident in all that they do.

“I’d like us to consider for a few moments the greatness of the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Let’s turn to 2 Samuel chapter 9,” a brother unknown to Femi was speaking.

How does he know what to say just like that without having prepared his sermon beforehand during the week? And how did he know when he should speak up?

“David wanted to show lovingkindness to someone for the sake of Jonathan. There was brought to him one man who was lame in both feet who lived in Lo-debar, which means, ‘a thing of nothing.’

“David showed him kindness, restored all the inheritance which had been lost, and brought him to his own table to eat

regularly in the presence of the king. Mephibosheth prostrated himself and said, **‘What is your servant, that you should regard a dead dog like me?’** That’s in verse 8.

“This is what the God of heaven, the great King of glory has done for us. He wants to show His lovingkindness to unworthy sinners for the sake of the Lord Jesus. He restores to us the spiritual inheritance which had been lost and brings us into His very presence to partake of the blessings of His Word.

“Truly we are no better than dead dogs, things of nothing, when we consider our own miserable and wretched state because of our sins. This man sat at the king’s table where the lameness of his feet was no more seen. All he saw there was the face of the king himself while sharing in daily fellowship with him.

“God, in His infinite mercies, has looked down upon us; lame, dead dogs, nothing, and rather than casting us off as disgusting objects of His wrath (which we surely are), He was looking to show His love to us and restore us from our miserable state.

“Thank God for Christ Jesus! Where would we be without Him? May the Lord be glorified in each of our hearts and lives for His name’s sake.”

Solemn yet grateful “Amens” could be heard throughout the now hushed parlor. Silence continued for some minutes as seemingly each one was reflecting deeply upon this Word from God and praying to their Father in secret.

Femi was nearly breathless with wonder as the brother spoke. He had never heard teaching like this before. It was marvelous in his eyes. *And he’s just a simple brother, not a professional preacher. He said more in these few moments than most Reverends say in two hours. Amazing!*

“Let’s join together and sing ‘O God of Matchless Grace.’

I think we have enough copies for everyone to share,” brother John made his contribution to the worship.

O God of matchless grace,
We sing unto Thy name.
We stand accepted in the place,
That none but Christ can claim!
Our willing hearts,
Have heard Thy voice,
And in Thy mercy we rejoice!

The song continued through its remaining three stanzas expressing magnificent truths about the Lord Jesus and His so-great a salvation. *I've never sung songs so profound in spiritual depth before. All we know are those silly little 'ditties' about being a 'winner man' or telling the Holy Ghost that 'we're here again,' as if He didn't know we were there anyway. This is deep!*

A sister prayed a simple prayer of thanks for the Lord having shown His mercy to her after the hymn concluded. Another silence followed. Some heads were bowed, others lifted their own upwards in adoration to the God of matchless grace.

There was no hurry to rush ahead with the evening's program. There was no program directing them, no time schedule to be maintained, no passive observation of other's worship. They were all participants.

Had they done and said nothing, nothing would have been done at all. Yet no pre-arrangements had been made, no pre-service meeting with the “staff” as Femi was accustomed to.

“I want us to consider this love and mercy from yet another aspect as well. Thank God for what our brother has shared. It is a

true encouragement and refreshment to our hearts, I'm sure. Turn to Rom.8:28-39. Someone please read this for us,” still another brother was opening the Word of God for the blessing of the group.

And so the meeting continued; some praying, a testimony was shared, a prayer request mentioned, both for prayer as well as for counsel from the Scriptures. All was interspersed with choruses and hymns as brother after brother had contributions of teaching and exhortation from the Bible.

Its all so orderly, yet no man is telling anyone what to do. They treat each other as equals, no, more than that, like family. And the women don't lead or teach. I'll have to ask John about that later. Its completely different than Christ's Tabernacle, that's for sure.

“The Lord has blessed us with many precious thoughts about His love, this evening,” the husband of the woman from the cloth shop began. *Its true! I hadn't thought of it until now, but there was a definite theme with all that was shared throughout the evening. God is wonderful!*

“Let's remember Him now for the greatest expression of His love to us, in the gift of His own Son, represented by the bread and cup before us.

“Its really a simple memorial, not a ritual at all like so many have turned it into. Let's consider the bread together for a moment before we partake.

“The mature grain was cut down in its prime, then sifted and crushed to a fine powder. It was pure and uniform in texture, with no contaminating elements of its own.

“Then leaven was mixed into the dough and placed in a heated oven for an appointed time. There, the leaven was killed so that it could not spread its influence any longer.

“What resulted was bread for man which satisfies his hunger and provides both life and blessing. **‘This,’** Jesus said, **‘is My body.’**

“He gave Himself for us and was cut off from the land of living though He had no sin of His own. He was bruised and crushed for our iniquities. Our sin was placed upon Him like the leaven was mixed with the dough.

“In the fiery oven of God’s wrath upon the cross, sin was destroyed once and for all. It is Christ who is the bread of God, giving life to the world.

“He wants us not merely to admire, but to partake. This bread is to be received and taken into our innermost being where it will transform us from the inside out. He will become our life and strength. We will live through Him.

“The cup represents what the Lord Jesus has done on our behalf. The bread shows us Christ’s person, while the cup portrays His work of redemption. It symbolizes the blood of a new covenant; a whole new relationship with God.

“We drink the cup to show that the blood of Jesus cleanses us within. It does not regulate us from without like the old covenant attempted to do. That was an external law which made demands but provided no power to do what it required.

“Jesus has done something altogether different. He has given a new spirit, cleansing within, and His law written upon our hearts, not on tablets of stone.

“In Paul’s letter to the Corinthians he says, **‘Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup.’** That’s found in I Cor.11:28. That’s why it is called ‘communion;’ because it expresses our true relationship with God in fellowship with Christ Jesus our Lord.

“We must walk in the light in order to have fellowship with God. And it is in walking in the light that we also have fellowship with each other as we are doing here this evening. I trust that we will all truly and humbly ask God to search our own hearts so that we may partake in a worthy manner for His name’s sake.”

‘Amen’s’ were softly heard from most of the brethren gathered that evening as they worshipped in the beauty of holiness.

Another brother prayed a simple heartfelt and reverent prayer of thanks to God for the gift of His Son, after which, the bread was passed from one to the other. Each took a piece and ate it with a deep meditation mixed with sobriety and joy. The cup was shared in a like manner by one and all.

Some moments of holy silence lingered in the stillness of their communion. No one seemed anxious to break the tranquillity of that atmosphere. Finally, one brother related with sympathy, “Our brother, Wale, wounded his leg on the farm and will likely not be able to join us for some time. He sends his love and greetings to everyone.”

“How will he be able to finish planting his farm, then? Does he have any help?” brother John inquired with concern.

“I don’t think so. He was even wondering out loud what he was going to do. Maybe we can help him,” he added eagerly as he glanced around the room.

“Its a good idea, brother. When can we arrange to do it?” John asked the general question to all assembled. Following a brief discussion, Saturday was decided upon for all to come and complete the planting.

“We sisters will provide the food for everyone as well as helping with the farm work,” Priscilla added with willing gladness.

“Thank God for wives of virtue,” one brother interjected with a broad smile. ‘Amens’ were heard from the whole group of contented men which fell upon their spouses’ ears of this loving fellowship.

“Also, let’s ask the Lord what he might have each of us do as far as possibly giving some amount for his family’s feeding during the time of his recovery. Whatever the Lord may put upon our hearts, we can bring for them on Saturday.”

“Its good. Let’s commit them and ourselves into the hands of God before we depart.” Simple prayers of thanks filled with love ascended from several, one after the other, as the others silently agreed with the heartfelt petition of each.

Warmth of affection for each other was evident in all their association as they remained in casual discussion for some time until they successively headed for their homes. Femi’s head was fairly swirling with all he had just experienced. It was all so new and different from anything he had ever known.

And he liked it. He liked it very well. His soul was refreshed and encouraged as no other gathering had ever done.

“Well, brother, how did you see our little meeting?” John inquired with a smile after the others had gone.

“It was wonderful! I’ve never seen anything like it. I was really blessed, and humbled. And the other brothers taught from the Scriptures like I’d never even read the passages before. Well, look, I’ve got many questions I want to discuss with you about it all, but its getting late. Maybe we can fix a time soon?” he concluded with a hopeful note.

“Sure, why not? Oh, speaking of discussing, didn’t you want to talk to me about something? It sounded pretty important.”

“Oh, yeah. I guess I do. I almost hate to after such a blessed time as this. Some ugly things are happening, John,” Femi reluctantly related with a grieved tone.

The encounter with Benson and Suki in the office was related in detail, both to unburden his own heart as well as to seek advice on what to do. John listened without interruption in somber silence to the sordid tale. A thick cloud of sorrow mingled with indignation hung heavily upon the two, alone in the parlor.

Several revolutions of the clock’s persistent second hand passed before John spoke. “I’m not surprised, brother,” was his simple comment.

Shock would best express Femi’s reaction to this unexpected response. “What do you mean, not surprised? You mean you’ve seen something similar?” Femi inquired incredulously.

“No, I’ve not witnessed first hand what you have,” John was speaking cautiously and purposefully, looking him straight in the eye. “But I have suspected it for some time,” he added, studying what effect this had upon his friend.

“But what made you think so? I mean, I work with him as close as anyone...”

“Anyone except Suki,” John injected mid-sentence with a note of scorn. “I guess you’re right. But, how did you know?” Femi was perplexed.

“One thing motivates the man, the love of money. I think you’ve seen that much?” John paused while Femi shrugged an acknowledgment of agreement. “And what does the Scripture call the love of money?”

“The root of all evil.”

“Exactly. If you are longing after money, you will do virtually anything in the pursuit of it. Doesn’t the passage say that

a man falls into temptation, a snare, and many foolish and harmful desires when he wants to gain riches?"

"Its true."

"That's why I'm not surprised. His love of money has plunged him into other lusts as the Word of God says it always will."

"But, I never expected that a Man of God of his stature would do such a thing. I mean, he's the president and founder of a very large ministry."

"So was Caiaphas. He was a lover of money and he crucified the Son of God! So why is this amazing to you, other than you had the unpleasant experience of encountering his sin right in the act?" John drove home the point with insistence and disgust over the whole affair.

Then, softening his tone he added, "I'm sorry, brother, that this has happened. You did well in what you said to both of them. Perhaps the Lord will lead them to repentance," then as an afterthought, "but its not likely."

Femi let this sink in for awhile, pondering what he should do further, if anything, in the situation. "What should we...I...what should be done now?" He was truly at a loss.

Calmly John quietly replied, "Prepare to suffer persecution for the sake of righteousness."

9

"I'm pregnant."

Only the clatter of his gold-plated pen upon the glass topped desk broke the tense silence in the Rev. Benson's office. "What did you say?"

"I said, 'I'm pregnant,'" Suki did not shift her gaze from the plush carpet pillowing her feet.

Protesting squeaks from the springs of his executive chair pierced the silence as he leaned back in panicked bewilderment. Cold beads of sweat dotted his upper lip. *This could finish me. Stupid useless woman, why did she have to go and do that?*

"I thought you said you were taking birth control pills," he finally burst out accusingly.

"They're not always 100% effective, you know," she shot back with irritation in her voice.

“Oh, great. Now look at the mess you’ve got us into!” he retorted with disgust.

“I didn’t exactly get this way by myself, Benson, Dear,” her sarcasm bit him like salt in an open wound.

He bolted to his feet threateningly but caught himself before grabbing at her. He turned to pacing the floor behind the barrier of his massive desk, while Suki sulked hotly, returning a despising stare in his direction.

“Listen, Suki, if anyone finds out about this...”

“You and I both will be finished,” she cut in contemptuously.

“Look, O, if you weren’t so stupid as to get yourself pregnant...”

“Don’t you call me ‘stupid,’ you pig! I don’t think anyone was holding a gun to your head every time you lay with me on this sofa!” she spat the words defiantly in his face.

Involuntarily tremors of rage shook his frame as his fists clenched and unclenched uncontrollably. Benson’s feet started in her direction, the veins of his temples bulging in wrath, as his hand raised to strike her upon the face.

“If you dare touch me, I’ll shout to everyone in this city how you impregnated me!” Suki screeched nearly hysterically.

As if encountering an invisible wall, he staggered backwards stunned at what he realized he was about to do. The Rev. Dr. sank limply like a deflated balloon into his swivel chair and stared dumbly at Suki who was still poised for the conflict.

Lamb like now, Benson covered his face in his hands. “Suki... I’m... I’m sorry. I don’t know what came over me. The news... it... its so devastating. I guess I just lost control of myself...” his words had a hollow dazed tone to them.

She said nothing in reply but continued to watch him warily with even less respect than previously.

Finally, with a sense of being overwhelmed, he rather stupidly said, “So what are we going to do?”

The question was strategically left hanging by Suki to impress the point that he was in a dilemma which he had no solution for. When she sensed that his helplessness was at its highest ebb, she coldly stated, “We abort the thing.”

He started up at this as if jolted by an electric current. “Abort? That’s... that’s rather drastic, isn’t it?” his eyes were pleading that there might be some other avenue to resolve their disastrous difficulty.

Suki looked down upon his now pathetic form, weak and spineless in her calculating estimation. “Do you have any better solution?” she asked with a note of haughtiness still lingering in her voice.

He only slowly shook his head. Too much was at stake to spare an unborn fetus. He reluctantly conceded to the suggestion with a heavy sigh of defeated resignation. “But how can we do it? Everyone knows me, and your cassettes and photos are all over Nigeria.”

“There’s one doctor in Lagos who specializes in secret abortions. You’d be shocked at the prominent women of fame who’ve been to him. I’ve talked to many of them myself,” she was in control of the situation once again.

“I’m sure he doesn’t offer his services for free,” Benson remarked, always keen when it came to the subject of money.

“Its only five hundred thousand,” Suki dropped the sum matter-of-factly, knowing that he would be aghast at the figure.

“Five hundred thousand!? How could any simple medical procedure amount to that?” he spluttered in disbelief.

“We’re not paying for medical expertise, we’re paying for silence. Reputations are expensive commodities, aren’t they?” she added, knowing that he had no alternative but to comply.

Suki understood him all too well. To his twisted and crooked heart, no other option existed. He was willing to pay a price of blackmail to conceal his lustful crime even though murder was the means of camouflage.

He faltered but briefly, convinced that there was nothing else to be done except this desperate plan. The kingdom he had erected was toppling and he would do anything to preserve it. Yes, anything at all.

“Okay, I don’t see any other way out. When will you do it?” he had already resigned himself to what he believed to be inevitable.

“I can leave for Lagos today and return on Saturday so I won’t be missed on Sunday. People might start to ask embarrassing questions if they don’t see me in the service, don’t you think?” she asked it with a slight challenge in her voice.

Is this crazy woman going to talk? Fear had gripped his cold heart at the prospect. I’d better not provoke her. She could ruin everything I’ve worked for during all these years.

“Your plan is a good one and I’m sure everything will work out fine,” he hastily stuttered. “Let me just access the safe under my desk and I’ll bring you the money,” yet Benson hesitated as if uneasy about something.

“Are you sure you can trust that Doctor not to speak one word of this to anyone?” he anxiously inquired.

“Are you sure you can trust anyone?” was her only half-mocking reply.

Actually, he was beginning to wonder. Suki had seemed so trustworthy and loyal before; before the beginning of their adulterous scandal. Now he was questioning that himself. It was a very unsettling feeling, but he was trapped and he knew it.

“Here’s the money. What you do, do quickly. Phone me when you get back in town.”

Without a further word she slipped the bundles into her waiting purse and proceeded out of the office door, not even looking back as she left.

I’ve got to move quickly to bring her under my control. This is already out of hand. How to get rid of my wife is the big problem now. As soon as she’s out of the way, Suki will be mine, both her body and her money, and with no more threats of exposing any secrets.

I know what to do! I’ll convince the other pastors that my wife is bewitched. Yes! That’s it! They will all turn against her then and I’ll come out of it shining as a humble suffering hero. O, it will work-o! It will surely work!

“Good afternoon, Sister Suki, we are so happy to see you. You are highly welcome! Please, have your seat,” was the overly cordial greeting lavished by the proprietor of V.I. Estates. “Quickly, bring our distinguished guest cold bottles of Capel and Eva for her selection,” he turned and smiled at Suki who was thoroughly at home in the plush surroundings.

“I think you know the purpose of my visit to your fine establishment this afternoon. I trust that all is in order so we can

proceed and conclude the matter?" she inquired, expecting nothing less in reply.

"Certainly, Ma'am, all is in order. We've been anticipating your arrival and there is no problem at all in obtaining exactly what you've come for," was the eager reply as a chilled crystal wine glass was set before her and peach Eva was selected.

Suki sipped slowly at the beverage in the luxurious reception room before casually remarking, "I have the five hundred thousand with me, if you'd like to bring out the agreement for signature."

Immediately the proprietor's assistant disappeared into an inner office, returning momentarily with the requested documents. Suki leafed through them to insure that all particulars had been addressed appropriately. Being satisfied, she affixed her signature to the papers and handed over the money.

"Very fine, Ma'am, we are quite honored to have you as our client, indeed. Your down payment this afternoon will assure the timely completion of your project within the next three months, all in strictest confidence, of course."

"You're well done. I think that the shipment of Italian marble for the entry way will soon arrive so as to not delay the completion of my condominium. Am I correct?" Suki asked only to make the point that she didn't want any hitches in occupying the newly constructed luxury condo along the exclusive stretch of V.I.'s shores.

"Certainly, everything is moving along according to schedule with no problems, no problems at all. All details will be completed according to your specifications well within the allotted time," the proprietor gave all assurances that it would be so.

"I'll pay you a visit next month to check on your progress," and then, as if including him in a deep secret, she added, "and don't

spoil my surprise by letting anyone know about my purchase until after I move in; Agreed?" she had moved very close to him, employing all of her charm in the entreaty.

It worked. The silly man joined in the clandestine affair like he was guarding some sacred mystery entrusted to him by a priestess queen. "My lips are sealed, and my staff are under the strictest of orders according to your request. You can rest assured, not a soul will discover anything through this establishment, that I guarantee."

Suki gave him a teasing sensual smile. "Its a pleasure doing business with someone like you, my dear Sir." And, with that, she collected her copies of the real estate transaction and headed for her hotel suite in order to wile away the time until her return on Saturday.

Huh! Pregnant indeed. What kind of fool does he think I am, anyway? I would never be so careless as to become pregnant by him or anyone else. There's too much at stake to allow that to happen. He's really a stupid man, giving me five hundred thousand for a pretended abortion. Well, that's his problem if he's that foolish. I've got what I want, at least for now. I'll soon be in my new condo, and all paid for by the Rev. Dr. himself. He really doesn't know who he's dealing with. No, he doesn't know at all.

10

“How was the meeting, dear,” Blessed asked almost routinely, expecting nothing more than an offhand, ‘Oh, it was fine,’ response. She wasn’t prepared for what followed.

With an enthusiasm about church matters rarely witnessed in her husband, he eagerly drew her to his side as he began to relate all he experienced there. She listened with a growing interest and a strange warmth welled up in her heart, akin to a longing.

“It sounds, well, simply wonderful, Femi,” she was having trouble trying to envision all he had described. “Do they meet together often?”

“Every week, usually on Sunday afternoon so as not to compete with other church services,” he was watching her closely and observed her favorable impression. “Maybe we’ll go together next time, eh?” he added hopefully.

Her eyes met his with a tender seriousness, “I think I’d like that very much.”

“It was all so new, I mean it was very fine-o, but different in a wonderful kind of way. I can’t really explain it, but I’ve got a lot of questions for you,” the early morning sessions at the cloth-shop were becoming a regular event.

John laughed at Femi’s exuberance. “Okay, my friend, enter and ask away! Then let’s see what the Word of God has to say about all these things,” as he took his hand, leading the way to their familiar benches.

“Uh, I hardly know where to begin. I want to know about pastors and leadership and why there’s no pre-arranged program and how the brethren know what to teach and when to begin and which songs are to be sung and...”

“Slow down, brother, one thing at a time,” John chuckled with a broad grin, “just come down small and we’ll look at first things first,”

Femi was only a little bit embarrassed at his eagerness but smiled back, “Okay, so where do we begin?”

“At the beginning, where else?” John quipped. “Let’s look at the first mention of the church in the Scriptures found in Matt.16. I think we’ll discover there the foundational principles upon which everything else is built. Go ahead and read verses 13-18.”

Femi scanned the text then looked up, “Okay, I’ve read it.”

“Several things are to be noted here. First, no one can become a member of this church unless the Father in heaven reveals to one’s heart who Jesus truly is. It is a supernatural work to make Him known as the Christ.”

“But doesn’t every Christian believe that?”

“Not necessarily. Some in Jesus’ day thought He was someone other than He truly was; a prophet or miracle worker, but

not the Christ, the Son of the living God. If you believe in an imaginary Jesus, you will never be blessed because an imaginary Savior doesn't exist in reality, only in your own mind."

"So what is the significance of Him being the Christ and the Son?"

"'Christ' is the New Testament word for 'Messiah' in the Old Testament. Both terms means the same thing: Anointed. Now in the OT, it was the priest and the king who were especially anointed by God. The priest was the only valid mediator between God and men and the king was the only legitimate ruler over the people of God.

"In confessing Jesus as the Christ a person is saying, in effect, 'I recognize no other means of acceptance before God and that no one else will govern and rule my heart except Jesus alone.' I think you're getting me?"

"You're saying that nothing else will make a person a member of the church but this revelation of the true Jesus by God Himself. If a person is trusting in anything else to commend himself to God or if anyone or anything besides Him is directing and ruling his life, he is not a true Christian at all. I think I'm right, eh?" Femi wanted to see if he'd really grabbed what John was saying.

"You've got it. Now, let's see what Jesus says about the church in verse 18. Whose church is it?"

"Jesus says that its '**My church.**'"

"If it belongs to Him, then who does the church not belong to?"

"Well, it doesn't belong to anybody but Him."

"Not to any President and Founder? Not to any denomination? Is that right?"

"No, it couldn't possibly belong to any of them or it wouldn't be Jesus' church again. That's pretty basic, but what does that say about what's going on in Nigeria? Everyone claims 'This is my church,' 'This is my ministry.' What is really happening?"

"You've seen something, brother. Let's address that one a little later when we discuss leadership. But I want us to consider something else from verse 18 before moving on. How will Jesus' church be built?"

"Why, He says that He will build it."

"Does the Lord build with wood and cement? Have you ever seen a signboard saying, 'This is the church that Jesus built'?"

"Of course not. That would be absolute foolishness."

"Then the church that Jesus builds, the one he calls '**My church,**' is not an earthly physical structure or institution. It is not identifiable by any building nor does it exist in any one denomination or organization. His church is completely other than the religious empires of men."

"Its true, though I'd never really thought of it that way before. Its a spiritual thing, not like a business or corporation. But if its not like those things, what is the church?"

"The church is never actually defined in so many words in the Scriptures, but it is described by several illustrations. In those we learn what Jesus' church really is.

"We believers are all brothers because we belong to one family with God as our Father. Jesus told us this in places like Mt.23:7-10. Verse 8 says, '**you are all brothers.**' Its why the Lord has the brethren in His church refuse all carnal titles of religious distinction.

"A second description is that of the Shepherd and His flock. The church is made up of sheep who all follow the voice of their one

Shepherd, the Lord Jesus.”

“Isn’t that found somewhere in John’s gospel, maybe chapter 10 or so?” Femi was already searching his own Bible. “Yeah, here it is, Jn.10:1-16. Listen to this, **‘The sheep follow Him because they know His voice. A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him...and they will become one flock with one Shepherd.’**”

“Why is it then that so many are running after men who teach and practice such funny things? And why do we see churches scattered everywhere competing for sheep when Jesus says that His church is **‘one flock’**? It doesn’t seem right at all,” Femi concluded slowly shaking his head in amazement.

“Its not right. Men have exalted themselves to occupy the position in the church which belongs to Christ alone. It has created chaos and made seekers of God into followers of men. Its a great evil.

“If we turn to Eph.2:19-22 we discover that the church is a spiritual house, a temple, actually, and the very dwelling of God through His Spirit. Fem, what is meant by calling the church a temple?”

“Well, the temple is where the people would worship God.”

“Good, what else?”

“It is a holy place where God was glorified and, if I remember rightly, I think that the glory of God shone there in some kind of light or fire. Is that right?”

“Exactly. It is also the place where sacrifices are offered to God and where men can learn from the Word of God. Now, summarize what it means for the church to be the temple of God.”

“You want me to tell you?”

“Why not?”

“Okay, I’ll try. The church should be a holy place for God to dwell in where He is glorified by His people offering up spiritual sacrifices to Him and proclaiming His Word to men. I think that’s it, eh? Did I leave anything out?”

“Well done-o. Only one correction. You said the church *should* be this. Is it or isn’t it?”

“Many churches aren’t like this at all. That’s why I said the church should be that way,” Femi paused here knowing that John was heading somewhere with his question, but he didn’t know quite where.

“Does Eph.2, where we read, say that this is what the church *should* be or that this is what *it is*? Do you see the difference?”

“Let me read it over again,” he studied the text carefully this time. “It seems to be saying that this is what the church is, not what it should be as if it were merely challenging people to be something other than what they actually are at present.”

“That’s exactly what I Cor.3:16, 17 tell us. Let me read it. **‘Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.’** I think you’re getting me?”

“Clearly. A holy temple is what Jesus’ church *is* not what it is *hoping* to be or what it *claims* to be.”

“You’ve got it. Now, what would you say about something that claimed it was the temple of God but was full of rubbish and filth, offered no acceptable sacrifices, taught other things besides the Word of God, had no evidence of the presence of God within it and was ruled by thieves and robbers?”

“Well, I’d say that it was not the temple of God at all regardless of what they may claim it to be.” Here Femi settled into

a sober reflection on what he had just uttered. “If its not truly a temple, then its not the church at all; certainly not the church that Jesus is building,” he met John’s eyes with a light in his own as if a profound revelation had just entered his heart. And, indeed, it had.

“The church that Jesus is building is described as a bride in places like Jn.3:29, 2 Cor.11:2, 3, Eph.5:23-32, Rev.19:7-9; really the whole book of Song of Solomon teaches this...”

“Hey! Slow down. I’m not a cassette recorder, you know! This poor hand of mine can’t write that fast,” Femi interjected half-teasingly.

“Sorry-eh. This truth of the church is so liberating, I just get carried away when I talk about it. I’ll try to control myself, okay?” John grinned back at his friend. “Here’s the references again.” John went over the list as Femi noted each one in his jotter. “Got ‘em? All right, let’s look at the 2 Corinthians passage briefly.”

They turned together in their Bibles and Femi read, “**I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to Him. But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.**”

“Two primary things characterize a bride; purity and devotion. She doesn’t chase after other lovers but has affectionate devotion for one man alone.

Who would want to marry a woman who wasn’t pure and devoted to her own husband?”

“Never!”

“A pure, devoted, and loving bride is what identifies the true church of Jesus Christ. Let me ask you this, does a bride need someone shouting in her face to make her love her bridegroom?”

Femi recoiled at the absurdity of the suggestion. “Of course not. If she didn’t already love him, no amount of commanding, however loud and insistent it was, could ever make someone love someone else,” he paused as his brow furrowed, deep in thought. “Shouting prayer-points in the bride’s face is a pretty useless practice, isn’t it?”

“I think so. The bride doesn’t need any artificial stimulants to arouse her affection or to express her love to him. She knows what their mutual concerns are and can freely speak to her bridegroom about them at anytime.”

“Brother, this is deep, yet its so simple and plain. I don’t understand why I haven’t seen it before now. Maybe I wasn’t really willing to see it. That’s probably it. I was seeking other things in the church but not really seeking the Lord Himself.

“Its an embarrassing and shameful thing to consider and to admit,” Femi was more thinking out loud than speaking to John who was listening with thanks for the light which was pouring into his friend’s heart.

“We thank God for all the light He grants us, whenever and however He chooses to reveal it. Praise the Lord,” John expressed with quiet gratitude.

“Amen, amen,” Femi softly replied with heartfelt reverence. “But I think that’s not all, is it? Let’s continue.”

“No problem. The most frequently used illustration of what makes up the true church is that of servants/slaves. Real Christians are slaves of God. Turn to Rom.6:15-23 and let’s read it together. Notice how many times the idea of slavery is mentioned.”

Both read silently for some moments until Femi commented, “Cai! There are many-o. It’s clear, either we’re slaves of sin or

slaves of God. But I'm not understanding verse 18. How can we be free by becoming a slave?"

"Obedience to God is the only freedom there is. Everything else is bondage. Jesus said, **'He who commits sin is the slave of sin...'**"

"I understand," Femi interrupted, "where's that found?"

"Let's see, its in John eight," John paused while scanning the chapter, "in...Here it is, verse 34."

"Good. Thanks, bro."

"Slaves are purchased possessions who have no independent rights. Their only concern is to know and obey the will of their master. It makes life very simple, and also makes it very clear who are slaves of God and who aren't."

"Yeah, it sure does. The man's directives whom a servant performs shows who his real lord is," Femi snorted a little laugh. "Which kind of servant is it who says, 'This man is my lord,' but does the work of another master?"

"A wicked one, for sure. The members of Jesus' church serve Him as slaves do their own Master. If they don't, it only shows that they are servants of another man, but not of the Lord Jesus.

"There's one other relationship that tells us what Jesus' church is like," John continued, "its what Paul often refers to as the body of Christ. Col.1:18 simply says, **'He is also head of the body, the church.'**" Now, Fem, what is a body?"

"A body?" Femi asked as if it ought to be obvious to anyone what a body is. "Well, you know, its what we, I mean, our real selves, live in. We do many things through our bodies..." he paused as if uncertain what else to say. "I'm not sure I'm getting you very well."

"No, you're doing fine. The body is the dwelling place for the one who lives inside it. The body is the means of accomplishing what the man has purposed in his heart to do. Each member of the body has its own designed purpose to contribute to the benefit of all. The life of the head flows in every part without exception. I think you understand?"

"Its getting clearer, but continue."

"How does your hand know when to move?"

"Why, it just does whatever I want it to do."

"If your nose is scratching, why does your hand reach up to itch it?"

"Because I don't like it to scratch, so I move my hand to relieve it, that's all. What are you trying to say, John?"

"I'm coming. Does your nose command your hand to do what the nose wants?"

"It could never."

"How then does the nose make its 'request' for itching known to the hand? Is it by demanding or begging the hand to come and do something for it?"

"I'm not sure exactly how it all works except that I know when my nose is scratching and when it isn't. I guess somehow a kind of message reaches my head from the nose, but I still..."

"That's right," John cut him off in order to make his final point, "and then your head sends a message to your hand to come and help your nose," was his triumphant conclusion.

Femi looked as if he half-way was following all of this, so John spelled it out for him directly.

"Look, Fem, Christ is the Head of the church, His body. There is one body which is made up of many members. All Christians have the life of the Head, Christ, within them.

“Jesus, as the Head, directs and governs the activities of each of the members. Only the Head could possibly coordinate the body, the church, to accomplish His will without total chaos resulting.

“No member dictates to any other. The nose doesn’t rule over the hand, but each member makes its requests known unto the Head. And it is Christ who directs each member to carry out His purposes for the good and benefit of all. This is how the true church of Christ lives and functions.

“There’s no conflict when the Head governs His own body. All is harmonious, purposeful, and productive. In this way, the church becomes the true expression of its Head and He is glorified by it.”

“I understand. But I’m not clear about leadership. There doesn’t seem to be any place for leaders or pastors in the way you’ve been explaining it. And I’ve never heard of a church that didn’t have a pastor. I mean, pastors are biblical, aren’t they?”

“There’s no question that there are to be godly leaders in the church. The real question is, what type of leaders should they be? That’s what we need to carefully consider from the Scriptures.”

“So what are we waiting for? Let me see your legs moving, brother,” Femi teased in his eagerness.

“First you tell me to slow down, and now you’re rushing me. Which kind of man are you, anyway?” John jokingly demanded. They both laughed before settling down to their study.

“Jesus gives the basis of all true leadership in His church in Lk.22:25, 26. Let me read it. **‘Jesus said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the**

youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.’” Several very obvious things are seen here.

“First, Jesus’ leaders are servants, not lords. They are small boys, not great men. Secondly, it is the men of the world that act like lords by exercising authority over those they consider to be under themselves.

“If anything is clear, it is that Jesus’ *true* leaders are *not* to be ‘big men,’ exercising authority over the ‘small boys’ in *their* churches. So, yes, there are definitely to be leaders in the true church, but nothing like the typical leaders we see in the churches today.”

“Wonderful! Ah-ah!” Femi shook his head in amazement. “Jesus Himself said, **‘But you are not to be like that.’** But this is exactly what we *are* like. What is happening? When did you ever see a Man of God acting like the junior in the compound or serving the congregation like a slave? Never!”

“Don’t shout too loudly, brother, I think that you’re a pastor yourself by profession, eh?” John reminded him half-teasingly but with a seriousness underlying his comment. John was not one to look at faces when it came to teaching the Word of God. He simply spoke the truth in love.

Femi looked embarrassed for a moment then humbly said, “You’re right, brother, I guess I don’t exactly have anything to boast about. Cai-O! this Word of God. Its like a hammer,” and then, realizing that though he saw what a leader wasn’t, he still wasn’t clear on what he should be, he asked, “But what then is a true leader in the church?”

“He is two things; an example and a teacher, that’s all. He is not an administrator as if he were directing a corporation and he’s not a lord as if he were the ruler of an empire.”

“I don’t want to be a ‘doubting Thomas,’ but you’re going to have to show me in the Scriptures or I won’t believe until I put my finger on the print of the page,” Femi jokingly insisted.

“Well, Thomas eventually was convinced when he saw for himself, so there’s still hope for you,” John replied with a twinkle in his eye. “Paul said, **‘not that we lord it over your faith’** in 2 Cor.1:24. Peter said a similar thing in I Pet.5:3, **‘not lording it over those entrusted to you.’** Jesus, Paul, and Peter all agree, leaders are not lords.

“A true leader is a humble servant who is an example of godliness. Jesus Himself said, **‘I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you,’** John noticed Femi rapidly writing and added, “That’s in Jn.13:15.

“Paul told the Thessalonians that they should pay close attention to his manner of life while among them so that they might do the same. 2 Thess.3:7 says it like this, **‘For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you.’** Peter commands the elders of the church to not act like lords, but rather to be **‘examples to the flock.’**”

“Reference?”

“Oh, sorry. I Pet.5:3.”

“Anyone who would be an overseer in the church, that’s what the NIV calls him, the KJV says, ‘bishop,’ **‘must be above reproach,’** and be a model example in his own home. I Tim.3:5 says, **‘If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?’** That first quote was from verse two of this same chapter.”

“I’m grateful, brother, its clear. But what is a leader’s ministry? I mean, what work is he actually to be doing if he’s not

to be ruling? I’ve always thought that ruling was the whole purpose of being a leader, you know, to tell those under you what to do.”

“‘Pastor’ is only mentioned once in the entire NT, in Eph.4:11. In other places, this same word for ‘pastor’ is translated as ‘shepherd.’ Its what a pastor is and what his work consists of.”

“So what is a shepherd to be doing? Isn’t he the ruler of the flock?”

“Only the Lord Jesus is called the Ruling Shepherd. In I Pet.5:4 He is named **‘The Chief Shepherd.’** If you remember, in Jn.10:16 Jesus said that there is **‘One Shepherd’** over His flock, and He is certainly that One. I Pet.2:25 calls the Lord Jesus, **‘the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.’**

“There can only be one ruling shepherd of a flock. No man can serve two masters. Only one Bridegroom is the object of devotion and love in the heart of His bride. No other foundation for the temple of God has been laid except Jesus Christ. A single Master commands and governs His servants. And certainly no one has yet seen a body with more than one Head. Christ Jesus has first place in everything in His church.”

“I understand that Christ is to be the unrivaled Lord of His people, but why are leaders called shepherds, then? That one needs more explanation.”

“The work of a shepherd basically consists of two things; feeding and protecting the flock. It is how shepherding is consistently described in the Word of God. Let me read Jer.3:15 in my KJV.

“And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.’ Now, you read the same verse in your NIV.”

“Okay, here it is, **‘Then I will give you shepherds after my**

own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding.'

"What similarities and contrasts do you see from these two versions?"

"Well, one says 'pastors' and the other says 'shepherds.' Its just like we were saying, that 'pastors' is just another way of saying 'shepherds'."

"That's right. Anything again?"

"There's also the exchange of the word 'feed' for 'lead,'" Femi suddenly saw it. "Huh, the purpose of leading is to bring the flock to feed on the knowledge and understanding of God's Word! That's it, isn't it?"

"Its what the ministry of leading and shepherding is all about, brother."

"So let me see if I'm on track with what it means to protect the flock. When a leader sees the wolf coming, like something entering to scatter the flock, maybe wicked practices or false teaching or something, then it is to be resisted or overcome by the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Is that the idea?" Femi asked hopefully but with assurance, for he sensed that the Lord was enlightening his heart.

John was beaming with gladness. "Exactly. You've really grabbed something, brother. This tells us what overseeing is all about. Mature godly men watch to see that the people of God are being fed by His Word and not ruined by false and hurtful things coming in. That's all."

"The Word of God is wonderful! Its so simple and direct; no religious politics, striving for position and recognition. Its only a loving concern that others not suffer, either from lack of the needs of this life or lack of the light of God from His Word," Femi reflected

on these new realizations. "Now that I think about it, its really what was happening in the meeting in your parlor."

"We try to do all to the honor and glory of God according to His Word so that the people of God might be encouraged and blessed."

"So when are you going to begin a church?"

"We already are the church."

"Wha..." Femi didn't voice his question, realizing the obvious answer already from their previous discussion. "But aren't you going to put up a church building?"

"Why would we want to do that?"

"To have a place for the church to meet, of course," Femi sounded puzzled at John's question.

"Where did the NT church meet? Was it in church buildings or cathedrals?"

"I don't remember ever reading about any church buildings or such in the Scriptures, now that you mention it. So, where *did* they meet?"

"In their homes, just like we're doing. House churches are spoken of in several places in the NT. You can look at Rom.16:5, I Cor.16:19, Col.4:15, and Philemon 2," John calmly replied.

"But what are you going to do when it grows too big for your parlor? Then you'll look for a building, eh?"

"No, we'll just meet in however many homes are needed to accommodate the brethren the Lord sends our way."

Femi didn't know what to say about that. He'd never thought of the church in this way before. But he had to admit, he experienced more real fellowship and genuine Christians there than he ever had at Christ's Tabernacle.

"What's on your mind, Fem?"

“Oh, just thinking about the meeting in your house. I really liked it, not like anything I’d ever been to before.” Then a new consideration came to his mind. “Tell me about the sisters, I mean, I heard them praying, but none of them did any teaching; not like Tabernacle at all.”

“What do the Scriptures tell us about that, do you know?”

“Uh, I’ve heard people talk about Deborah, she was a prophetess in the OT, and something about everybody being one in Christ or something like that. But I guess I’ve just kind of done what everyone else has been doing without really thinking about it much,” he somewhat sheepishly replied.

“Read I Timothy 2:11, 12 and tell me what you think.”

Femi thumbed through his pages and found the place. “**A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man.**” What’s there to think? I don’t know what could be clearer than that! So why do the churches not do what the Bible says?”

“That’s a big question, brother. Jesus asked it Himself in Lk.6:46, ‘**Why do you call me “Lord, Lord,” and do not do what I say?**’ It certainly raises very serious issues about the genuineness of our profession, doesn’t it?”

“I’ll say,” Femi fell silent again, deep in thought. A look of admiration came across his face as he remarked, “I was really blessed and challenged by your love for brother Wale and his family. Its how giving should be, from the heart, out of real demonstrated love to meet pressing needs. God bless you all.”

John was deeply touched to think that their simple act of concern for their brother had such a testimony to the glory of God. “Thanks, brother, may the Lord be praised.”

They both fell silent for several minutes. A divine work of excavation had begun in the hidden recesses of Femi’s heart which was sending tremors under his former foundation. But he didn’t recoil at the upheaval. He rather welcomed it, for his eyes were fixed on something far greater and more glorious. He had seen the light of God from His everlasting Word.

Abruptly Femi asked, “John, why are you at Christ’s Tabernacle?”

“It’s my mission field,” came the simple reply.

Femi glanced up at the unexpected answer only to nod as he realized what his friend had meant. “Thank God for your life, brother.”

“Fem,” John paused until he had his full attention, “neither one of us will last long in that place.”

He looked into John’s sober eyes steadily for some moments. “You’re absolutely right, brother. We won’t last long.”

11

“I have some very devastating and sorrowful news. It’s why I’ve called you all here for this special meeting,” the Rev. Dr. Benson had assembled all of his junior pastoral staff into his private chambers. “What I am about to say must be kept in the strictest confidence as the entire future of this divinely ordained ministry is hanging in the balance.”

Nervous glances were swiftly exchanged between themselves with strained attempts to keep their composure and mask their alarm. *What could possibly be wrong?* raced through each troubled mind.

“I think you all know what this is,” as he dramatically tossed an antelope horn filled with black soap onto his glittering desk top.

Gasps of horror were heard on many lips as the powerful Juju clattered to a silent halt inches from their side of the shiny surface.

“For some time now I have sensed in my spirit that means were being used against this anointed ministry. I have been fasting

and praying that the Lord would expose those who are practicing these devilish works of darkness. Two days ago, the breakthrough came after mighty wrestlings with the prince of the kingdom of Persia,” the G.O.’s lowered volume heightened the already electric tension in the air.

“Unfortunately, what I have suspected for many months has been confirmed,” he was trying to control his contrived emotional upset. It was a convincing performance. Not a soul dared breathe as they awaited the unveiling of the devil’s agent in their midst.

With great emotion straining his voice, Benson choked out, “I discovered it in my wife’s wardrobe,” as he turned his head to the side in mock grief.

The effect was predictable. Tears involuntarily sprang from the women’s eyes, groans emitted from every throat, who were otherwise speechless, so shattering was the crushing blow.

No one dared to speak in the stunned silence which followed as they sympathized with their Founder’s convincing sorrowful display .

After seemingly endless moments, he heaved a great sigh and quietly stated, “This will signal either the end of my marriage, or the end of my ministry,” he paused for emphasis. “And I’m not about to let the devil gain the victory over what God has ordained through this ministry,” he concluded as if he were a noble martyr pledged to the cause of righteousness.

“I regret deeply having to be the bearer of this terrible news, but it is for our good, each one of us, who are dedicated to this ministry. If we do nothing, God Himself will hold us responsible for not preserving what He has committed into our hands.

“I can only ask that you stand with me and do battle against the principalities that have taken hold of my wife, and that I might do

what is required for the glory of God, painful as it will be. This is spiritual warfare of the first order and we must not shrink from the path of known duty. May the Lord help us, each one, in Jesus' name," he concluded with a pretended note of reverence.

They filed out, grieved and burdened, in full agreement with the Reverend's proposal to divorce his bewitched wife. The evidence had been presented before their very eyes. The Rev. Dr. had spoken. The anointing of God was upon him. What further proof did they need for the allegations?

Yet the Word of God still stands. **‘Go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses’** - Mt.18:15, 16.

None of them went to the Rev. Mrs. to confirm anything. That is never done. They only believed what they were told by the Man of God. His word settled all issues in their minds. But the Word of God did not.

They were really as foolish as the man who ruled them.

“How was the meeting, dear?” Blessed inquired cheerily as Femi entered the parlor.

Femi nearly whirled on his heel and faced his wife with a determined fire in his eye. “It was disgusting, totally disgusting,” he answered with great agitation.

Taken aback by his unexpected intensity, she stumbled against the small serving table, scattering it and its rubber plate onto the floor.

“Sorry, dear, I didn’t mean to upset you. It was just such a...a... I don’t even know what to call it; Sorry, sorry...” he rubbed his forehead with both hands as he sank into the sofa.

Blessed quickly joined him, her alarm being replaced by concern and comfort. “What happened? I can’t imagine what could have...”

Femi cut her off, not rudely, but in exasperation at what he had witnessed. “No, you could never imagine in your wildest dreams what just happened.”

Even more concerned than before, she patted his arm soothingly and quietly said, “Can you talk about it, I mean, do you want to talk about it?”

I’ve got to. I can’t conceal what I know about Benson and Suki any longer, not when he’s bent on such a desperate venture as divorcing his wife.

“Blessed, Dear, have I ever lied to you?”

“Why, no, Dear, never,” she hesitatingly managed to reply, even more confused and anxious now as she waited for what was coming.

“Then I want you to listen very carefully to what I’m going to say,” he turned to look her directly in the eye, “and you must not mention to *anyone* what you’ve heard.”

She swallowed hard, bewildered at his indignation, but nodded in agreement.

“The Rev. Dr. Benson is planning to divorce his wife because he says she is an agent of the devil sent to destroy his ministry,” he reported the gist of the meeting with cold accuracy.

“Whaaat? You can’t mean it? Divorce? Witchcraft? How can it be?” she faded into a stupefied silence, horror stricken at the prospects swirling in her mind. Femi said nothing to his wife’s questions but sat staring rigidly while drumming his fingertips on his knee.

“I don’t believe a word of it,” he at last broke into her mystified reflections.

“Whaaat?” she blurted out for the second time.

“I said, ‘I don’t believe a word of it.’”

“Femi, what are you saying? Are you saying that Rev. Benson is not telling the truth?” she asked incredulously.

“That’s exactly what I’m saying,” he turned again to gaze straight into her astonished eyes, “and I know why I’m saying so,” he ended with finality.

It was a big pill for his wife to swallow. She sat stunned while the wall clock ticked off some revolutions. Eventually she implored him with a quivering tone, “That’s a mighty serious accusation against a Man of God. I hope you know what you’re doing.”

He didn’t look at her but flatly said, “Do you want to know why I said so?”

She wasn’t sure that she did, but she knew she must. She couldn’t bear to allow the turmoil and tension within her to continue unresolved. “Femi, please, this is so upsetting. I don’t know what to say. I want to know, but I’m fearing what it might be. Please, help me decide. I…I trust your judgment,” she shakily replied in a tiny voice.

“Okay, its okay. I really want you to know what’s happening; you need to know. I wish it wasn’t so, but it is. Its like

a bad dream,” Femi sounded apologetic about what he was going to tell his dear wife.

“Its been just over a week ago now when I went to the church office in the afternoon, actually, right before Mary left with Peter at noon for their lunch. As she was leaving, Mary said I should just knock and go on in to the Reverend’s office, that he and Suki were listening to some of her cassettes, trying to decide which songs they wanted to use for the upcoming statewide vigil,” Femi could see that Blessed was attentive to his every word.

“So, I knocked like Mary told me to, but I didn’t hear a reply, maybe because the tape was playing so loudly. Anyway, I opened the door and entered,” a storm seemed to cloud his eyes with a threatening darkness as he spoke these last words.

“I couldn’t believe what I met when I stepped inside his office. There on his sofa was the Reverend, caressing and kissing Suki in a passionate embrace!” he almost spit out the last sordid details.

For the third time that evening, Blessed’s mouth gaped open in disbelief, “Whaaat? Femi, are you sure?”

“Listen, Dear, of course I’m sure. I know it sounds incredible, that’s why I asked you beforehand if I had ever lied to you. The whole thing is sickening,” Femi finished with revulsion evident in his every fiber.

Before Blessed could collect her wits to comment, he continued, “That’s why I said that I don’t believe him. He’s only looking for a ‘spiritual’ sounding excuse to dump his wife so he can cover up his lust for Suki. Its wickedness.”

Blessed’s earlier alarm had now turned to outright fright. *What has become of our G.O.? This will scatter our church. It will*

ruin us and my husband's position as pastor. Oh, why is this happening? What can we do?

“Please, Femi, be very careful about what you are saying, we shouldn't ever speak against the Lord's anointed. God isn't happy with that, you know,” she weakly exhorted him, more out of fear of possibly losing his job than of anything else.

“And do you suppose that God is happy with adultery in His so-called anointed man?” Femi shot back contemptuously.

His wife felt her face blush with shame at the obvious answer to that question and she thought it best to pursue a different approach. “Didn't they have any explanation for what they were doing? Maybe it wasn't exactly as it first appeared,” was her next cowardly suggestion.

Femi bristled with anger at that. “What kind of explanation will a married man give for fondling another woman with his hands inside her clothes while kissing her lustfully on the lips?”

Blessed looked as if someone had slapped her in the face.

“Suki only snarled at me with a hateful insult when I told her that a man should not touch a woman in any immoral way. And as for our dear Reverend,” Femi added with extreme sarcasm, “why, he rushed at me like a wounded beast, knocked my Bible to the floor, and shook his threatening fist in my face while promising that I'd wish I had never been born if I dared to quote the Word of God to him again.

“That, my dear, was what first appeared to my eyes and the explanation they gave for their sin. I hope that answers your question,” he concluded hotly.

There was nothing more to be said. The ugly secrets had been exposed and nothing remained but to grieve over the tragedy of shipwrecked lives.

A warm tear dropped onto his hand from his devastated wife's cheek. Femi tenderly gathered her into his arms as she wept silently on his shoulder.

“Please, Dear, I'm sorry. I'm not angry at you, its just this whole stinking mess. It rips at one's heart. May God help us . . . May God help us.”

“You really do love me, don't you Benson, Dear?” Suki had slid next to him on the executive sofa in the Reverend's office.

“Of course I do, what brings this up all of a sudden?”

“Oh, I'm not doubting it at all, especially when I see what you're willing to sacrifice to have me as the new Mrs. Benson,” she leaned over and tickled his ear. “I can hardly wait for the day,” she whispered and kissed him to emphasize her sincerity.

Benson's inflated Ego swelled his conceit and deepened his delusion. He imagined that his scheme was proceeding undetected and under his masterful control. His pride blinded him into thinking that Suki really loved him and was taken in by all his trickery. But pride never rightly assesses anything.

“When do you think we can be wedded? How long will the proceedings take in the courts for the divorce to be finalized? Oh, I hope its not long,” she wrapped her arms around his neck.

“Don't worry your pretty head about it. Our glad day will take place within two months, God willing.”

“Yes, God willing. I'm so happy! I'll be making every preparation for that blessed event. Oh, Benson, its hard to believe that we'll soon be married!”

“Didn’t I tell you, ‘With God, all things are possible?’” he announced with smug self-congratulation.

“Yes, Dear, you certainly did. All things are surely possible.”

Benson smiled, thinking that he knew what she meant and that he had her exactly where he wanted her.

Nothing was further from the truth.

“There are some serious financial concerns facing us all at Christ’s Tabernacle of Glory,” the President swiveled from behind his monument of a desk to impress his point upon his junior pastoral staff at the Sunday morning pre-service briefing. “Tithes have been dropping and offerings have been tapering off. This trend must be reversed immediately,” as he shifted his gaze accusingly in Femi’s direction.

“Some of you have been displaying a lack of team spirit and even opposition to the divine principles that this anointed ministry has been built upon,” he let that sink in with one of his theatrical pauses. “And I’m not the only one who has witnessed such things.”

The stage was being set to dismiss pastor Femi from the church, and Benson was a master manipulator.

“I think, Pastors Emmanuel and Chide, that you have encountered this firsthand, have you not?”

It was Emmanuel who immediately spoke up, always alert for an opportunity to ingratiate himself in the Reverend’s eyes. “Why, yes, Sir. We both were in this very office just before the city-wide vigil I believe,” he glanced at Chide for confirmation who

nodded an affirmative, “when Pastor Femi entered and began contradicting the biblical message of Prosperity.”

“And what exactly took place at that time?” the G.O. was sounding like a circuit court judge.

“Well, he rebuked us for wanting to see many people come and be blessed by attending the vigil, saying that we were only interested in getting people’s money. He was very insistent with what he thought the Bible was saying and wouldn’t listen to reason at all.”

“I remember the instance as if it happened yesterday. Tell the staff what he said to me, the President and Founder of this ministry.”

These men are setting me up! He’s going to get rid of me because of him and Suki and pretend that I’m a rebel! I can’t believe it!

“It was most disgraceful, Sir. I’m even embarrassed to mention it, but I must for the benefit of this divinely appointed ministry.”

Spoken like a true Judas. Betraying the innocent for filthy lucre.

“He reproved you, Sir, in our presence and did not hesitate to argue with you even after you had admonished and corrected him. He continued to quote verses out of context though you had warned him about the dangers of doing so. We were both shocked at the disrespect and rebellion we witnessed that day,” Emmanuel rounded up his speech of poison, hoping that he had served his master’s purpose well.

“All of you, and the entire congregation as well, were the unfortunate witnesses to Femi’s misled ramblings about giving during our morning service recently. This was a purely rebellious act

which had no approval or sanction from the General Overseer and was done in violation of the sacred pledge he made upon entering this ministry as a junior pastor. I believe that you signed an agreement to uphold all the divinely inspired principles that this ministry is founded upon when you took the position. Isn't that correct, Pastor Femi?"

"Its true, Sir."

"Well, what you were saying had no resemblance to the sacred vow you bound yourself under when called of God to this position. We can only assume that you are going astray and attempting to lead others into your same path of delusion.

"Sister Suki, I believe that you were present just over a week ago when Femi burst into my office uninvited and began rebuking me, waving his Bible around as if he were John the Baptist standing before Herod. Is that so?"

"It was a very shameful display, most unbecoming, disrespectful, and willfully rebellious. His arrogance in thinking he could address an anointed Man of God like you, Sir, in the manner in which he did, cannot even bear repeating. I was shocked at the outrage and happy at the mature way you dealt with his waywardness," Suki's smooth tongue would convince even the most skeptical.

Femi had grown almost numb from the barrage of boldfaced lies heaped one upon the other. But in the midst of it all, a breath of freshness from the Spirit of God enlivened his soul, **'Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.'** (Mt.5:11, 12).

John leaned over and whispered into his wife, Priscilla's, ear, "Let's pray right now for brother Femi. I have a real burden that we should ask the Lord to strengthen him to stand firm at this very hour." And so, seated in the sanctuary before the morning service began, they raised their petition of love earnestly to the Father in heaven.

"Pastor Femi, you have repeatedly gone astray over the past months even though you have been lovingly corrected by your fellow ministers and by your General Overseer. We can only hope and pray that these things will be sufficient for you to see the error of your ways and return to a true Christian faith and practice.

"We are willing to provide you one last opportunity to display your loyalty and commitment to God and to this ministry. The blessing of the people of God has suffered by your discouraging influence to turn them away from their divinely mandated responsibility to bring the whole tithe into this storehouse.

"This chance is being presented to you this morning. It will be your privilege and responsibility to warn the people of the certain curse of God upon them if they fail to tithe in obedience to the Word of God. Will you accept this command from the President and Founder of this ministry and thereby show your repentance for your former actions and teachings?"

All eyes were upon him as they waited with bated breath for his reply.

“With good conscience before God I could not do such a thing, Sir, as I do not believe that God sends His curse upon His true people, and especially not for failing to tithe as you have indicated. So, I must respectfully refuse your offer, choosing to obey God rather than men.”

Benson was elated, though he was careful to display a somber exterior as if he were deeply grieved. He allowed a strategic silence to follow Femi’s words, knowing that no one would dare speak until he did.

Slowly, and with great solemnity, he rose from his seat and faced them all, fixing his gaze on Femi. “Pastor Femi, I am truly saddened to hear your response. It displays a root of willfulness which will not yield to sound reason, the Word of God, or to the voice of your divinely sanctioned authority in this ministry.

“I can see no alternative but to regretfully dismiss you from your post as Pastor in this congregation. Are we in agreement?” the question was thrown out to all assembled, knowing full well that none would dare disagree with his decision.

“Yes, Sir, the testimony is clear and has been demonstrated by repeated specific instances and witnesses,” it was the sniveling self-seeking Emmanuel again.

“I’m afraid so, Sir, there is no evidence of his willingness to turn from his strange notions,” Chide chimed in his echo of Emmanuel’s assessment.

“To keep him on would only further oppose what God is doing through this ministry. It would only be a threat to realizing our divine potential,” these were ‘sweet’ Suki’s comments.

Yeah, it would be a threat all right. A threat to expose your lustful secret crimes.

“Are we all in agreement, then?” Benson was carefully

monitoring each person’s response.

They all nodded their ascent, Peter being the last to comply. He was troubled by the proceedings, but was not a strong man. He was accustomed to being compliant and not causing problems when others insisted on their way.

Neither was he one to ask questions, but rather did what he was told. And it was clear that the Rev. Dr. was convinced that this was the needful course of action. So, he cast in his vote with reluctance, not knowing what else to do in the circumstance.

“Pastor Femi, you will drop your keys with Mary as you leave. We will announce to the congregation this morning what has transpired here. You are free to go now,” it was spoken as a master would to his slave.

“Femi, what’s wrong, you don’t look well?” Blessed noticed him mechanically making his way down the side aisle of the church complex.

“I’ll tell you all about it at home. I think I’ll go ahead now and try and rest some. Bye-bye,” he listlessly moved on out of the building into the street.

Oh God, has it happened? Has what I’ve been fearing really taken place? O, Lord, have mercy, have mercy, O, Lord!

“That was some pretty fancy dribbling in there, Rev., Dear,” Suki flattered him with oily admiration. “A most convincing set-up. I’m impressed.”

“I told you I knew how to handle him, didn’t I?” he boasted overconfidently.

“That you did, Dear, that you did,” Suki mused thoughtfully.

This man may be more crafty than I have imagined. I will need to very carefully maneuver the events of these next few weeks.

12

It was with silent emptiness that the parlor welcomed the weary former pastor as Femi snapped open the entry padlock. It was actually a relief to be alone, away from the noise and treachery he had just now left at Christ’s Tabernacle.

Not bitterly, he entered what seemed to him a sanctum from the strife and deception he had been in the midst of only minutes before. Harassed as he was, an inexplicable peace guarded his heart from bursting out in vengeance.

Instinctively, he sank to his knees in the cool dim solitude.

“Father, I truly give You thanks. You certainly cause all things to work together for good to those who love You and are called according to Your purpose. Surely it was Your purpose for me to encounter these things.

“You permitted me to discover the secret wickedness of Suki and the Reverend. You gave me grace and boldness to speak Your

truth in love to both of them. And You have counted me worthy of suffering for Your name's sake.

"John suffered at the hands of Herod and Your own Son suffered under Pontius Pilate, all according to Your blessed will. And shall I suffer the less for the cause of righteousness?"

"No, Lord, it could never be, for the Lord Jesus told us that if they hated Him, they will also hate us. And who am I but a weak and unworthy servant? Jesus alone served You well.

"Unworthy as I am, I must surely taste of the fellowship of His sufferings. I do so long to live godly in Christ Jesus, and You have granted me the grace and privilege to be persecuted in Your great cause. Blessed be Your name!

"Lord, I bow my heart before You. You alone are worthy. Your ways are past finding out and Your will is good, acceptable, and perfect. I rejoice this day in what You have strengthened me to endure.

"I do not know what Your purpose is in all of this that has come upon me. But I do know this, that You will never leave me or forsake me, according to the unchanging promise of Your everlasting Word.

"Look upon me still, blessed Savior, and do not abandon me to my foes, for my eyes are fixed upon You. My help comes from the Lord, who has made heaven and earth. Hear my prayer and act for the sake of Your great name that I might praise you from this time forth and forevermore. In Jesus' name, Amen."

"Bomp-bomp-bomp-bomp!" rocked the pounding drums, booming bass, and screaming keyboard as Suki and her singers

gyrated and bounced to the rhythm. Hundreds of prancing worshipers gleefully surged the aisles with their offerings. The sermon had rounded up, which immediately launched Suki into her Sunday morning melodic fund-raising ritual.

Femi's announcement had been carefully reserved until after the moneys were collected. It was a prudent financial decision on the part of the G.O. This most critical portion of the service having been completed, Benson had directed Suki to conclude with a slow and moving worship solo.

With her final subdued but emotionally charged notes still lingering, the Rev. Dr. mounted the pulpit and solemnly, almost reverently, led the congregation in prayer. The atmosphere was now set to spring the news.

"It is with great heaviness of heart this morning that I am standing here before you." Not a even a baby whimpered in the suspenseful silence that ensued across the auditorium.

"There are times in every great move of the Holy Ghost when trusted fellow ministers loose the divine vision imparted to God's ordained man," he shifted his gaze down as if in great turmoil.

"Over the past months, one of our very own pastors has repeatedly shown a departure from the heavenly vision this anointed ministry has been founded upon," he allowed that to impress them thoroughly before continuing. "After several instances involving myself, your President and Founder, as well as numerous of the loyal pastors of Christ's Tabernacle of Glory, we, as a Spirit-led ministry team, have regretfully discovered that one among us has departed from the faith which has been delivered to us by the anointing that is upon me.

"The pastor referred to has refused to listen to loving correction, has actually rebuked and insulted me in the presence of

others on our ministry team, and has undermined with false teaching the divine principles of the Word of God which we all hold dear.

“Things climaxed this morning when he boldly refused to perform his usual duties of service through exhorted to do so at the direction of your General Overseer. He declared in the presence of all the pastoral staff that he could not violate his conscience by obeying men rather than following his new- found misled notions of ministry.

“We, your anointed pastors, have often corrected and reproved his false ideas, but all to no avail. He has stubbornly and rebelliously continued in his false concepts and refuses to abandon his undermining of this ministry.

“It is therefore with great grief that I, in behalf of the entire pastoral staff, must announce to you the dismissal of Pastor Femi from his position and responsibilities in this church.

“Let us commit him and the family into the hands of God that they might see the error of their ways and return to the blessed path they once had walked upon. Let us pray...”

O God, how can this be? I can't believe it! I've never been so devastated in my life. How can I look anyone in the eye? I'm so humiliated. How will we ever be normal again? What will we do now to feed? I feel sick. I just want to get away. Hundreds of people are watching me. I feel so unclean, like a leper. Why did he say 'they' might see the error of 'their' ways? Does he think that I don't believe in Prosperity and that I'm rebellious too? Its not true! I want to get rich but now everything is ruined. Oh Femi, why did you have to go and do this? Why me? O God, why me? Its just not

fair! Blessed quickly gathered the children, gazing at no one in her flight from the now seeming hostile sanctuary.

“Well I would have never guessed that such a fine young man as Pastor Femi could go so far astray. It is truly a pity; a pity indeed,” Mary confided in her husband’s ear. “And what of his dear wife and children? Oh! how embarrassing, such a public scandal as this. I feel sorry for the poor dear,” then interrupting herself she added, “though the Reverend did say that *they* needed to turn from their errors. Well, I imagine that they’re both in this together, then.”

“I...I’m not so sure, my Dear, that they’re as bad as everything appears,” Peter nervously ventured to soften his wife’s hasty and uncharitable conclusion.

“Why, whatever do you mean by that? Of course they are guilty and rebellious; the Reverend himself said so, all the pastors know it to be true, and didn’t you agree yourself that it was so?” she buried him with her rapid-fire barrage of reasons. “So its plain to everyone, including you, that he’s gone astray and deserves his punishment.

“Huh! Daring to talk back to a Man of God! It only goes to show that he’s reaping what he’s sown,” and, with that, she dismissed any further comments on the subject. Peter knew that her mind was made up, so he settled back into his customary submissive silence once again.

“Well, its finally happened. It was only a matter of time. Femi’s spiritual progress and his stand for the truth of the Word of God has been shaking Benson’s foundation of sand for some time now,” John whispered earnestly to Priscilla following the announcement. “Catching them in their secret sin was the final straw for him. All the accusations against Femi are pure rubbish,” he concluded with distaste.

“Poor Blessed. What must she be going through? She’s not spiritually strong as Femi has become. We must uphold them both in prayer and I’ll go by and greet her in the house this week,” she softly replied in her husband’s ear.

Stupid fool. He’s thrown away every possibility of ever being recognized as a big Man of God. Go ahead, Femi, read your little Bible. As for me, I’ll press on to get what really matters, my own ministry where Prosperity will be all mine. Pastor Emmanuel had been trained all too well by his mentor, the Rev. Dr. Benson.

No one even considered whether the news about Femi was true or not. There was no need to. The anointed Set Man, God’s very mouth piece had spoken. It was all that they cared to know.

To them, it did not matter that Mt.18:15-17 condemned their hasty and foolish acceptance of whatever their General Overseer decreed. Their only concern was to be rightly aligned with the Man of God. To be otherwise was certain spiritual suicide.

God had spoken His living word of Rhema through His chosen vessel. It was as if God Himself had declared His mind infallibly and unquestionably through the mouth of the Rev. Dr. They thereby simply followed whatever they were told like so many senseless sheep.

For them, the word of man had replaced the Word of God. But the tongue of this man was the venom of a viper, and he had injected its deadly poison into their very heart and soul.

“Welcome, Dear,” Femi greeted his tense and distraught wife as she hurried past him without a word.

Lord, give my wife grace to endure all things for the sake of the gospel. May she not be ashamed to bear reproach for the testimony of Your Word. Help us, Lord, we are looking to You alone for wisdom. May these evils which have come upon us at Christ’s Tabernacle not cause her to stumble from Your way. Please, hear my request in Jesus’ name. Amen.

After settling the children she returned to face him in the parlor. “Femi, I can’t believe what I heard this morning! How could you do this? Have you gone mad? What about me and the children? Did you ever think about that?” she was more than upset, she was frantic.

“Blessed, Dear, the best I can do for you and the children is to faithfully obey the Word of God without fear,” was his calm and gentle reply.

“I suppose you mean that being thrown out of your job in public disgrace is the best you can do?” she spitefully retorted.

“I’m sorry that we’ve had to suffer this injustice at the hands of deceivers, but you know that what they said is not true, don’t you?” he asked sincerely, not accusingly or defensively, but purposefully to help her to see clearly the reality of their situation.

Her folded arms, flexing jaw muscles, and stiff posture showed that his point had been made though she wasn’t happy that it had been. Frustration was written all over her face as her eyes shifted rapidly in her distress.

Femi continued since Blessed made no reply. “You know that Benson and Suki’s sin along with their love of money is at the root of what happened this morning.” It was a statement of fact, not a question.

Blessed turned her back on her husband who was seated on the sofa. He sensed that she realized it was true, but also that she was angry because it was. Without turning around she said with determination, “Listen, I’m not ready to abandon Prosperity as easily as you have. We need a breakthrough now more than ever and I’m going to pursue it whether you do or not!”

“Dear,” Femi gently replied, “you know that the Scripture warns us that those who long for riches, wander away from the faith; like Benson and Suki. I don’t think you wish to end up like them.”

Hot tears burst from her troubled eyes. “No! I don’t want to end up like that, but I don’t want to end up like this either! Oh, why...why...why? Why has God done this to us?” and she broke down sobbing uncontrollably.

Femi rose and placed a comforting arm on his wife’s shoulder. She did not resist. “We’re in the hands of God, Dear. I don’t know why this is happening. I don’t really know,” was all that he could think of to say.

But it was enough. In the hands of Him who does all things well is the best place for anyone to be. God makes no mistakes. Though clouded over to their sight now, they would soon learn to say with Joseph of old, **“You meant it for evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result”** - Gen.50:20.

At the moment, however, that song was not on either of their lips.

“Shall we have a little farewell celebration in memory of the late Pastor Femi?” came the mocking invitation from Sister Suki, sipping at an imported beverage in Benson’s chambers.

“Huh!” grunted Benson in disdainful amusement, “Why not? He’s surely gone and buried by now, and I don’t expect that he’ll be resurrected any time soon, if ever,” he forced a scornful grin and clinked his own glass against hers to toast the event.

“Now that Mr. Big-mouth is out of our hair, nothing will stand in the way of realizing our dreams. The upcoming statewide vigil will be a very critical turning point in this ministry,” he paused and slid closer to her, “and in our own lives together,” he added with exaggerated desire.

“You’re not holding secrets from me, are you Benson, Dear,” she batted her eyes at him teasingly. “How will the time of the vigil be a turning point for us?”

He smiled knowingly, liking the sense of being in control of a situation. “The divorce proceedings are well underway and should be rounding up just about at that time. And then,” he placed his arm around her, “you shall become Mrs. Benson.”

Suki gazed longingly into his eyes, “There’s nothing I look forward to more than that time.”

I’ve really got her convinced. She wants to be my wife. Soon she’ll be all mine with no more worry about her spoiling my plans. You’ve done all right for yourself, Benson.

Everything must be completed before that vigil or all I’ve been working for up to now will be totally scattered. And I’ll need all my cunning and charm to make that happen before its too late.

13

“My brother, sorry-o,” John consoled Femi the next day.

“Thanks, John, I’m really very grateful. You’re friendship has been a real blessing to me.”

“Its not easy, what you’re passing through, but the Lord Himself will strengthen you to endure all things. God’s Word is true and to be trusted though every man be a liar. He will never fail or forsake you regardless of the evils of men. Ps.119:161 puts it this way, **‘Rulers persecute me without cause, but my heart trembles at Your word.’**”

“The Lord is faithful, John. I’m actually kind of relieved about the whole thing. My spirit has been grieved for how many long months now? I’m thinking that this whole thing is really a blessing in disguise though I couldn’t tell you how.”

“Job didn’t understand his sufferings while in the midst of them all, yet the Scriptures tell us in Job 1:22 that, **‘In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.’**”

“That’s encouraging, brother. I sure wish that the Lord

would open Blessed's heart to see it that way," Femi longed for wistfully.

"This whole thing is hitting her pretty hard, eh?" John inquired with true concern.

"I'll say! She's so upset and confused, not to mention embarrassed! She's really at her wit's end about how we're going to feed now that there's nothing forthcoming from the church again. I guess I don't really know myself," he added honestly with a tinge of perplexity.

"Listen, Fem, the Lord Jesus will use all of these things for His own glory and for all of our spiritual blessing. I think you know Rom.8:28, eh?"

"Yeah, very well, and not just in my head, either. I seem to be living out the reality of it, day by day!"

"We thank the Lord that He's kept your eyes fixed upon Him. He'll continue to lead you and supply all of your needs," John encouraged him and then paused in serious reflection, as if studying his friend.

Femi glanced up and noticed John's intent contemplation. "What are you thinking about so hard over there?" Femi's curiosity gave expression to his question.

As if arriving at a conclusion, John replied, "For some time now I've been praying about someone to assist me in the shop. Not just anyone though. He would have to be a man of integrity, able to be trusted, and honest in all things," he fell silent briefly and studied his friend again.

"I've not been comfortable with any of the people I've been considering. I really need someone who's diligent, and especially one who loves people rather than money. Those are all rare qualities to be found in our day and age."

"Well, maybe I can join you in praying that the Lord will send you the right person." Femi had not caught on why John was bringing this up at that time.

"Maybe the Lord has already answered that prayer, brother," John's smile was directed straight at Femi's puzzled face.

"He has? How...I mean, wha...what are you trying to say?" Femi was baffled, then suddenly embarrassed. "You...you're not talking about me, are you?" he inquired with disbelief.

John laughed. "Sure, why not? You've proven yourself through all the wahalah of these past months to be a perfectly suited assistant. So, my brother," John smiled broadly at Femi's astonished face, "you want a job?"

"Blessed!" Femi burst excitedly through the parlor door, grabbed his wife by the waist, and swung her around joyfully.

"Whaaa...?"

"I've got a job!" and he planted a big kiss on her astonished cheek. "The Lord has provided beyond anything we've asked or thought of. God is wonderful!"

"Well... what... when... I mean, how...?" she was at a loss for words.

He laughed at her bewilderment and gave her another kiss. "I start tomorrow and its not far from our place and the pay is even better than at the Tabernacle!" he announced happily.

"It...it sounds marvelous," she herself was beginning to smile now.

"Marvelous is exactly right," and he began dancing her around the parlor chanting, "Its marvelous to my sight, its

marvelous to my sight; What the Lord has done for me, is marvelous to my sight!”

They both fell laughing onto the sofa, all the gloom of yesterday completely forgotten in the joy of the moment.

“Don’t keep me in suspense any longer, dear,” her lip quivered slightly with the intense relief and gladness she felt, “I don’t want to be left out of the Lord’s blessing, you know,” she managed a laugh through the tears of joy beginning to well up within her.

Femi related in detail all that had transpired in John’s shop that morning. Blessed received the news with thanks, though her enthusiasm dampened slightly at the thought of her husband taking such a lowly position.

But necessity has a persuasive way of combating pride. The demands of hunger predominate over the dictates of fancy. And so, she was grateful for the provision, though her self-image was battered and dented in the process.

That, however, was a far greater mercy than this provision of daily bread, had she but realized it.

“Guinea Brocades and Baby Laces are along the back right wall. You’ll find the Batiks and Campalás on the left rear side.” John was orienting Femi to the layout of the shop and current pricing. “For the next few days, you can watch carefully what I do and how I assist the customers so you’ll get a feel for the business.”

Femi applied himself diligently, learning many new things about the differences in cloth quality and their price ranges. He saw that the shop was neatly organized and that all matters were handled

decently and in order. An even deeper respect for brother John developed in his mind.

“I don’t carry any poor quality cloth. It doesn’t pay to deal cheaply and give to people what you yourself wouldn’t be happy with. Its what the Lord expects of us, anyway.”

“Sounds like, **‘Do unto others what you would have them do unto you,’** Femi remarked, seeing the similarity between what the Scriptures taught and the way John conducted his business.

“Col.3:23, 24 commands us to do our work heartily, as for the Lord, and not for men. Its the Lord Christ whom we serve,” John reinforced Femi’s contribution, not only with the Scriptures, but by his very manner of life. It had great impact on Femi.

“So, I try to treat each customer as if I were providing a service to the Lord Jesus Himself. And by supplying only quality products, the people obtain the value they expect and many of them have become loyal customers because of it,” John explained, not boasting at all, but merely stating what he knew to be true.

“It is foolishness to try and obtain exorbitant prices from people; really its wickedness. I price the cloth reasonably to one and all alike, whether they are wealthy or not. The Scriptures tell us in Prov.20:10, **‘The Lord hates both these things: Dishonest weights and dishonest measures.’**

“You can see why I’ve had no success in finding someone to work with me. How many people can you find in this Nigeria whose greed doesn’t lead them to take advantage of people for the sake of their own gain?”

The question’s answer was self-evident and needed no comment. “Another thing that I do is to not show preference to selfish and self-assertive people who have no regard for others.

Many times people will push their way past others as if they were the only one's to be considered, demanding whatever it is that they want.

“That, I do not tolerate at all. The Bible says in I Pet.2:17, **‘Honor all men.’** Its not godly to ignore another simply because someone else is impatient and puffed up by his own pride. So, I make it a practice to politely ask the person insisting on their own way to please patiently wait until I finish with the person I'm attending to at the moment.”

Femi was deeply impressed. *Where do you ever discover such things practiced in Nigeria? This John is a man of real conviction who takes seriously the teaching of the Word of God about everything. No wonder people return to him time after time. He truly loves and serves them from a selfless heart and they know it. Now this is a real testimony.*

The day passed swiftly as Femi straightened cloth, greeted and assisted customers, and watched carefully how John conversed with people as he conducted his trade. He noticed three things repeatedly as he observed his friend.

This John, eh, he's free from what you see virtually everywhere else in this Nigeria. He's not greedy at all, never is there dishonesty in any of his dealings, and no laziness is ever to be seen in him. Its really the way things ought to be.

What a contrast to the place I've just come from! And that was supposed to be the house of God! This cloth shop is more like heaven than that place ever was! Huh, its really so simple. Obedience to the Word of God is for every area of life. That's all. May the Lord bless this dear brother.

“How was the first day at work, dear?” Blessed called from the kitchen as Femi entered the parlor. He could tell that she was greatly settled in her heart after the turmoil of the previous two days. And that gladdened his own heart tremendously.

“It was...how shall I describe it? It was...I know this might sound kind of crazy, but it was almost like a spiritual retreat,” Femi was satisfied with this explanation as it expressed what he truly felt about the experiences of the day.

“Is that...?” Blessed's interest was aroused as she joined him in the parlor, wiping her hands on a cloth. “Well, you'll have to tell me more than that,” she insisted smilingly. “It sounds wonderful!”

Her husband proceeded to relate all that he had witnessed, what he had learned about the various types and grades of cloth, and especially his observations about John's principles of business and their biblical foundation.

Blessed sat back with a growing light of admiration reflecting in her eyes. *I'm happy, so happy, and challenged. John's doing what others aren't even talking about doing. And Femi is happy, more than I've seen him in months. Maybe this is truly the Lord at work after all.*

“I learned more about godly living and gained more insight into the truth of God's Word in this one day than I have at months at the Tabernacle,” Femi exclaimed as if he had been liberated from a darksome cell.

She smiled in acknowledgment. But something in his last statement troubled her heart. Maybe it was that he no longer had a position of respect which meant that she didn't either. Perhaps it seemed a disrespectful thing to say about the influence of an anointed Man of God. It could have been that the mention of their former

church brought the shameful recollection of their public disgrace back into her mind.

Likely it was a combination of many things. But it set her to thinking about their future church attendance. “Femi, I’m really happy about what the Lord has done in providing so unexpectedly for our needs in this way. I can tell that you’re glad too,” she looked at him and saw the expected agreement in his eyes.

Her eyes lowered, showing traces of troubling darkening their luster of the previous moments. She voiced what had come to her heart at his last comment. “What are we going to do about going to church now that we are... well, you know,” she finished as if it were too awkward for her to even mention.

“Its a good question,” Femi mused as he lapsed into silence. “There seem to be two difficulties facing us, Dear. One is that, since I’ve been a pastor in a large and widely known ministry, a certain reputation proceeds ahead of us wherever we might go. Surely news like ours will rapidly spread, and I doubt if any of the churches would welcome us under the circumstances.

“Secondly, and more important in my mind, is this. I don’t know of anywhere in this city where we could go without encountering the same false emphasis on Prosperity and all the rest of it.

“I don’t know of anywhere that the Word of God is truly being taught in simplicity and truth. You saw what the ministers were like who turned out for the city-wide vigil. Not much of a selection there,” was his final, almost discouraged, comment.

His answer only confirmed her inner fears. They were outcasts with no real place to go. Almost like lepers. It was very disturbing to her. Church had been such a part of her daily life which seemed threatened now to be completely cut off.

“But surely there’s something we can do, somewhere we can go? There has to be, doesn’t there?” her voice was strained with anxiety. “How can we live without church? I mean, it just wouldn’t be right,” was her confused and distressful appeal.

Femi sympathized with her dilemma. He, as well, could not conceive of a life without attending church of some type. But where could they go? It seemed as if there were no solutions before them.

Suddenly, an idea flashed through his mind. *I don’t know why I didn’t think of this before. Of course! The fellowship in John’s parlor! They would welcome us and they’re not caught up in all this funny stuff like other churches are.*

Femi turned excitedly to his dejected wife. “Blessed, dear, there’s a perfect solution!”

She brightened up immediately. “There is? Well, what is it?” she eagerly asked.

“I don’t know why I didn’t think of it earlier. The fellowship at John and Priscilla’s place. They’ll gladly welcome us and they’re not involved in all this funny teaching like so many others are,” he voiced the answer with great confidence that the matter was resolved.

“Oh...” she sounded deflated. “But that’s not a church! Its a... something... a... well, I don’t know what you want to call it, anyway, but its not a *church*, Femi,” she couldn’t conceive of that gathering qualifying to be called a church.

“I mean, there’s no building, they have no pastor or founder, no one leads in worship or prayer-points, and they don’t even tithe! How could that ever be considered a church?” she was completely taken aback by his suggestion that this would solve their problem.

“But didn’t you say that you’d like to come with me to their gathering?” Femi reminded her of her former willingness.

“Yes, but that was while we were still in a real church. That was different. I don’t even know what you’d call this thing. If someone asked me where I was going to church, what would I say? ‘Cloth-Traders Tabernacle’?”

“Blessed, it doesn’t matter what something is called, it matters what it *is*. This is a group of genuine loving people who truly obey and glorify the Lord, who worship Him in spirit and truth. Isn’t that what a real church is supposed to be?” Femi pleaded with her to consider things from the standpoint of the Scriptures.

She was flustered at his answer, knowing that he was right. But she would be so embarrassed to only attend something like that, something so foreign to her entire previous frame of reference.

“I’d like us to at least try it, dear,” Femi spoke tenderly and encouragingly to his wife, understanding that it was a totally new concept for her to digest.

“I don’t know, Femi, I just don’t know if I could. Its all so strange and... so unlike *real* church. I’m not used to that type of something at all.”

“What are your alternatives?” Femi quietly inquired with pointed sensitivity.

She looked up nervously, like a lost antelope in the forest, “I don’t really know,” she whispered helplessly.

“Ah! My trusty assistant has arrived, and right on time,” John greeted Femi warmly the next morning. “How was the first day, brother?”

“I was totally blessed. I can’t remember enjoying work so much in I don’t know when! And I learned so much, and I don’t just mean about Wax and Super Prints,” he added laughing.

John joined him in their shared gladness. “Well, you’re not the only one that was blessed. Your work was done well and with such a willing spirit of helpfulness. I really thank the Lord for His leading for both of our families,” John sincerely expressed his heartfelt gratitude.

“We thank God, brother. Only the Lord could have engineered these circumstances the way He did. We bless the Lord.”

“So what does Blessed think about all these developments?”

“Well, she’s really happy for me and for the Lord’s supplying our needs in this way. Really, she’s very glad,” he paused as he reflected momentarily on their discussion about church. “She’s pretty mixed up, though, about what to do about church now that we’re no longer at Christ’s Tabernacle,” he looked at John hoping he might have some suggestion.

“What did you discuss with her about that?”

“I said that I didn’t think any ‘church’ would welcome us under the circumstances and that I didn’t want to go somewhere that funny teachings were going on, anyway.”

“Anything else?”

“It came to my mind that attending the fellowship at your home would be the ideal solution to our dilemma.”

“And what was her response to that?”

“She was thrown into a whirlwind by that one, saying that it wasn’t a *real* church at all and something too strange to seriously consider. I asked her what alternatives she had. She didn’t know what to say.”

John reflected over the conversation for a minute before

simply saying, “Let’s just commit your and Blessed’s decision into the hands of God.”

“All posters and handbills have been dispatched to our key contacts in every major city, Sir,” Pastor Emmanuel reported with satisfaction to his G.O.

“Well done, Pastor. That is one of the critical links in the success of our statewide Overcomers Vigil. I personally appreciate your devotedness to this ministry.”

“Thank you, Sir, it is a privilege for me to serve in this way,” he was alert to every occasion to worm his way into the Reverend’s good graces.

“Sister Suki, how is the progress on the duplicating of your cassettes?”

“There is no problem, Sir. The final twenty thousand of the ten releases will soon be finished, making a total of two hundred thousand copies available for the outreach. I might add that all arrangements for transport, tables, awnings, and sales personnel have been finalized,” she smiled with professional competency.

Benson returned the smile, already adding up in his calculating mind the revenue to be generated by their sale. “Its a pleasure working with you, Sister Suki,” he smoothly complimented her.

“I’m only too happy to contribute my part to the success of this ministry, Sir,” she replied with convincing sincerity.

“Now, in order to ensure that there will be no last minutes hitches, all pastoral staff will be required to work overtime until 6:30

each evening until the day of the event. I think you all understand?” There was no room allowed for any who didn’t.

“Yes, Sir,” the unanimous chorus echoed from the assembled team.

“Well, I’ve never been busier in my whole life, I imagine,” Mary was bustling about her now overloaded disaster of a desk trying to attend to her increased demands. “Peter and I will just have to do what it takes to make this a success, that’s all, even if it does mean having to leave the office at such a late hour.”

She noticed Suki sitting in her office going over some of the voluminous Vigil correspondence. “Well, Suki, I don’t suppose it will hurt this jolly old belly of mine to wait a little later to eat anyway, eh?” she chuckled out loud to herself as she pinched a big roll of fat for emphasis.

Suki smiled out of politeness rather than amusement. “No, I don’t suppose that it will, Mary,” as she smiled a second time, this one being with satisfaction.

Peter and Mary’s leaving the office at 6:30 was the final needed detail in her carefully conceived scheme.

“Good morning, my sister,” Priscilla greeted Blessed from the doorway.

“Oh, Priscilla, you’re welcome-o. I’m so happy to see you. Enter, enter. You’re highly welcome,” Blessed was truly glad to receive her unexpected guest. “How are the children?”

“Thank the Lord, they are fine, fine. Thank you. And how be your pickings?”

“No problem, we thank God. Please, have your seat. I’m coming-o,” as she hurried to the kitchen to prepare some small entertainment for her visitor.

Lord, please guide me that I might encourage and help my sister to understand Your ways. Open her eyes to see the truth of Your Word, both for her as a wife and as a member of Your church. I’m so very thankful for leading me in this service of love for the sake of my sister, Blessed, and for the glory of Your kingdom. May You be honored in all that is said and done here today, in Jesus’ name, Amen.

Blessed soon returned with a tray of sliced mango, groundnuts, and biscuits accompanying a Maltina.

“Thank you very much, my sister, I’m very grateful. Let’s thank the Lord,” as she poured out her praise to the Lord Jesus with quiet earnestness.

She’s so different than the pastor’s wives I know from Christ’s Tabernacle; no loudness, self-promotion, and fancy dressing. Just a peaceful gentle quietness. I think I like her.

The conversation turned to domestic subjects of children, meals and markets, sewing and farming. Blessed found herself relaxing and thoroughly enjoying the visit. *She seems so... genuine... Yes, that’s it, genuine.*

“God has given us wives a great ministry,” Priscilla began. *He has? Whatever could she mean?*

“From the very beginning, the Lord made us to be the

helpers to our husbands. This is the great work of any woman of God. Eve was created for Adam, as his faithful companion and support in all that the Lord had called him to be and to do,” Priscilla sensed that she had Blessed’s undivided attention.

“Our husbands face many conflicts and dangers that we do not directly encounter. They protect us from many assaults and evils that they themselves squarely face as the God-ordained leaders in their homes.”

Its true. I’d never thought of it like that before. But I know that Femi has been the one bearing the brunt of all of this evil that has come upon us. Thank God for him. I should really be more grateful and supportive rather than adding to his burdens.

“We need to be grateful and supportive of our husbands so they are encouraged to do the Lord’s will with confidence. Our homes should be a refuge from the difficulties they endure for our sakes, and not an added weight to the burdens they already bear.”

Blessed’s mouth almost dropped open. *How does she know what I’ve been thinking?*

She was just beginning to glimpse how the Spirit of God leads in impressing His truth upon one’s heart. It was something she had seldom experienced, but it produced a solemn holy fear within her; not a frightful invasion, but a purity of gladdened welcome to be drawn into obedience.

“What you’re saying is exactly true, I’m certain of it, but how did you know what I was thinking?” Blessed timidly inquired.

Priscilla only laughed good-naturedly which served to lighten her spirits. “My dear friend, be assured, I’m no prophetess,” she smiled at her again.

“Its how God speaks to our hearts through His Word. The truth of the Word of God has entered your heart and led you to the

same applications and convictions that it has to many godly women. Nothing mysterious, really,” she reached out, smiling, and held her hand in friendship.

Blessed returned the gesture of affection willingly. *I'm so glad she came. I can't remember enjoying a visit so much like I have this one. Lord, I give You thanks.*

Priscilla finished the last of her malt and smiled kindly at her friend before gently commenting, “John and I know that what was said about Femi and you on Sunday is not true. We're sorry, Blessed. May the Lord uphold you both that this will not be upsetting to your faith.”

She looked with tenderness and sympathy at the silent Blessed. “Everyone who chooses to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer at the hands of the ungodly. We must expect it to be that way.”

With a momentary surprise she glanced into Priscilla's wise and caring eyes. She thought for a moment about asking her how she knew that the charges against them were false, but decided against it. It didn't really matter. She knew it was so; and that, Blessed was sure of.

“Thank you, Priscilla, your visit and kindness have helped me more than you could realize. I am really very grateful,” Blessed took her friend's hand again in affectionate emphasis.

“We thank the Lord, my sister. I'm very happy that we could discuss the Word of God together as we did. His Word always refreshes the heart, doesn't it?” she serenely commented.

Blessed felt a flush of warmth rush up the sides of her neck as a gladness filled her heart. *Its true. I'm truly refreshed. Lord, I'm so thankful to You. May Your mighty name be praised.* She smiled at Priscilla with a nod of agreement.

Taking her hand affectionately once again, she softly said, “Let's pray together before I must go.”

14

“R - r - r - ring!”

“Well, here we go again! I’ve never talked so much in my whole life! Will this thing never give me a moment’s rest?” Mary threw up her hands in mock frustration.

“R - r - r - ring!” The phone demanded more of a response from her than what she had just said.

“Okay, okay. I hear you. I’m coming-o,” Mary had managed to regain most of her bubbly composure.

“Christ’s Tabernacle of Glory,” she cheerfully answered the phone with her usual courteous warmth.

“Good evening, Sir... Fine, fine, thank you, Reverend... We’re very honored to have you and your ministry represented and participating in the statewide vigil, Sir... Yes, Sir... Please hold on small while I transfer you to Rev.Benson’s office... Yes, Sir, thank you, Sir,” Mary connected the two reverends with a sigh of relief.

“Can you believe it? Even I’m getting tired of talking!” Mary was laughing light-heartedly at herself. “I can see why the

good Rev. Dr. has us all working late these days. There are so-o-o-o many details to attend to!” she glanced at Suki for confirmation of the obvious.

Suki sat patiently listening to Mary’s nearly non-stop banter as she awaited Dr. Benson’s visitors to exit his office. “Mary, I’m certain that this program could never take place without your competent coordination,” Suki smiled at her with seeming sincere flattery.

Mary brightened self-consciously at the unexpected compliment. “Well, I don’t know if I’d go *that* far,” she interjected with a modesty born more of not wanting to sound arrogant than of sincerity. “Though I *have* done quite a bit, I must admit,” she added, happy for whatever praise and recognition she could claim for her efforts.

Suki smiled back at her pleasantly as she continued to carefully manicure her nails. Actually, she was methodically filing those on her right hand to a near razor’s edge.

Casually glancing at the bustling secretary shuffling through the disarray of papers cluttering her desk, she tested the claw-like sharpness of her fingers upon her neck.

A slight smile of satisfaction crossed her lips. *There, that should do just fine.*

Benson’s office door swung open, releasing the volume of hearty laughter accompanying the group of retreating reverend dignitaries. Final handshakes and pleasantries were exchanged in the outer office with a nod from Benson for Mary to accompany them to their awaiting vehicles.

“Sister Suki,” Mary professionally requested, “could you please attend to the phones while I escort our distinguished guests?”

“Why, certainly, Ma’am,” and then turning with the appropriate curtsy of respect, “Good afternoon, Sirs, may the Lord grant you a safe journey.”

“Thank you, my Dear, may God bless you and your anointed ministry.”

“Amen, thank you, Sir.”

The outer door clicked shut on the entourage. Dr. Benson had already retreated into his own inner sanctum. *This is the perfect time.*

Suki sprang silently across the office floor to Mary’s desk. Rapidly rifling through the drawer’s contents, she soon discovered her prize amid its disorganized collection. Swiftly she removed Mary’s house key and returned the remaining ones to their former place and shut the drawer.

Quickly and quietly she returned to her seat and calmly flipped through the pages of a recent news periodical. An evil glint shone in her eye.

It will all be over now in just a very little while.

“Priscilla’s visit was such an encouragement. She is such a dear Christian,” Blessed commented to her husband that evening. “She’s so understanding and kind.”

“We thank the Lord, dear. I’m very happy. I’ve always been impressed with her quiet godly ways, myself. What all did you talk about?”

“Oh, many things; children, markets, farming...” she paused briefly and raised thankful and bashful eyes to meet Femi’s, “and being grateful and supportive of our husbands.”

Femi smiled at her appreciatively. “The Scriptures tell us that, **‘He who finds a wife, finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord.’** I know that’s very true in my own home.”

Blessed lowered her eyes in embarrassment. “I... I’m really very fortunate to have a husband like you. I really want to please you and assist you and, well, to be the kind of wife I should be.”

“I thank God for you, Blessed. I’ve never regretted our day of marriage, you know,” he looked at her tenderly and caught her shy glance at him.

Its how things should be.

Shadows began to lengthen their darkened fingers across the city in the evening’s declining light.

“Oh! Peter will be here in just fifteen minutes! Cai! I’ve so much to do yet. I don’t know if I’ll ever see the top of my desk again,” Mary was distractedly hurrying about as if a constant flow of words might hasten the completion of her seemingly hopeless task.

“Is there anything I can do to help you, Mary?” Suki sweetly offered.

“You’re such a dear, Sister Suki. You’ve been so kind and thoughtful all day long. Really, I don’t how I could have ever gotten this far without you. Well, if you’re volunteering, I’m recruiting,” Mary laughed in her typical jolly manner.

Side by side, the two attempted to create some semblance of order out of the chaos of her desk top until her husband’s arrival. Predictably as clockwork, Peter pulled up at 6:30 on the dot.

“Ah, here’s Peter now. I should have known, he’s on the dot. He always is, you know. Its one of the things I love about the man...” The door swung open upon the two women.

“Welcome, Mr. Peter, Dear. You’re just in time to rescue my poor old soul from near collapse! If it weren’t for this darling helper here,” she squeezed Suki for emphasis, “I don’t know what I would have done today.”

Absentmindedly, she fished in her drawer for her keys, depositing them into her purse without so much as glancing at them. “Why, she has organized and answered phones and...” the detailed report of the day’s activities freely flowed as Suki escorted them to their awaiting Peugeot in the now darkened parking lot.

The outer office door locked behind her as Peter and Mary drove the ten minutes to their flat. Suki carefully replaced Mary’s house key in her desk drawer and headed for Benson’s office. She extinguished the lights in the outer office before entering his own.

I’ve got exactly twenty minutes to finish him and set myself free.

“How was your visit with Blessed, Dear?” John inquired.

“I think the Lord really used it to comfort and encourage her heart.”

“Thank the Lord. How is she regarding what happened at the Tabernacle?”

“She was understandably distressed and somewhat confused about the whole thing. But I think the Lord has helped her to see things from a different standpoint now. Its not easy.”

“We need to pray for both of them, especially Blessed. Embracing spiritual truth requires hard decisions. You’ll never find a multitude to support you in taking a stand upon the true Word of God.”

Priscilla smiled knowingly at her husband. “No, you never do, do you?”

With predetermined purpose, Suki arranged candles upon the center table separating the front of Benson’s desk from the cushioned overstuffed sofa. Well chilled Eva along with delicate crystal goblets joined the romantic atmosphere being created.

Both candles were lit while the Reverend was busily pouring over his financial statement regarding the statewide vigil to be held that weekend. He didn’t even notice what Suki was preparing.

The resounding “Pop!” of the Eva cork got his attention as Suki turned out the office lights.

“Whaa...?” Benson looked up, almost perturbed at the intrusion upon his monetary considerations.

Suki had sauntered to his side with an inviting seductive smile. “You’ve been working so hard, Dear, I thought we’d take a short break and celebrate a little.”

Teasingly, she pulled at his necktie and led him, now willing and grinning, to the awaiting sofa. The beverage gurgled into its elegant two containers. His was presented as she lifted her own to gently clink the rims together.

“Here’s to the new Mr. and Mrs. Benson,” and she blew an enticing kiss across the tops of the sparkling crystal.

“Now, where could that key have gotten to?” Mary was digging through the random catch-all that was her purse. After several searches in vain, she concluded in exasperation, “It must be back at the office.”

“I knew we should have replaced that key chain long ago, Peter. I guess we’re just a little *too* tight with our money. Well, there’s nothing to do but to go back. I’m sure its in my desk drawer.”

So, back they climbed into their ancient Peugeot for the ten minute ride back to the office.

“Oh, God, my Father, expose to my wife the deception of longing for money and the evils it leads to. Convict her to abandon all for what she knows is true from Your Word. Show to her what Your church truly is and deliver Your people at Christ’s Tabernacle from the evils that are happening there, in Jesus’ name, Amen!” Femi concluded his fervent and heartfelt prayer in earnest humility.

Ten minutes left. They’re on their way back by now. The time has come.

“I want to *really* celebrate, darling,” Suki purred in Benson’s ear as she removed his necktie and flung it onto the floor. Fool that he was, he did not resist in the slightest as item after item was lustily removed by this wanton woman and scattered with daring

randomness across the office.

Her own followed, but were carefully placed near the sofa in cautiously contrived order. The stage was set.

Any moment from now, they’ll arrive and it will all be over.

“Oh, Reverend Benson’s car and Suki’s both are still here, Peter. I know they’ve been working very closely together on this one. Of course, they have to with all their responsibilities,” Mary rattled on while she opened the outer office door and switched on the lights.

The pretended panic in Suki’s voice sent chills down his spine, “Quick! Get dressed! Somebody’s here!” she hissed in a frightened whisper as she pushed him away from her.

Benson stumbled helplessly, not knowing where his clothing had fallen.

Immediately Suki raked her razor-sharp nails across her thigh drawing blood. Instantly she reached her purposefully placed underwear and pressed them to her self-inflicted wound, staining them in one brief moment.

Noting Benson’s location, she swiftly swung her leg, overturning the center table and sending shattered goblets and foaming Eva noisily to the floor.

Snuffed out in the violent overthrow, the candles extinguished their glow, plunging the room into deep obscurity.

Startled, Mary turned to her husband, “Peter, did you hear something?”

Before Benson could recover to even utter one word, Suki had reached his side. “Quick, take these,” as she thrust her panties into his right hand.

With a wild slash of her sharpened claws, she gouged his eye unmercifully.

Benson shrieked in alarm and anguish and staggered backwards in the darkness, not knowing what had hit him.

“What is happening in there?” Peter and Mary froze in fright, staring first at each other, then at Benson’s closed office door.

“Awgh!” howled the Reverend as his nose and lip received the full force of Suki’s furious fist. The blow sent him sprawling to the floor in complete disorientation as his face quickly swelled and began to ooze blood.

Suki’s bloodcurdling scream pierced the blackness, petrifying the pained and bewildered Benson while rooting Peter and Mary to the spot.

Snatching up her carefully placed wrapper, she reached the door in three deft bounds.

Hastily the wrapper was clutched about her bare form as she burst into the outer office shrieking hysterically, having purposefully switched on the Reverend’s lights in her flight.

Falling in a crumpled heap at Peter and Mary’s feet, she wailed convulsively with one arm outstretched, accusingly pointing within, “He... he... he...” Suki sobbed uncontrollably and could say no more.

Horrified, Peter and Mary took in the incredible scene before them. Breathlessly they surveyed the evidence confronting their battered senses as Suki whimpered at their feet.

They saw Benson’s wild passionate scattering of his clothes across the office floor. They envisioned the overturned table in Suki’s desperate struggle to preserve the virtue of her saintly womanhood.

Benson’s wounds testified to her valiant resistance of his lustful attack. The final evidence, blood stained panties still clutched in his hand, told the obvious tale of how her thigh received its wound.

The conclusion was inescapable and irrefutable. Slowly they turned their gaze to the dumbfounded Reverend, stupidly staring at them from the floor, too numb to even think of covering the shame of his nakedness.

Mary’s expression shifted from that of shock, gradually phased into disgust, and finally settled into a fiery indignation.

For once, she only had one thing to say, but that one thing said it all, “You wicked, wicked man!”

And the Scripture was fulfilled which said,
“The one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense;

**He who would destroy himself does it.
Wounds and disgrace he will find,
And his reproach will not be blotted out.”**
Proverbs 6:32, 33

15

“I’ve never been so shocked in my entire life!” Mary was telling her story for the some hundredth time. News travels fast with such reporters.

Sympathy poured in from far and wide for the innocent victim of the Rev. Benson’s outrage. Suki was consoled and comforted by thousands. Cards, phone calls, and gifts -large gifts- rained in upon Sister Suki who had taken on the reputation as a virtuous martyr through the ordeal.

Everyone fully understood how she wished to relocate, away from the public eye for sometime, until the trauma of the event subsided. The church unanimously agreed that the least they could do was to donate all the recording equipment to her as she left them to recover in solitude.

She, of course, was very grateful for all their kindness and support. She assured them that she would never forget them and would keep in touch over the next months. Tearfully, she was bid

goodbye by the now devastated Christ's Tabernacle of Glory membership. It seemed as if they had lost their best and most glorious daughter.

"It is the judgment of this court that seventy-five percent of all assets of the Christ's Tabernacle of Glory be awarded to Mrs. Benson as the full and final settlement in this divorce proceeding," the judge's gavel came down with a resounding crack of finality.

Lagos, 37 km.

The driver sang along with gay abandon to the blaring newly released Suki Singer's cassette at 120 km per hour.

Threading through the tangled web of Lagos traffic onto Victoria Island, the destination was reached. A remote-control garage door opener smoothly hummed in obedience to the driver's signal, welcoming it's owner's arrival.

An impressive door swung in on the Italian marbled entryway displaying the imported full-length mirror facing the doorway. The owner stopped to admire herself in the glass.

You've done all right for yourself, darling. A new condo, a Honda-Accord, the latest recording equipment, and money enough to provoke a king to envy.

She smiled with satisfaction. *And its not over yet. Lagos is a big place, and there are many churches, large churches, that are just waiting for someone like you; extremely talented, godly to all appearances, and strikingly beautiful.*

She laughed a little laugh to herself in the gilded mirror and, with a final glance and a flippant kick of her heel, Suki sent the door swinging shut with a crisp click of finality.

Another Sunday.

"Femi," came Blessed's trembling voice in the dead of night. "Femi," she sobbed it again chokingly a second time. He was fully awake now and turned toward his wife in the bed. "Oh, Fem!" she was convulsing now upon his breast.

"May God forgive me!" tears wet his chest from his grief-stricken darling. She gasped it out, again and again amidst heart-racking sobs. "Awgh," rasped his dear Blessed for whom he had prayed these long months, "Femi, can you ever forgive me?" She dissolved into tears once more.

He embraced her, his own tears mingling with her own. There they lay; weeping, praying, baring their hearts, rejoicing.

Minutes stretched into hours in the night's stillness. A oneness, tenderness, and a profound depth of love until then unknown became their portion, sent from on high.

Timidly, she at last ventured to ask, "Femi, may I join you in the fellowship this afternoon?"

He made no reply but simply gathered her into his arms. She could see through the moon's silvery light that he was smiling with unmistakable gladness.

Suddenly, they both were laughing; rolling and hugging and laughing in the sheer joy of the moment.

They had known the truth, and the truth had set them free.

EPILOGUE

AN APPALLING AND HORRIBLE THING HAS HAPPENED IN THE
LAND:

THE PROPHETS PROPHECY FALSELY,
AND THE PRIESTS RULE ON THEIR OWN AUTHORITY;
AND MY PEOPLE LOVE IT SO!
BUT WHAT WILL YOU DO AT THE END OF IT? - JER.5:30, 31

FOR FROM THE LEAST OF THEM EVEN TO THE GREATEST OF
THEM,
EVERYONE IS GREEDY FOR GAIN,
AND FROM THE PROPHET EVEN TO THE PRIEST EVERYONE
PRACTICES DECEIT
JER.6:13

THUS SAYS THE LORD, 'STAND AT THE CROSSROADS AND
LOOK:
ASK FOR THE ANCIENT PATHS, ASK WHERE THE GOOD WAY
IS, AND WALK IN IT,
AND YOU SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.'
BUT YOU SAID, 'WE WILL NOT WALK IN IT.' - JER.6:16

BEHOLD, YOU ARE TRUSTING IN DECEPTIVE WORDS WHICH
ARE WORTHLESS.

WILL YOU STEAL AND MURDER, COMMIT ADULTERY AND
PERJURY...
AND THEN COME AND STAND BEFORE ME IN THIS HOUSE,
WHICH IS CALLED BY MY NAME, AND SAY,
'WE ARE DELIVERED!' - THAT YOU MAY DO ALL THESE
ABOMINATIONS?
HAS THIS HOUSE, WHICH IS CALLED BY MY NAME,
BECOME A DEN OF ROBBERS IN YOUR SIGHT? - JER.7:8-11

THIS IS WHAT THE LORD ALMIGHTY SAYS:
DO NOT LISTEN TO WHAT THE PROPHETS ARE
PROPHECYING TO YOU;
THEY FILL YOU WITH FALSE HOPES,
THEY SPEAK VISIONS FROM THEIR OWN MINDS,
NOT FROM THE MOUTH OF THE LORD - JER.23:16

FOR IT IS TIME FOR JUDGMENT TO BEGIN WITH THE
HOUSEHOLD OF GOD
1 PET.4:17

THE
DISCIPLESHIP
EXPERIENCE

AN APPROACH TO
EQUIPPING FAITHFUL MEN
FOR GODLY LIVING **AND**
GOSPEL SERVICE

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THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE

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Freely you have received, freely give [Mt.10:8]

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THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE
Every disciple when he is fully trained will be like his master - Lk.6:40

IN GRATEFUL APPRECIATION

In every life the influences for good or ill are numerous. In reflecting upon the author's spiritual pilgrimage as a Christian begun 30 years ago, the following have profoundly affected *this man* for everlasting good. To each I owe a debt of gratitude unable to be repaid: only may your investment in the author's **life** not prove to be in vain, for **Jesus'** sake. To each of you I would say:

**"May the Lord reward your work, and your wages be full from the Lord,
the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to seek refuge"**
Ruth 2:12

To you, therefore, is this, the **fruit** of your labors, lovingly dedicated in deepest humility for the advancement of the **faith** which, once for all, **has been** delivered to the saints.

CLYDE COWAN

My spiritual father, who taught me to **sacrifice** all things for the sake of **the gospel**, who demonstrated that the Word of God has **answers** for all of **life**, and who tirelessly proved the value of **discipling** one *soul*.

MARCHANT KING

The most **saintly man** I've **ever known**, at whose feet I learned the **exacting** scholarship of "proving all **things**" and who unfolded the glories of Christ on **every** page of Scripture. His legacy and the crowning glory of his **life** was the **grand** "private environment" of union with **Christ**.

JACK WELCH

Whose methodical and disciplined approach to **life** and the Scriptures coupled with his affectionate oversight forged a **course** of ministry to which this volume attests.

JEAN PHILLIPS

My mother, **from** whom I **learned** to **joyfully** persevere through sufferings without complaint, to **selflessly** love **all**, **even** those who **despitefully** use you, and to **finish** one's course with **grace** and the praise of Christ upon the **lips**.

JOHN CATTERMOLE

A disciple **indeed** and a **friend** that has "**stuck closer** than a brother", who has **often refreshed** me **and** whose **faithful** wounds and smiting in **kindness**, **especially at** the lowest **points** of my spiritual **journey**, have, more than once, **strengthened** these feeble knees.

DAN FAUST

Whose strength is truly **the joy** of the Lord in **selfless** giving, **esteeming** others **above** himself. His quiet unhurried **levelheadedness** has **preserved** me **from** many a hasty path.

PATS

The **darling** of my bosom, **truly** a **helper** made for her husband, **whose** guileless **sincerity** and intense insistence that the Lord Jesus have **preeminence** in all things, have, through her **gentle quietness**, made her **precious** in the **sight** of God and awesome as an army with **banners** to me. You are **greatly** loved of your husband.

THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE

Paul wanted this man to go with him - **Acts 16:3**

PRACTICAL ASPECTS

A disciple is, by definition, a learner. If one does not wish to learn from another, he will not go to him. He will not listen. He will not follow. He will not abide by directives. He will resist teaching and reproof. **"Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this said, 'This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?' As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore."** - Jn.6:60, 66

As a learner, he does not know as he ought (I Cor.8:2). He does not lean on his own understanding (Prov.3:5). He is not a fool, trusting in his own heart (Prov.28:26). He is quick to listen and slow to speak (Jas 1.19)

If one will learn **from** another as a disciple, it is because he wants to be like the one discipling him (Lk.6:40).

A disciple will be of a kindred spirit / like-minded with the one discipling him (Phil.2:20).

A disciple will not seek **after** his own interests (Phil.2:21)

A disciple is a servant; first of all to the Lord and then also to the one discipling him, like a child serving his father (Phil.2:22).

A disciple follows the teaching and conduct of the one discipling him (2 Tim.3:10)

A disciple teaches the same things that the one discipling him does (I Cor.4:17).

During discipleship, the disciple is sent under the direction of the one discipling him (I Cor.4:17, Phil.2:19, 23, 25, 28, I Tim.1:3, 2 Tim.4:12, Tit.1:5). Independence and self-will do not guide his movements.

The one discipling will preach (2 Tim.4:2), speak, exhort, and reprove with all authority (Tit.2:15), lead (Heb.13:7), prove to be an example (I Pet.5:3), teach (2 Tim.2:24), ~~correct~~ (2 Tim.2:25), remind and solemnly charge (2 Tim.2:14), encourage (Acts 15:32), and instruct with all patience (2 Tim.4:2); but he **will** not lord it over the disciple (Lk.22:25-27, 2 Cor.1:24, I Pet.5:3).

A disciple who does not welcome reproof is no disciple at all. **"He is on the path of life who heeds instruction, but he who ignores reproof goes astray."** - Prov.10:17. **"Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid"** - Prov.12:1.

The demands of discipleship are intense and rigorous (I Tim.4:15,16, 2 Tim.2:15). Self-discipline is essential (I Tim.4:7,8, Prov.2:1-5, 4:23). Time is to be redeemed (Eph.5:16, Col.4:5).

Six chapters daily, 7 days per week, are to be read without fail according to the schedule provided in OVERVIEW. This amounts to 2.190 chapters during one year's **time** and is non-optional if one would be a disciple.

The full-time disciple **will** complete the 150 sessions of this volume during one year's time. The time of day set aside for such study is to be scheduled by the disciple himself. Teaching sessions as described in OVERVIEW will be scheduled by the one discipling and **will** generally be several days per week.

If a disciple **will** not work but is lazy, neither let **him** eat (2 Thess.3:10-13)

A disciple shall make it his ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to his own business and work with his hands (I Thess.4:11). Therefore, since the one discipling and his family have their own rigorous schedules to **maintain**, **limit** your visits to scheduled sessions and other arranged appointments (Prov 25:17).

A disciple shall relate to women **"in all purity"** (I Tim.5:2). **"It is good for a man not to touch a woman"** (I Cor.7:1). Since the disciple does not want to be led **"into temptation"** (Mt.6:13), nor give the enemy any **"occasion for reproach"** (I Tim.5:14), but to **"abstain from all appearance of evil"** (I Thess.5:22), the disciple will not be alone in private with a woman (excepting, of course, one's own wife) during the time of his discipleship.

The one discipling **will** determine which or if all of the disciples will accompany him on various gospel ministrations.

These constitute the essential practical aspects of The Discipleship Experience. It is for you to honestly evaluate your own heart and desires in **Light** of these things in the presence of God. You also must answer the following question:

Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, 'What do you seek?'" - Jn.1:38

THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE

Every disciple when he is **fully** trained will be **Like** his master - Lk.6:40

AIM

The purpose of the Discipleship Experience is to equip **faithful** men for the works of **service** to which the Lord Jesus has called them. Development of consistent, disciplined, and godly character is its ultimate objective. *"The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and an unhyprocritical faith" - 1 Tim.1:5.*

SCOPE

The Discipleship Experience is intentionally limited in its scope. It is designed to serve as a foundation for life and ministry. Any foundation laid establishes the parameters and scope of a structure. The Discipleship Experience is intended to supply a strong support for all that later is to be built upon it. Its spectrum encompasses the whole counsel of God, and, in this sense, is comprehensive. The essential elements needed to grasp the remaining **Scripture** not addressed during the sessions are covered.

PLAN

The sessions are presented sequentially and progressively, being patterned **after** that of the order of the Scriptures themselves. It is not without reason that Gen.1:1 is the starting point and Rev.22 is the conclusion. The unfolding revelation of God's Word builds successively upon the previous ones until the whole is culminated in the book of Revelation itself

Therefore, maximum benefit and understanding will be obtained by pursuing the individual sessions in the order encountered.

The sessions are designed to be completed together with the daily reading schedule outlined in the section following entitled OVERVIEW. **In** this way, the disciple is exposed to the whole of the Word of God while focusing his concentration on selected passages. The sessions will provide the framework to interpret the daily readings.

The OT is examined first as it quite obviously provides the needed background for **understanding** the NT. Studying the OT and NT sessions combined with the daily reading, provides the needed understanding to formulate the doctrines of the Scriptures. Basic Doctrines can only be deduced within the necessary broader context of the Scriptures as a whole. Attempts to establish doctrines apart from this **frame** of reference are both foolish and dangerous. It is for this reason that doctrinal matters form the final considerations of the Discipleship Experience.

The questions in each session have a two-fold purpose. They first are designed to stimulate **careful** reflection upon the actual words of the text under examination. The disciple must encounter the Word of **God** and seek the Lord Himself for insight into and application of the Scriptural truths being studied.

The approach is therefore investigative rather than informative. Thus, the disciple must seek the Lord rather than being told what to believe per se.

Secondly, the questions, in a cumulative sense, will help to orient the mind of the disciple to investigate the remainder of the Scriptures in a similar manner. They will train the faculties of perception to follow disciplined principles of inquiry. As such, they will impart an asset for life extending beyond the immediate benefit derived from the sessions themselves

USE

Maximum benefit will be obtained by utilizing these study sessions in conjunction with **all** 7 aspects described in the section following entitled OVERVIEW.

The sessions contained herein may be employed as a comprehensive curriculum for Bible schools or missionary and discipleship training ministries. They may be adopted in whole or in part as the core of or as supplemental to existing teaching materials.

They can serve as a course of sermon preparation which will ensure a congregation being taught the whole counsel of God. Individual sessions can serve as points of discussion for Bible study groups. It can serve as a reference tool in addressing doctrinal questions and evaluating church practices. Photostats of particular sessions can assist inquirers to search the Scriptures for answers to their questions.

THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE

Every disciple when he is fully trained will be like his master - Lk.6:40

USE

The blank pages preceding and following each session are provided for recording understanding **gained** during the course of study.

The following **Abbreviations** are used throughout: **KJV** (King James Version) **NASB** (New American Standard Bible) **NIV** (New International Version) **i.e.** (that is) **etc.** (and things like these)

OT (Old Testament) **NT** (New Testament) **v.** (verse) **f** (and following) **a** ("a" attached to a reference indicates 1st part of a verse)

The OT was originally written in **Heb.** (Hebrew) The NT was originally written in **Gk.** (Greek)

BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Gen. - Genesis	2 Chron. - 2 Chronicles	Dan. - Daniel
Ex. - Exodus	Ez. - Ezra	Hos. - Hosea
Lev. - Leviticus	Neh. - Nehemiah	Joel
Num. - Numbers	Esth. - Esther	Amos
Deut. - Deuteronomy	Job	Ob. - Obadiah
Josh. - Joshua	Ps. - Psalms	Jonah
Jud. - Judges	Prov. - Proverbs	Mic. - Micah
Ruth	Ecc. - Ecclesiastes	Nah. - Nahum
1 Sam. - I Samuel	S. of S. - Song of Solomon	Hab. - Habakkuk
2 Sam. - 2 Samuel	Isa. - Isaiah	Zeph. - Zephaniah
2 Kings	Jer. - Jeremiah	Hag. - Haggai
1 Chron. - I Chronicles	Lam. - Lamentations	Zech. - Zechariah
	Ezk. - Ezekiel	Mal. - Malachi

BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Mt. - Matthew	Eph. - Ephesians	Heb. - Hebrews
Mk. - Mark	Phil. - Philippians	Jas. - James
Lk. - Luke	Col. - Colossians	1 Pet. - I Peter
Jn. - John	1 Thess. - I Thessalonians	2 Pet. - 2 Peter
Acts	2 Thess. - 2 Thessalonians	1 Jn. - I John
Rom. - Romans	1 Tim. - I Timothy	2 Jn. - 2 John
1 Cor. - I Corinthians	2 Tim. - 2 Timothy	3 Jn. - 3 John
2 Cor. - 2 Corinthians	Ti. - Titus	Jude
Gal. - Galatians	Philemon	Rev. - Revelation

OVERVIEW

The Discipleship Experience is a self-paced approach. **If pursued** on a full-time basis, its 150 sessions can adequately be accomplished in one year. Doing one session weekly will entail nearly three years to complete.

The sessions contained in the remainder of this volume are only one portion of 7 aspects comprising the Discipleship Experience. The sessions are not intended as an academic exercise though requiring concentrated diligent study to complete. They are an aid to seeking the Lord Himself to reveal His ways to the disciple that, in obedience to God's Word, he might become **transformed** thereby into the image of Christ Jesus, our Lord.

To the extent that any of these aspects are minimized, the resulting transformation and equipping will be incomplete or circumvented.

THE 7 ASPECTS ARE DESCRIBED ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE

Every disciple when he is fully trained will be like his master - Lk.6:40

THE 7 ASPECTS OF THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE

(1) **SCRIPTURE READING** according to the following daily schedule. One chapter per day is to be read from each of the six sections making a total of six chapters per day that are to be read.

- (1) *GENESIS - ESTHER* Narrative / History containing examples, warnings, and illustrations
(After reading Esth 10, return to Gen 1)
- (2) *JOB - MALACHI* Poetry and Prophecy (**Psalms** and Proverbs will not be read as part of this section since they are covered in # 3, 4. After reading Mal 4, return to Job 1)
- (3) *PSALMS* Prayer, Worship, and Deliverance in affliction (After reading Ps.150, return to Ps.1)
- (4) *PROVERBS* Wisdom for all of life (After reading Prov.31, return to Prov.1)
- (5) *MATTHEW - ACTS* The life of Christ and of the church (After reading Acts 28, return to Mt.1)
- (6) *ROMANS - REVELATION* The Doctrine of the Scriptures (After reading Rev.22, return to Rom.1)

During the course of one year, sections 1 and 2 will be read approximately once each. Sections 3 and 6 will be read about twice each, section 5 nearly three times, and section 4 twelve times.

(2) **INDIVIDUAL STUDY OF THE WORD OF GOD** focused upon the following three areas.

- (1) *OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES*
- (2) *NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES*
- (3) *BASIC DOCTRINE*

See TABLE OF CONTENTS for specifics covered

(3) **TEACHING OTHERS** is critical to becoming equipped for the Lord's service. What the disciple has learned from the Lord during his individual study of the Word of God, he will teach to his fellow disciples as well as to the one discipling him. The discipler will then teach the disciples from the same passage. On the principle of 1 Cor 10 15, "*I speak as to wise men, you judge what I say*", there will follow a general evaluation of the teachings presented in an open forum of question and answer, dialogue, and discussion guided by the discipler

(4) **PRAYER** in the form of adoration of God, confession of sin, petition regarding needs, and intercession for the advancement of the kingdom of Heaven in the world will be emphasized and engaged in.

(5) **EVANGELISM** both in personal witness and in group settings, with the discipler and individually, both in urban and especially in interior villages, will form a significant part of equipping the disciple to preach the Word outside of church contexts.

(6) **SERVICE / FELLOWSHIP** among the people of God amidst local churches is critical to the discipling process. A disciple is essentially a servant who is learning and therefore must serve the saints of God.

(7) **THE BREAKING OF BREAD** will be participated in weekly in obedience to our Lord Jesus' command. "*Do this in remembrance of Me.*" This is an **unprogrammed** meeting in which the Holy Spirit directs all who know Christ to express **their** thanks in hymns, songs, praise, **teaching**, prayer, exhortation, confession, and worship.

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27	Joshua 3 & 4 Crossing Jordan	23
28	Joshua 5 Gilgal , circumcision, Captain of the Lord's host	23, 24
29	Joshua 6 & 7 Jericho, sin of Achan	24, 25
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3	Matthew 6 Prayer, God and Mammon	2, 3
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5	Matthew 13 Parables of the kingdom	3, 4
6	Matthew 16 Church	4, 5
7	Mark 7 Traditions of men	5
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9	John 1 Jesus, the Word made flesh	7

THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE

Every disciple when he is fully trained will be like his master - Lk.6:40

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14	John 16 Holy Spirit	10, 11
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16	Acts 2 3,000 on Pentecost	12
17	Acts 7 Stephen	12, 13
18	Acts 10 Gentiles saved	13
19	Romans 1 Gospel, wrath of God	13, 14
20	Romans 2 Sin	14, 15
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22	Romans 4 Justification by faith	15, 16
23	Romans 5:1-11 Peace with God, saved by His Life	16
24	Romans 5:12 - 6:11 Adam & Christ, crucified with Christ	16, 17
25	Romans 6:12 -23 Slaves of God	17
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27	Romans 8:1 -17 Spirit of life in Christ Jesus	18
28	Romans 8: 18 - 39 Nothing can separate us from God's love	18, 19
29	Romans 9 Sovereign choice of God	19
30	Romans 10 Confess Jesus as Lord	19, 20
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32	Romans 12 Present your bodies as a living sacrifice	20, 21
33	Romans 13 & 14 Government. weaker brother	21
34	Romans 15 & 16 OT, the gospel, greetings	22
35	I Corinthians 11 Breaking of Bread	22, 23
36	I Corinthians 15 Resurrection	23, 24
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38	2 Corinthians 5 Judgment seat, new creation, ambassadors	25
39	Galatians 1 - 3 Faith and law	25, 26
40	Galatians 4 - 6 Hagar , circumcision, fruit of the Spirit, cross	26, 27
41	Ephesians 1 Blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ	28
42	Ephesians 2 Saved by grace through faith	28, 29
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47	Philippians 2 The mind of Christ, His emptying & exaltation	32
48	Philippians 3 That I might know Him	32, 33
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61	Revelation 1 Christ revealed in glory	42
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THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE

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2	God God is Spirit	1, 2
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20	Salvation Forgiveness and Regeneration	14, 15
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22	Salvation Law	16
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24	Salvation Security and Assurance	17, 18
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26	Salvation Sanctification	21
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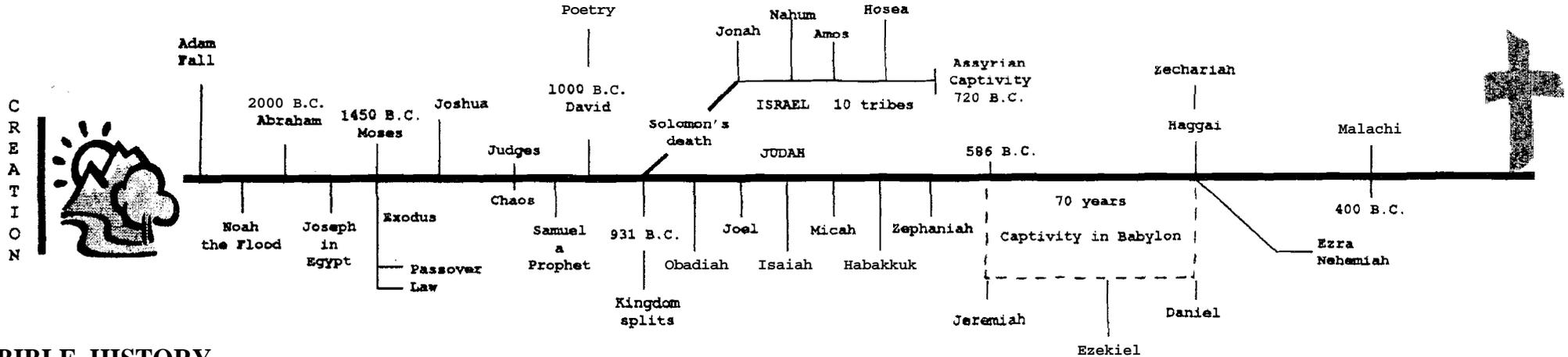
THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE
Every disciple when he is fully trained will be like his master - Lk.6:40

**OLD
TESTAMENT
KEY
PASSAGES**

THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE

Every disciple **when** he is fully trained will **be like** his master - Lk.6:40

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES



BIBLE HISTORY

GENESIS 1-3 Creation, fall
 6, 7 Rood
 11:1-9 Tower of Babel
 12:1-5 Call of Abraham
 21:1-5 Birth of Isaac
 25:21-34 Birth of Jacob
 37 Joseph cast into Egypt
 41:46-57; 42:1-3; 45:25-46:7;
 50:22-26 Jews in Egypt

EXODUS 1-3:10 Moses' call
 11-12:42, 51; 14-17 the EXODUS
 19, 20 the LAW

DEUTERONOMY 1-3 Failure to enter the promised land
 34 Death of Moses

JOSHUA 1-11, 13.1 The conquest of the land

JUDGES 1, 2:16-23; 17:6; 21:25 Israel's ups and downs

1 SAMUEL 8-11 GOD rejected, Saul crowned

2 SAMUEL 1, 5:1-12 David is king

1 KINGS 2:1-12 Death of David, Solomon is king

1 KINGS 11:41-12:33 Kingdom splits

2 KINGS 17:1-23 Assyrian captivity of the ten tribes
 24:10-25:11 Babylonian captivity of Judah

EZRA 1, 3 Return to Jerusalem, building the temple

NEHEMIAH 1, 2, 4 Building the wall

Figure 1

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

GENESIS 1 & 2 (Session 1)

GENESIS 1 Familiarity with Figure 1 will aid in your understanding of the OT.

v.1 What does the phrase "in the beginning" tell us about God? What does the word "created" tell us about God? What qualities must one have in order to create? Is there anything that comes before God? What does this mean both literally and spiritually? What is the difference between the "universe" and the "heavens and the earth"? Which does man use to describe things? Which does God use? Explain the spiritual significance of "heavens and earth" (see Isa.55:8, 9, Col.3:1, 2). What are some foundational truths **learned** about God and man **from** this verse?

v.1-31 How do the **progressive** steps of the physical creation illustrate the new creation in Christ Jesus (**see** 2 Cor.5:17, Eph.2:10)?

v.1-5 See Jn.1:1-3. What is the relationship between these two passages? Who created the heavens and the earth (see Gen.1:26)? What is the spiritual dimension of light and darkness (see Jn.8:12, 12:35, 36, 2 Cor.4:4-6, 1 Jn.1:5-7)? Why did the Lord not leave things formless, void, and in the **darkness** (**see** 1 Cor.14:33, 40)?

v.4, 6, 7, 14, 18 What word is repeated in each of these verses? What does this **tell** us about the Lord and our relationship to Him (see 2 Cor.6:14-18)?

v.9-13 What 3 things are emphasized in these verses? What is the spiritual significance of each?

v.14-19 What were the purposes of these various light bearers? What spiritual meaning do they have (see Mal.4:2, Phil.2:15, Mt.5:14)?

v.20-25 How would you describe the number and types of life described in these verses? How does this correspond to John 10:10?

v.26-31 Who is **speaking** in verse 26? What does this tell us about the nature of God? How does man differ **from** animals? What is the image of God? How does being male and female yet being one relate to the image of God in mankind? What was the purpose of man's creation? What was the crowning glory of the creation?

GENESIS 2

v.1-3 What qualities of God's character are seen in these verses (see Jn.4:34, 2 Cor.8:10, 11, 2 Tim.4:7, Phil.1:6)?

v.7 What aspects make up man (**see** 1 Thess.5:23)? Where does life come from? How dependent are we upon the Lord? Explain.

v.9 What trees were in the garden? What was true of all these trees (see Gen.1:31)?

v.15-17 What was man to do in this garden? What was he not to do? What was to be the **consequence** of disobedience? Define death both physically and spiritually (see Job 34 14, Isa.59:2, Eph.2:1, Rev.20:14)

v.18-25 Why was the woman made? What roles and responsibilities do male and female have as created by God (see 1 Cor.11:3, 7-12, Eph.5:22,23, 33; 1 Tim.2:11-15)? What is the Lord's design for marriage (see Mt.19:3-9)? Describe Adam's state while **his bride** was being formed. What are the parallels between this section and Eph. 5:22-33?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

GENESIS 3 (Session 2)

v.1 Who is this serpent (see Rev.12:9)? Did he appear to the woman in all his evil and **fearfulness**? Why(see 2 Cor.11:14, 15)? Define subtle / **crafty**. What are schemes / wiles / strategies (see 2 Cor.2:11, 11:3, Eph. 6:11)? What was his purpose in asking her this question? He was attacking the _____ of God's Word. In Genesis 2:4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 3:1 the title "Lord God" is found. Satan **calls** him "God". Why did he do this and what is the difference between the two? The Lord had said, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely" - **Gen.2:16**. The devil said, "You shall not eat from every tree of the garden?" What is the difference in emphasis? What would the devil have us focus upon; what would he have us forget?

v.2 If a question is raised regarding the **truth** of God's Word, whom should we seek for the answer? With whom did the woman discuss this? Did her statement here show that she believed what the **Lord** had said (see **Gen.2 16**)? Explain.

v.3 Is this what the Lord had said (see **Gen.2:17**)? Where did she get the idea that she should not touch it? See Mt.16:22, 23. Where did Peter get these thoughts? What did the woman not do when the **truth** of the Word was questioned (see 2 Cor.10:5)? By what title did the woman refer to the Lord?

v.4 **Rom.6:23** says that "the wages of sin is death." What does the devil **say**? The devil would have us believe that the Lord is not _____ : that nothing of **what** we are told in **Rom.1:18**, **Eph.5:6**, and **Col.3:25** **will** come to pass.

v.5 What was the source of this "revelation" about God? Would she have **ever known** these things **from** reflecting upon and believing the Word which the Lord had spoken to her? Is something else needed beyond the Bible and the Lord Himself in order to understand what He has spoken to us? What is the source of this hidden and secret "truth" about the Lord and His Word? Were Adam and Eve like God already (see **Gen.1:26, 27**)? Did they already know good and evil (see Gen.2:15-17)? Why then did Satan suggest that these things were not true? The implication is that God is not _____ and therefore is withholding these good things **from** them.

v.6 How did the woman see that the tree was good for **food** and a delight to the eyes (see **Gen.2:9**)? How did she "see" that it was desirable to make her wise? What happened when she touched the **fruit**? How does this relate to her misquoting of the Word of God in v.3? How is the truth of Heb.2:1 illustrated here? Since she did not surely die when she touched the **fruit**, what was her heart strengthened to do? What does I **Tim.2:13, 14** **tell** us about this event?

v.7 Satan had said that their eyes would be opened. Were they opened in the sense that he had led them to **believe**? Explain. In what sense did they know that they were naked (see **Isa.61:10**, 2 Cor.5:3, 4)? What clothing did they lack? What were they attempting to do **by** sewing fig leaves together? What did these coverings fail to do (see **Isa.59:6**)?

v.8 What does sin and disobedience lead to?

v.9 Why did the Lord ask this? Who seeks whom in this **sinful** world (see Rom.3:11, Lk.19:10)?

v.10 Why did he say he was naked **after** covering himself with fig leaves? Why was he afraid (see I Jn.4:1.7, 18)? If he was trying to hide from the Lord, why did he answer when the Lord said, "Where are **you**?"

v.11 What is the **answer** to this first question (see **Rom.2:15, 16**)? What is the answer to the second question? Did the Lord ask whether they had **touched** the fruit or eaten of it?

v.12 What was Adam trying to do **by** the answer he gave? What was the first thing he said; the last thing? Why did he answer in this order? What was **he trying** to blame for his sin? Who was Adam actually blaming for his rebellion (see Ex.16:2, 7, 8)?

v.13 Whom did the **woman** blame for her transgression? Did the Lord ask her what she had done or why she had done it? Explain.

v.14 Does the Lord ask the serpent what he had done or why he had done it? Explain.

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

GENESIS 3

v.15 Who is the seed of the woman (see Gal.3:16)? What will He do to the head of the serpent? What will the serpent do to His heel? What is the significance of each? How was this bruising of the serpent's head accomplished (see Jn.12:23, 24, 27, 31, 32. Col.2:14, IS, Heb.2:14, 15)?

v.16 What specific judgments came upon the woman because of her sin? In what sense will she desire her husband (see Gen.4:7 where the identical words for "desire" and "rule" are used)?

v.17 What did Adam listen to? What did he not listen to? Was Adam deceived (see I Tim.2:14)? Explain.

v.17-19 What specific judgments came upon the man because of his sin? What should the fact that we are dust always remind us of?

v.20 "Eve" means "Living / Life". Why did Adam call his wife this rather than "the mother of all death"? How does the truth of v.15 enter into the answer to this question?

v.21 How did the Lord respond to this naming of his wife? **What** does the Lord think about our own works of righteousness and self-effort? Who provided these garments for Adam and Eve? How were these garments obtained? What instruction did this provide for them (see Heb.9:22)?

v.22-24 What had Adam and Eve forfeited all right to? Why was this so? In order to partake of the tree of life what must one do? What would happen to any who attempted to reach the tree of life while yet in sin and under the sentence of the Lord's judgment? How does Mt.10:39 relate to this passage here?

GENESIS 4, 5 (Session 3)

GENESIS 4

v.1-5 What was the difference between Cain and Abel (see Heb.11:4, I Jn.3:10-12)?

v.3 What does "in the process of time / the course of time" mean?

v.4 How did Abel know to bring this type of offering (see Heb.11:4, Rom.10:17, Lev.3:16, 17)?

v.5 How does Gen.3:17-19 relate to the acceptability of Cain's offering?

v.1-8 Comment on these statements: Cain was the first Pharisee (see Mt.23:27-35). Religion is a mask for hatred of God (see Jn.8:37-44).

v.7 What was the Lord asking Cain to do?

v.8, 9 How do Cain's actions here show who his father really was (see Jn.8:44)?

v.10 What did Abel's blood cry out for? What did Christ's speak of (see Heb.12:24)?

v.12, 16, 17 What was to be Cain's punishment? What did he do instead? What does this tell us about the motivation in building the first city? Why did he name it after his son (see Ps.49:11, Gen.49:3)?

v.19 What deviation from God's order is seen here (see Gen.2:22-24)? Why was this not good (see Mt.19:4-6, Eph.5:22-33)?

v.20-22 What three broad categories of activity developed from the city dwellers? How are each of these employed in the hands of sinful men!

v.23, 24 What type of government or rule did Lamech establish? What, in essence, was Lamech doing by this declaration (see v.15 and v.24)?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

GENESIS 4

v.16-24 How many times is the Lord mentioned in this section? What does this **tell** us about the city of *man*? Summarize the **key** elements in the city of man **from this** section.

v.26 What does it **mean** to **call** upon the Name **of the** Lord (see **Ps.4:1-3, 18:3, 50:15, 80:18, 86:5, 105:1, 116:13, 145:18, Jer.29:12, 13, 33:3, Zeph.3:9, Rom.10:12, 13, 2 Tim.2:22**)?

GENESIS 5

v.1-3 What is the **difference** between in the "likeness of God" and "a son in his own likeness"?

v.4-32 What is repeated over and over throughout this section?

v.21-24 What was different **about Enoch**? Describe Enoch's life (see **Heb.11:5, Jude 14, 15**). **What** does this tell us about what it means to walk with **God**?

GENESIS 6 - 9 (Session 4)

GENESIS 6

v.1-5, 11-13 Describe the condition of man as noted here. What is the relationship between v.5 and v.11 (see **Mk.7:20-23**)?

v.6, 7 Why was the Lord grieved? What does it **mean** that he repented of **making** man?

GENESIS 6 - 9

In **what** ways does the whole episode of the judgment and the ark picture salvation in the Lord Jesus (see **Heb.11:7, I Pet.3:18-22, 2 Pet.2:5, 2 Cor.5:17**)? Specifically describe how each of the following contribute to this picture: (a) The condition of man (b) The flood water (c) The ark (d) Noah, his family, and the animals (e) Coming out of the ark (f) The altar (g) The rainbow

GENESIS 7

Do the Scriptures describe an isolated local flood or a worldwide event (see **2 Pet.3:5-7, 2:5**)?

GENESIS 8

v.6-12 What was the purpose in sending out the birds? Which of the birds showed him what he was wishing to know? What is the dove a picture of (see **Mt.3:16**)? How is the believer guided (see **Gal.5:13-24**)?

v.20 What parallel can you see between this and **Rom.12:1**?

GENESIS 9

v.2 What protection does God give man?

v.3, 4 What dietary restrictions were given to **man** here? What restrictions did the Lord Jesus give (see **Mk.7:18, 19**)?

v.5, 6 Does God make provision for capital punishment? Explain. How does the image of God **affect** this?

v.9-17 In essence, what is this covenant? Where else do we find the rainbow (see **Ezk.1:26-28, Rev.4:2,3**)? What is the significance of the rainbow?

v. 20-29 What was Canaan's sin (see **Ex.20:12, Deut.5:16, Deut.27:16, Ezk.22:7, Lev.19:3, Eph.6:2,3**)? *What* does it mean to honor your father and mother?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

GENESIS 10, 11 (Session 5)

GENESIS 10

v.6 What do we know about Ham and his son (see **Gen.9:20-25**)? Ham means "tumult", Cush means "black terror" Mizraim is the Hebrew word for "Egypt". Put means "afflicted", Canaan means "a trafficker". Describe the lineage of Ham

v.13,14 **Casluhim** means "as forgiven ones", **Caphtorim** means "as if to interpret". What does the Philistine not have? What **parallels** are seen with 2 **Tim.3:5-9**? How do 1 **Sam.5** and 6 illustrate that they have neither forgiveness nor truth?

v.15-19 From their subsequent history, describe the Canaanites (see **Lev.18:20-28**, **Deut.12:31**, **18:9-14**)

v.25 In what sense was the earth divided in the days of Peleg (see **Gen.11:1**, 8, 9)?

v.7,8 What does Cush (black terror) give birth to? Nimrod means "one who rebels". In what sense was he a mighty one?

v.9 "Before" can mean "up against", as in an **army** coming **before** a **rival** kingdom. What type of hunting was he noted for (see **Ezk.13:18-23**)?

v.10 Babel means "confusion". Where did his kingdom begin and what characterized it?

v.12 What characterizes "the **great city**" (see **Rev.17:18**, **Rev.18**)?

GENESIS 11

v.1,2 Where did man settle? Who ruled **over them** there (see **Gen.10:10**)?

v.3 **How** is burned brick different from stone? **Which** does man build with? Which does God build with (see 1 **Kings 6:7**, 1 **Pet 2:5**)? What is the unifying element in man's building? What is the unity in God's building (see **Jn.17:21-23**, **Eph 4:3**)?

v.4 What was the Lord's stated purpose for man (see **Gen.9:1**)? What was man's stated purpose here? Why did they wish to build this tower?

Compare the city of Cain (see **Gen.4**) and the kingdom of Nimrod. What common principles of government can be seen in both?

v.6 What type of unity does God hate? Why? Which kind of unity does God establish (see **Ps.86:11**, **Jn.17:11**, **21-23**, **Eph.4:3**, **13**)?

v.6-9 Why did the Lord confuse man's language? When all men of the world can **freely** communicate with each other and exchange their ideas, what develops?

GENESIS 11, 12 (Session 6)

GENESIS 11

v.27-32 What motivated Abraham to leave Ur (see **Acts 7:2-4**)? How did **he** know **where** to go? **Who** went with him? Was this obedience? Explain. **Haran** (the city) **was** the **northernmost city** of the **Chaldean** empire which was the land of Abraham's **birth**. Was it the Lord's will for him to **settle** there? Explain. **When** did he leave **Haran**? **Terah** means "delay". What does this tell **us** about our **associations** (see **1 Cor.15:33**, **Mt.10:37**)?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

GENESIS 12

- v.1 Was this the first time that the Lord had told Abraham this (see Acts 7:2-4)? What does the Lord do if His children do not obey Him (see Heb.12:5-11)?
- v.2 What comes first, being blessed or being a blessing (see Gal.1:16)? What is the principle?
- v.3 How does our orientation to the people of God demonstrate our orientation to God Himself (see I Jn.5:1, 2)? How will **all** people be blessed through Abraham (see Gal.3:8, 14)?
- v.4 In what sense did Abraham go forth as the Lord had spoken to him if Lot went with him?
- v.5 "They set out...thus they came." What is the principle seen here (see Phil.1:6, I Pet.1:3-5)?
- v.6-8 How does 2 Cor.5:7 relate to the Lord's promise while the Canaanite was then in the land? What do the altar and tent represent (see Heb.11:8-10, 13-16. I Pet.2:11, Heb.13:10, Rom.12:1)?
- v.10 What is a famine? What does it illustrate (see Deut.8:2, 3)? Should Abraham have gone to Egypt (see Gen.12:1, 5, 7)? Explain. What does Egypt picture in the Scriptures (see Ex.12:12, 13, 13:3, Isa.19:11-15, 31:1-3, I Jn.2:15-17)?
- v.11-13 Was this true (see Gen.20:2, 11-13)? Explain. What was Abraham's motivation in doing this? What comment does Phil.2:3, 4 make on these actions?
- v.14-17 Does approval **from** men indicate approval **from** God (see Jn.12:42, 43, Gal.1:10)? Explain.
- v.18, 19 What answer could Abraham give to this?
- v.20 Why did they escort him? Was this an honor to Abraham? Was it honoring to God? Explain

GENESIS 13 (Session 7)

- v.1-4 Where did Abraham return to? What is the spiritual lesson to be learned **from** this? What was there no mention of while he was in Egypt? What progress had he made spiritually during that time?
- v.1, 5, and 12:5 How is Lot described in these verses? What is the difference between walking with God and walking with Abraham (see 2 Chron.24:2, 17, 18)?
- v.5-9 Why was there strife? What was Lot willing to do about it? What of Abraham? What lesson is there that "the Canaanite was then in the land"?
- v.10, 11 "Lifted up his eyes" is the same phrase as in Gen.39:7. What does it tell us about Lot's desire? How did the land appear to him? What is the difference between the garden of the Lord and the land of Egypt in Lot's mind? What does Egypt picture in the Scriptures (see the question on Gen.12:10 above)? On what basis did he choose?
- v.10-13 What was Lot attracted to? What characterized Sodom (see Ezk.16:49, 50)?
- v.14-17 How was the lifting up of Abraham's eyes different than that of Lot's? The Lord desired that Abraham would both "see" the land and "walk" through it. What is the spiritual principle (see Jn.13:17, Col.2:6, 7, Jas.1:22, Mt 7:24-27)?
- v.18 Describe Abraham's life at this point. Mamre means "causing fatness" (as in abundance), Hebron **means** "communion". Also, what is the significance of the tent and the altar (see question on Gen 12:6-8 above)?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

GENESIS 14 (Session 8)

v.11, 12 What is the difference between Gen 13:12 and these verses? What did Lot lack in these verses? Why was he taken captive? What does **Sodom** represent? What power did Lot have over the enemy while living in **Sodom**?

v.13-16 Where was Abraham dwelling (see Gen.13:18)? What does this represent? What was Abraham able to do that Lot could not? How did he defeat the enemy? What does the sword represent in the Scriptures (see Eph.6:17, Heb.4:12)? What influence did Abraham have on the 318 men of his **household**?

v.17, 18 Who met Abraham before the king of **Sodom** did? How does this relate to I Cor.10:13?

v.18-20 See Hebrews 7. Who was Melchizedek? What does his name mean? What does Salem mean? Which is first, righteousness or peace? What is the significance (see Isa.32:17)? What do priests do? What did this priest **bring**? What do these things **signify**? Who blessed whom? What did this say about the Old Testament priesthood? How is the priesthood of Christ superior to that of **Levi**?

v.21-24 How did Abraham meet the temptation facing him here (see v.19)? What is the king of **Sodom** concerned about? What of Abraham? Why did Abraham **refuse** this offer? What is the principle (see 3Jn.7, 8, 2 Kings 5:15-27)?

GENESIS 15, 16 (Session 9)

GENESIS 15

v.1 Why did the Lord say this to him at this time (see Gen.14:22-24)?

v.2, 3 Why was this a concern to Abraham (see Gen.13:16)?

v.4-6 What did Abraham believe (see Gal.3:6-9)? What does it mean to be justified by faith (see Rom.4)?

v.12-21 How did this answer the question Abraham asked in v.7, 8?

v.9, 10, 17 See Jer.34:18-20. Did Abraham pass between the pieces of the sacrifice? What did? What did this represent (see Lev.9:24, I Kings 18:24, 38, I Chron.21:26)?

v.13-16 What was the iniquity of the **Amorite** (Canaanites) that was not yet full (see Lev.18:19-30, 20:2-5, Deut.12:29-31, 18:9-14)?

v.17, 18 How did this appearance of the Lord in a flaming torch manifest itself in Israel's later history (see Ex.13:22)?

GENESIS 16

v.1-5 Was this an act of faith or of sight (see Gal.4:23)? Where did Abraham get this Egyptian slave (see Gen.12:16)? How does this illustrate Gal.6:7? Was this God's means of **fulfilling** His promise to Abraham (see Gen.17:18-21, Gal.4:30)? What is the difference between promise and works?

v.6-9 Is harsh treatment a legitimate reason to not do what you ought (see I Pet.2:18-23)?

v.12 What will characterize Ishmael? Has this described his descendants (the Muslim peoples)? Explain

v.13,14 **Beer-Lahai-Roi** means "The well of the Living One who sees me". What does this mean for the believer in the spiritual life?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

GENESIS 17, 18 (Session 10)

GENESIS 17

v.1, 2 How long had it been since the birth of Ishmael (see Gen.16:16)? Why this length of time? How does the Lord now reveal Himself to Abraham? What significance does this revelation and the command given to him now have at this time in his life?

v.1-8 What was the covenant based upon. God's ability or Abraham's (see Rom.4:17-25, Rom.4:1-5, 2 Cor.12:9, 10)? What is the difference between promise and performance? What is the fulfillment of a promise dependent upon? How does this describe the essence of the new covenant and the basis upon which righteousness is received (see 2 Cor.3:5-18)? How is Jn.6:63 illustrated in Abraham's history?

v.9-27 Why is circumcision a fitting sign of this covenant? What is the spiritual significance of circumcision (see Co.2:11, 13, Deut.10:16, 306, Ex.6:12, Jer.6:10, Rom.2:28, 29, Phil.3:3)? If physical external circumcision is not the issue before God, what is (see 1 Cor.7:19, Gal.5:6, 6:15)?

v.18, 19 Why does God reject Ishmael (see Jn.6:63)? What is the principle shown by this?

GENESIS 18

v 1-8 Describe Abraham's relationship to these 3 persons. Who were they (see v.16, 22, 19:1, Heb.13:2)? After his circumcision in chapter 17, what does Abraham now experience once again? What is the principle shown by this (see 1 Jn.1 5-9)?

v 10-12 What is the obtaining of his child based upon? Why did Sarah laugh? Is this different than Abraham laughing in Gen 17 17? What principles are seen in her response?

v.17, 18 Why did God not hide from Abraham what He was about to do (see Ps.25:14, Prov.3:32, Jn.15:14, 15)?

v.20, 21 What is the judgment of God always in accord with?

v 23 Why did Abraham ask this question"

v 23-33 List the elements of genuine prayer seen in this section

GENESIS 13, 14, 19 (Session 11)

LOT: Love not the world. The name "Lot" means "a wrapper". See 3 Pet.2:7, 8, Lk.17:32

GENESIS 13

v 1, 5, Gen.12:4 What is repeated 3 times about Lot? What is the difference between walking with Abraham and walking with God?

v 7-9 What was Lot content to have exist between him and Abraham? What could Abraham not tolerate? To whom had the land been given (see Gen.12:1, 7)? What was the relationship between Abraham and Lot (see Gen.11:27)? What does Abraham call Lot? Who approached whom? What was Abraham willing to do that strife might cease?

v.10, 11 In what sense did Lot "lift up his eyes" (see Gen.39:7 where this same phrase is used)? What two things did this valley look like to him! On what principles did Lot make his decisions (see 2 Cor.4:18, 5:7, Jas.1:7, 8, 1 Jn.2:15-17)? Why was Lot content to be separated from Abraham?

v 12, 13 Where did Lot choose to dwell? What did this tell us about the inclination of his heart (see 1 Cor.15:33)? How did Lot's name suit his character?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

GENESIS 14

v.11, 12 Where was Lot now living? What happened to him while there? What did he lose **by** dwelling in **Sodom**? Why did the Lord allow this to happen to him (see Heb.12:5-9)? What was Lot unable to do against the enemy?

v.14-16 How did the Lord rescue **him**? How did Abraham deliver him? What is the sword a symbol of (see Eph.6:17, Heb.4:12)? Why was Abraham able to do with 318 men what kings and their armies could not (see I Sam.17:45-47)?

GENESIS 19

v.1 Where was Lot now? What was the significance of being "in the gate" (see Deut.22:15, 24, 25:7, Ruth 4:1, Prov.22:22, 24:7, Isa.29:21, Amos 5:10, 15)?

v.2-5 Why was Lot so eager to have the angels come into his house? v.4 How **corrupt** was **Sodom**?

v.6-8 How does Lot address the men of **Sodom**? What does this tell us about his orientation? What was he trying to prevent? How did he go about it? How are the truths of I Cor.15:33 and **Gal.6:7, 8** seen in Lot?

v.9-11 Did the men of **Sodom** consider Lot to be their **brother**? Describe what they thought of his being their "judge". See Lk.22:25, 26. Which of the types of leaders described here did Lot resemble? How does v.11 show the depths of depravity in the hearts of the Sodomites?

v.12-14 Including **Lot** and his wife, how many were in his family? How does this relate to Abraham's prayer of Gen.18:26, 32? What was Lot responsible to do according to the Word of the Lord **through** the angels? Why did Lot's message seem as a mocking jest to his sons-in-law?

v.15, 16 What was the command? Why did he linger / hesitate? How do the angels' actions illustrate salvation by grace?

v.17-22 How do vs.19-20 illustrate the principles of **Lot's** life? On what basis does Lot plead that he does not need to obey the Word of the Lord (see also Rom.6:1, 2, 15)? Zoar means "small". How does this name describe Lot's life?

v.26 Why did she look back? Was she righteous (see **Gen.18:23, 25**)? Where did she learn that the Word of God need not be obeyed in all its particulars (see v.17-22 above)? What is salt used for? See Lk.17:32. What are we to remember about her?

v.29 On what basis was Lot saved **from** the fires of judgment (see Gen.18:25)?

v.30-38 Where did Lot's daughters learn such practices (see v.8 above)? v.30 What did Lot discover about his self-sought **refuge**? Describe this final episode in his life. What legacy did he leave for **following** generations? Describe Moab and Ammon (see Jer.48:29, I Kings 11:7, Lev.20:2-5, Deut.23:3, 4).

GENESIS 20, 21 (Session 12)

GENESIS 20

v.1, 2 **Gerar** means "to bring up the cud". What sin does Abraham again commit (see **Gen.12:11-13, 18, 19**)? How is I Cor.10:12, 13 illustrated by this?

v.3-7 How did the Lord view Abraham's and Sarah's actions'?

v.6 What does this verse tell us about God?

v.8-10 Was this an honor to Abraham? What of to God? Explain

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

GENESIS 20

v.11 Did Abraham have any basis for thinking this way (see **Prov.3:5, 6, Jn.7:24, 2 Cor.5:7**)? What was Abraham not concerned about here?

v.12 What do you think Abimelech thought about this explanation? Was it untrue? Explain. Does the end **justify** the means (see **Rom.3:8**)? Explain.

v.13 Was this an accurate description of the events from Ur unto Canaan? Was the Lord glorified by it? Explain Whom is Abraham ultimately attempting to blame for his deceptive actions?

v.14-16 What rebuke is given to Sarah by saying that the silver given to Abraham was a "covering of the eyes / veil" to her? What does a veil picture in the Scriptures (see **Gen.24:65, 1 Cor.11:3-16**)? Does the world know (in general) how a believer ought to conduct himself? How do they respond if we are living other than we ought?

v.17-18 What was the Lord teaching Abraham by having him pray for Abimelech?

GENESIS 21

v.1, 2 When did God fulfill His promise? What determines when the Lord acts?

v.8-10 What conflict ensued? What was the resolution (see v.12)? What is the spiritual significance of this incident as taught in **Gal.4:21-31**?

v.11-13 Why was Abraham distressed? Will the Lord accept a **co-regency** of Isaac and Ishmael? Explain. Why is Ishmael made a nation (see **Gen.17:20**)?

v.22, 23 When Abraham is walking with the Lord what does Abimelech recognize about him? What does he also not forget?

v.25 What does this tell us about Abraham? What does it tell us about the Philistines?

GENESIS 22 (Session 13)

v.1 Why does the Lord test us (see **Deut.8:2, 16, Ex.16:4, 20:20, Job 7:18, Deut.13:3**)? Is this the same as tempting us (see **Jas.1:2-4, 12-16**)?

v.2 What was the Lord requiring Abraham to give up?

v.3 What was the repeated lesson of Abraham's life that he now immediately responded to in faith (see **Prov.3:5, 6, 2 Cor.5:7**)?

v.5 What does this indicate about Abraham's faith? What did he believe the Lord would do (see **Heb.11:17-19**)?

v.6-9 Describe the relationship between Abraham and Isaac

v.10-12 What kind of response did Abraham have to the voice calling to him from heaven?

v.13, 14 Who actually was slain? What was it that was provided?

Hebrews 11:19 describes this as a "type" or "parable" or a "figure".

Whom does Abraham picture? Isaac? The altar / wood? The fire / knife? The ram?

What does Abraham and Isaac's relationship picture?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

OVERVIEW OF EXODUS (Session 14)

THE EXODUS	1 - 18	POWER	Brought out into liberty.
THE LAW	19 - 24	HOLINESS	Brought under responsibility.
TABERNACLE	25 - 40	GRACE	Brought into communion .

Outline of Exodus

Bondage in Egypt (1, 2) Call of Moses (3-6) Plagues on Egypt (7-10) Passover (11-13) Red Sea (14)
Song of Deliverance (15) Manna (16) Water from Rock / Amalek (17) Counsel from **Jethro** (18)
The Law Given (19-23) Covenant Ratified (24) Tabernacle (25-31) Golden Calf (32)
Moses Intercedes & Law Re-given (33-34) Tabernacle Erected (35-40)

EXODUS 1 - 11

Moses' requests: 5:1-3, 7:10, 7:15-16, 8:1-4, **8:20-23**, 9:1-4, 9:13-19, 10:1-6

Pharaoh's **refusals**: 5:2, 7:13, **7:22-23**, 8:15, 19, **8:32**, 9:7, 12, 9:34, 35, 10:11, 20, 27

God's 10 replies in judgment: 7:20, 8:6, 8:16, **8:24**, 9:3, 9:10, 9:22, 10:12, 10:21, 11:5

Pharaoh's compromises: **8:25**, 10:9-11, 10:24

Distinction between Israel and Egypt: **8:22**, 23, 9:4-7, 9:26, 10:23, 11:7

In what ways do the opening chapters of Exodus picture man's condition in sin (see Ex.1:11-16, 5:2-9, 12:12, 13, Jn.8:34, Mt.9:36, I Jn.5:19, Rom.7:23, 2 Cor.4:4)?

EXODUS 12 (Session 15)

What does this whole incident portray (see I Cor.5:7)?

v.1 Where does God's message of deliverance come to Israel? What kind of condition were they in?

v.2 In what sense was this to be the beginning of months (see 2 Cor.5:17)?

v.3, 4 What does this tell us about the sufficiency of the lamb? Was any household too large for it? What does this tell us about the sacrifice of the **Lord Jesus** (see I Jn.2:2)?

v.5 Why must it be unblemished (see Mal.1:6-14, I Pet.1:18, 19, 2 Cor.5:21, Heb.7:26, 28)? Why a male one year old (see Ps.89:19)? How does this relate to Christ and His death?

v.6 Why is it to be kept 4 **days**? What parallels are there to the **life** of the Lord Jesus (see Mt.3:17, Jn.8:29, 14:30, I Pet.1:19)? Why was the lamb slain (see Heb.9:22)?

v.7, 13, 23 What does this illustrate? What provision did it make? Why on this basis did God withhold judgment? Where was the blood applied?

v.8 Why did God direct them to eat this? **How** does Jn.6:48-58 relate to this?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

EXODUS 12

v.8 What does leaven represent (see I Cor.5:6-8)? Why did the Lord have them eat bitter herbs (see Ex.1:14)? Why was the bread to be unleavened (see Lev.2:11)?

v.9-10 How much of the lamb was to be roasted? What does this **tell** us about the Lord Jesus' suffering on the cross (see Mk.10:38, Ps.75:8, Ps.11:6, Jer.25:15)? Why was any remaining portion of it to be **burned**?

v.11 What were they to be immediately ready to do? What is the lesson for us?

v.12 The Passover event was both _____ upon Egypt and _____ for Israel.

v.17-20 What began on the day the lamb was slain? What does the Lord expect **from** the believer from the outset of his redemption? A week (7 days) is the normal course of our life. What does not eating **anything** leavened for 7 days represent?

v.34, 39 Why did the Israelites not **mix** leaven with their bread?

v.35, 36 Does God want the "help" of outsiders (see Gen.14:22, 23, Ez.4:2, 3, 3 Jn.7, 8)? If not, then how is this to be understood?

v.38 Who went with the Israelites (see Num.11:4)? What were their motives in going? Who will always be among the real people of God (see Mt.7:15, Mt.13:24-30, 2 Tim.2:20)?

v.43-48 What lessons do we learn **from** there being no foreigner, sojourner, hired servant, or uncircumcised being able to eat of the Passover? Do any of these have worthy, serious, and **committed** interest in the things of **God**? Explain.

EXODUS 13, 14, 15 (Session 16)

EXODUS 13

v.1-16 To whom do the first-born belong? Who are the first-born ones (see Heb.12:23)? By the act of redeeming them, what became true of them (see I Cor.6:19, 20)?

v.17 What do Philistines represent and how do they react to the people of God?

v.19 Why did Joseph not want to be buried in Egypt (see Heb.11:22)? What would an Israelite constantly be reminded of by **looking** at his bones?

v.20-22 What person of the Godhead does the pillar of fire and of cloud represent (see I Cor.10:1, 2, 12:13, Rom.8:14, Gal.5:18, 25)? What was the purpose of this in their midst (see Num.9:15-23)?

EXODUS 14

v.5, 8 Why did Pharaoh chase Israel?

v.9 Describe Israel's circumstances

v.8, 10, 11 What contrasts are seen in Israel's attitudes and actions here?

v.11, 12 In essence, what are they saying?

v.13, 14 What did Moses reply to them? Do you think they thought this was good advice? Was it? When does God deliver? What are we to do in "impossible" situations?

v.15 How do we harmonize this command with Moses' in v.13, 14?

v.16-18 How would God be honored through Pharaoh (see Rom.3:5-8, Rom.9:14-18)?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

EXODUS 14

v.21, 22 With what does this correspond to in the Christian life (see I Cor.10:1, 2)? What does Egypt represent? What does baptism signify(see Mt.3:6, 11, 12, Rom.6:3-6)?

v.26-31 What did the Lord deliver Israel from here(see Acts 26:18, Col.1:13,14)?

Summarize the spiritual lessons of this chapter.

EXODUS 15

v.1 Who is singing this song? Who was this song for? Why did they sing?

v.2 What two things characterize God's people?

v.3-10 What is the theme of the song in these verses? In verses 11-13?

v.3-13 Why do we always have cause to praise the Lord? Compare these verses with Ex.14:10-12. How are the people now viewing their circumstances in retrospect? What does this tell us about complaining and disbelief?

v.14-16 Who are the peoples mentioned here? Had this occurred as of yet? What is described?

v.17 What is an inheritance? To whom does this inheritance belong? What does the Lord inherit (see Eph.1:18, Deut.32:9, Jer.10:16)?

v.18 Which kingdom is being referred to here?

v.22-24 What had they just said in v.13? Why are they now doing this? How did they come to be in this place (see Ex.13:21, 22)? What are we in danger of even after victory(see I Cor.10:12)? What had they expected? Why did the Lord allow this expectation to be frustrated?

v.25 What solution does the Lord provide for their need? What does this represent(see I Pet.2:24)? What was this test designed to do?

v.26 What was crucial to Israel's well-being? What are these diseases (see Ex.9:3, 8-11, Deut.7:15, 28:58-60)?

v.27 Why didn't the Lord lead them directly to Elim rather than Marah? Why did He now bring them here?

Why do we not trust the Lord as we should?

EXODUS 16 (Session 17)

v.1 What did they have at Elim? Why did Israel leave Elim (see Ex.13:20, 21)?

v.2 Why did they grumble against Moses rather than God?

v.3 What are the people remembering here? What are they forgetting? What do they think about God? How does what we truly believe about the Lord affect how we act? What is the purpose of food (see Mt.6:10, 11)?

v.4 How does God respond to their unbelief? What was God's purpose in allowing this?

v.4, 5 What were the people to do?

v.7-12 Who were they really complaining against?

v.13-15 What did God provide for them? What had they complained of lacking (see v.3)? What does this tell us about God?'

In the context of this whole chapter, how does the manna illustrate the Lord Jesus (see Jn.6:31-35, 48-58)?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

EXODUS 16

What else does the manna picture (see **Deut.8:2, 3, 16**)?

v.16-18 What determined how much each one should gather? What does this tell us about our study of the Scriptures?

v.19-21 What were they to do each day? What did it require to do this (see I **Tim.4:15, 2 Tim.2:15**)? What were they not to do? What was the Lord teaching them by this daily routine? What would happen if they did not gather on any given day? What happens if you don't eat? What was the Lord teaching them by allowing a stored up portion to become rotten? Why must it be gathered in the morning? What lesson does this teach us about the study of the Scriptures?

v.22-26 Why were they to collect 2 days' supply on Friday?

v.27 Why did some of the people go out to gather on the Sabbath? What were they thinking?

v.28, 29 With every command God makes _____ so that we can obey Him

v.31-34 What was the manna to be a reminder of? What else was it a reminder of (see **Num.21:4, 5**)?

v.35 Why did the manna cease (see **Josh.5:12**)? Should we expect that supernatural signs will always accompany all believers? Explain.

EXODUS 17, 18 (Session 18)

EXODUS 17

v.1 Why did Israel come to **Rephidim** (see **Ex.13:20, 21**)? The word "Rephidim" means "supports." What did they find to support them here? What did they not find to support them? Did their own weakness or sin bring them to this place of testing? Explain. How are believers to live (see **2 Cor.5:7**)?

v.2 Who was the Israelites' complaint against?

v.3,7 What are the Israelites thinking about God?

v.5, 6 How did God respond to their **unbelief**?

v.5 How was the rod of Moses used on the Nile (see **Ex.7:14-21**)? What does the striking of the rock picture (see **I Cor.10:4**)? What does striking the rock provide? What does this represent (see **Jn.7:37-39**)? After this event, what was Moses to do for the water to be supplied (see **Num.20:7, 8**)? Why was he not to strike the rock again?

v.8 **Amalek**, grandson of **Essau** (see **Gen.36:12**), represents the flesh in the Scriptures. What do we see happening immediately upon the rock being struck and the water given? What does this **illustrate** (see **Gal.5:17**)? What is the flesh (see **Jn.6:63, Rom.7:18, 8:3-13, Gal.5:13-24, I Pet.2:11**)?

v.9-13 How was the victory won? What does Moses' activity picture? What does Joshua's sword illustrate (see **Eph.6:17, Heb.4:12**)? What does victory for the Christian depend upon? Can you be victorious without being attacked? What then do all Christians experience (see **I Pet.5:7-9**)?

v.14-16 What is God's evaluation of **Amalek** / the flesh?

EXODUS 18

v.8 How does Moses describe their experiences? What does this tell us about the Christian life?

v.13, 16 What were the people doing? Why were they doing this? As each waited to speak to Moses, do you think they were having an enjoyable time of fellowship? What would have been better (see **Mt.5:25, 26**)?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

EXODUS 18

- v.17-23 Was Jethro's advice good? Why? Did Moses' spiritual gift suit him for this work?
- v.20-22 If Moses taught them God's truth, why would they only be capable of dealing with minor disputes?
- v.23 On what basis did **Jethro** suggest that Moses follow his counsel?
- v.24 What is lacking here (**see Ex.6:2, 10, 7:8, 12:1, 13:1, 14:1**)?
- v.24, 25 Did Moses make the right decision? Explain. What is the lesson for us?

EXODUS 19, 20 (Session 19)

EXODUS 19

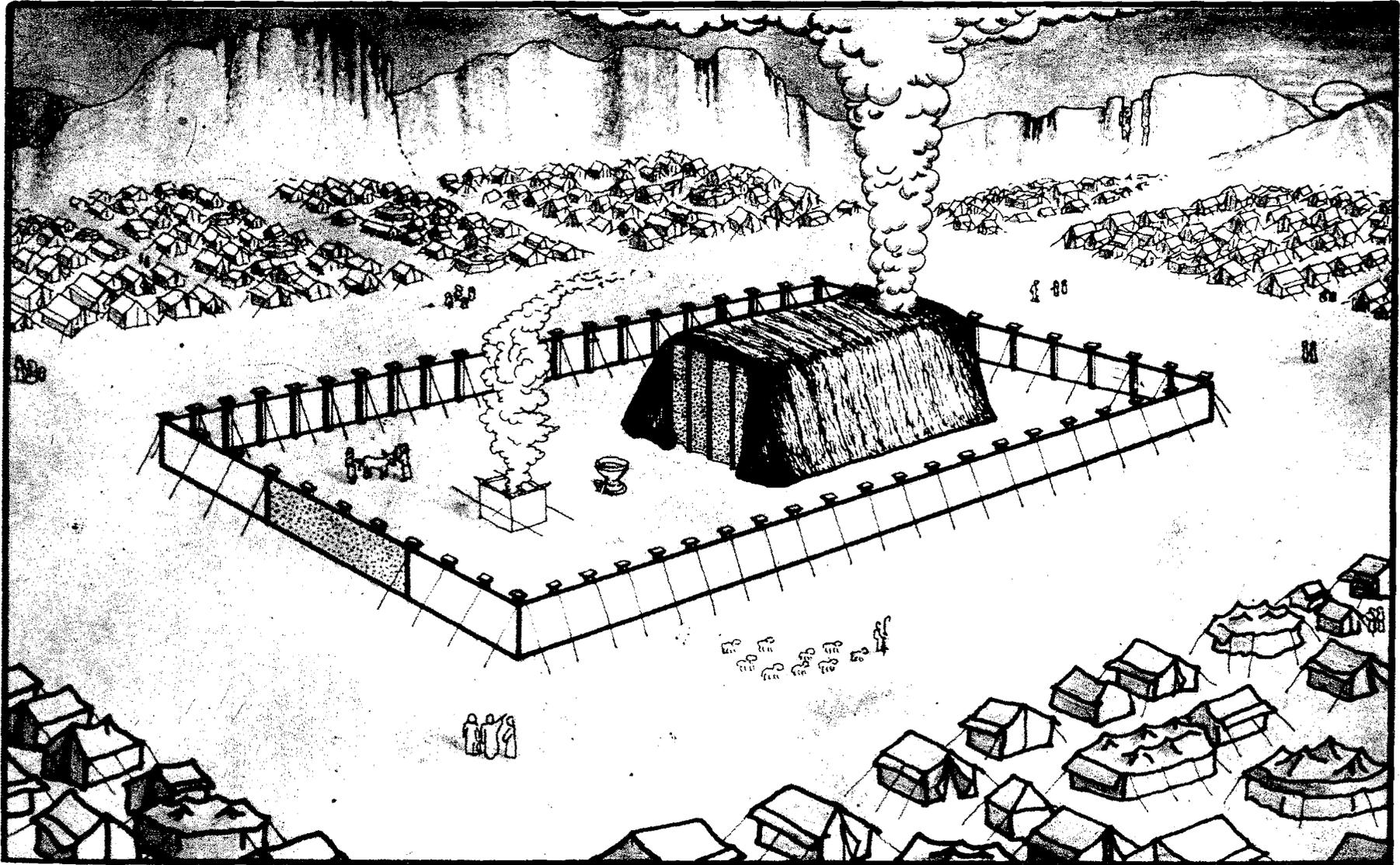
- v.4 Before speaking about the people's responsibility, what does God first remind them of! What is the picture here?
- v.5, 6 What is required from a redeemed people (see Jn.14:15, I Cor.6:19, 20, I Pet.1:2)? What three things characterize God's people here? What three moral attributes of God are seen in these three things? How are they displayed?
- v.8 Was this a proper response? In what way was it an improper response; in what way was it proper (**see Deut.5:28, 29**)?
- 9-19 God reminds them of His redemption, speaks of their responsibility, and they promise to do all that He has required How did God reveal Himself at this time to them? Why did He do so?
- v.23-25 What were the bounds around the mountain to teach Israel (see Heb.12:18-21)?

EXODUS 20

- v.2 Before the Lord speaks the Law, what does He remind them of? What is the lesson for the Christian?
- What do these passages tell us about the Law (see Rom.3:19, 20, 4:15, 5:20, Gal.3:24, I Tim.1:9, Gal.2:21)?
- Why can Law never bring about righteousness (see Rom.7:12-14, 8:3, Gal.3:21, 22, Heb.7:12, 18, 19, 8:6-8, 13, 10:1)?
- v.2, 3 Why are they to have no other gods before the Lord? What principle from Gen.1:1 is seen in this?
- v.4 What is an idol? Does it have to be an external image (see Ezk.14:3)?
- v.5 Define worship. How is an idol served? Whom are you serving when you serve an idol (see I Cor.10:19-22)? Can idols and the living and true God be served at the same time (see Mt.6:24, 2 Cor.6:14-17, I Jn.5:20, 21)? What is jealousy in the proper sense? What does this tell us about God's thoughts for His people (see Jas.4:4, 5)? What principles are seen in this verse?
- v.6 How do we show love for God?
- v.7 What does it mean to take the Lord's name in vain (see Prov.28:9, Jer.7:8-11, Mt.6:5-7, Lk.18:9-14)?
- v.8-11 What is the Lord desiring for man by this command? What type of Sabbath does the Christian have (see Heb.4:9-10)? Who was the Law given to (see Ex.31:12-17)? Have the Gentiles ever been under the Law? What was the sign of this covenant between God and Israel? What is the significance of Mark 2:27, 28 with respect to the Sabbath? What does Col 2:16, 17 tell us about the Sabbath? Is a Christian obligated to keep the Sabbath? Explain.

THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE

Every disciple when he is fully trained will be like his *master* • Lk.6:40
OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES



Israel camped about the Tabernacle

Figure 2

THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE

Every disciple when he is fully trained will be like his master - Lk.6:40

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

The TABERNACLE

"A copy and shadow of
heavenly things"
Heb. 8:5

1. Heb. 13:10; 10:8-10
2. Eph. 5:26 (Gk. word "washing" is "laver")
3. John 6:51
4. John 8:12
5. Psalm 141:2; Rev.8:3, 4; John 17
6. Heb. 10:20
7. Rom. 3:25 (Gk. word "propitiation" is "mercy seat")

"... the Word became flesh
and dwelt (Gk. word "dwelt"
is //tabernacled//) among us..."
John 1:14

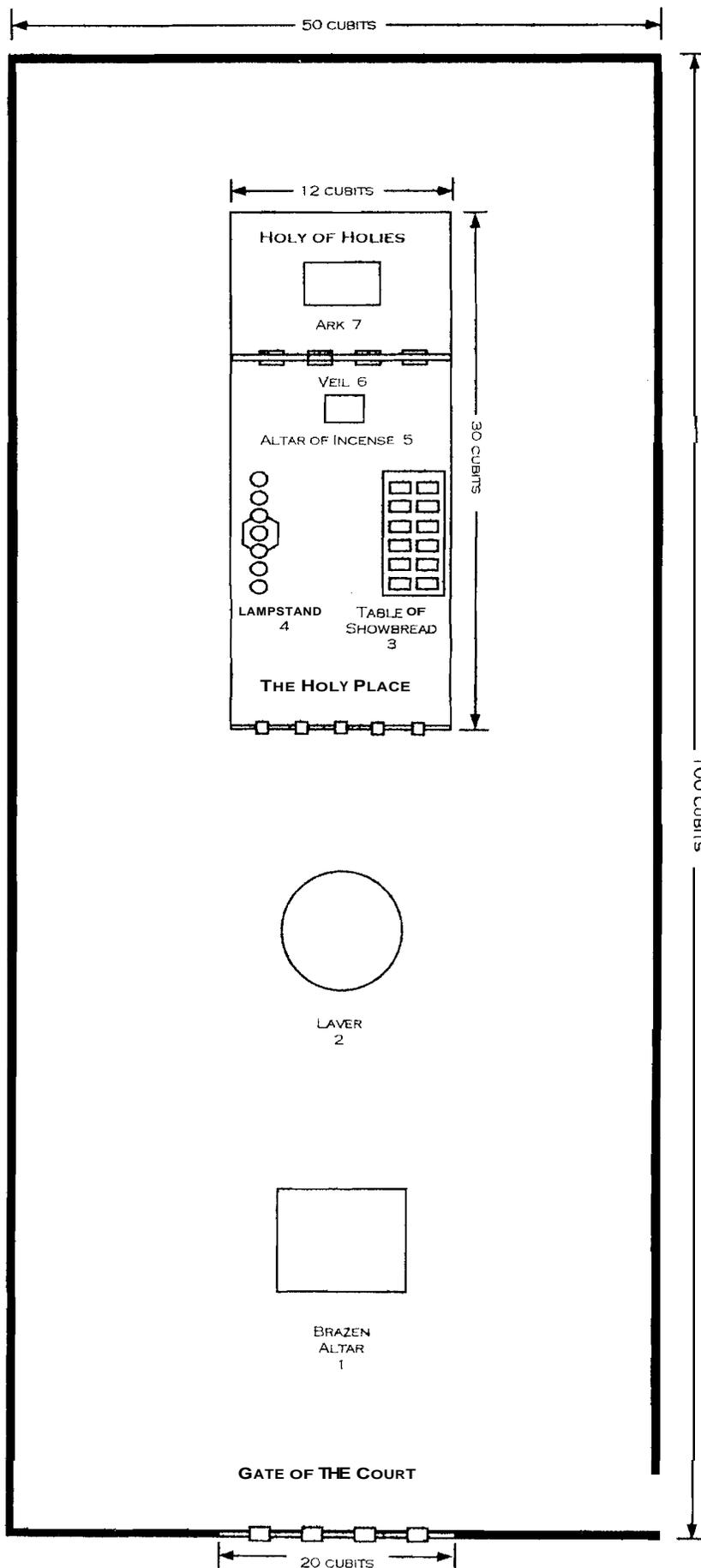


Figure 3

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

TABERNACLE (Session 20)

The noun "tabernacle" means "tent." The verb "tabernacle" means "to dwell." Thoroughly familiarize yourself with the diagrams and illustrations of the tabernacle (see Figures 2 and 3). **Note** A cubit is about 18" (46cm) long.

Jn. 1: 14 The word "dwelt" is literally "tabernacled." What then does the tabernacle picture?

2 Cor.5:4,6 What does the tabernacle/ tent picture here? What does it represent in Rev.21:3?

Throughout the Scriptures, God regularly speaks to man by the use of symbols. We first want to examine the symbolic significance of the materials and numbers connected with the tabernacle.

Exodus 25: 1-7

Gold - the undimmed glory of God - Job 22:25a, Rev.21:10, 11, 18, S.of S. 5:1 la

Silver - redemption - Ex.30:11-16, 38:24-27

Bronze - judgment - Rev. 1:5, 2 Kings 25:7

Blue - heavenly - Job 22:12

Purple - royal - Esth.8:15, Ezk.23:6

Scarlet - true glory of man ("Adam" means "scarlet"), or the guilt of sin - Isa. 1:18

White - purity - Rev.7:14, Isa. 1:18

Linen - righteousness - Isa.61: 10, Zech.3:3-5, Rev. 19:8,14

Goat - atonement - Lev. 16:5-10,15-22

Ram skin dyed red - sacrificial devotedness - Jn. 1:29, Isa. 1:18

Badger/ porpoise skin - undesirable outward appearance - Isa.53:2, or resistance to impurities

Shittim/ Acacia wood - incorruptible humanity of Christ - Jn.8:29,46, Heb.7:26

Oil - Holy Spirit - Zech.4, 2 Cor. 1:21,22, 1 Jn.2:20, 27

Spices - fragrance of a life that is pleasing to God - 2 Cor.2:14-16, Eph.5:2

Precious stones - God's people - Ex.28:9, 21

Numbers in the Scriptures also regularly have a symbolic significance beyond the actual literal way that they are used.

- 1 - unity, primary, source
- 2 - testimony, relation, confirmation, distinction
- 3 - reality, resurrection
- 4 - weakness, earth, experience
- 5 - grace - **G**
- 6 - man
- 7 - perfection, rest, completeness
- 8 - new beginning
- 10 - human responsibility
- 12 - manifestation of God, God in government
- 40 - testing

TABERNACLE (Session 21) The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us - Jn. 1: 14

ARK Exodus 25 (see Figure 4)

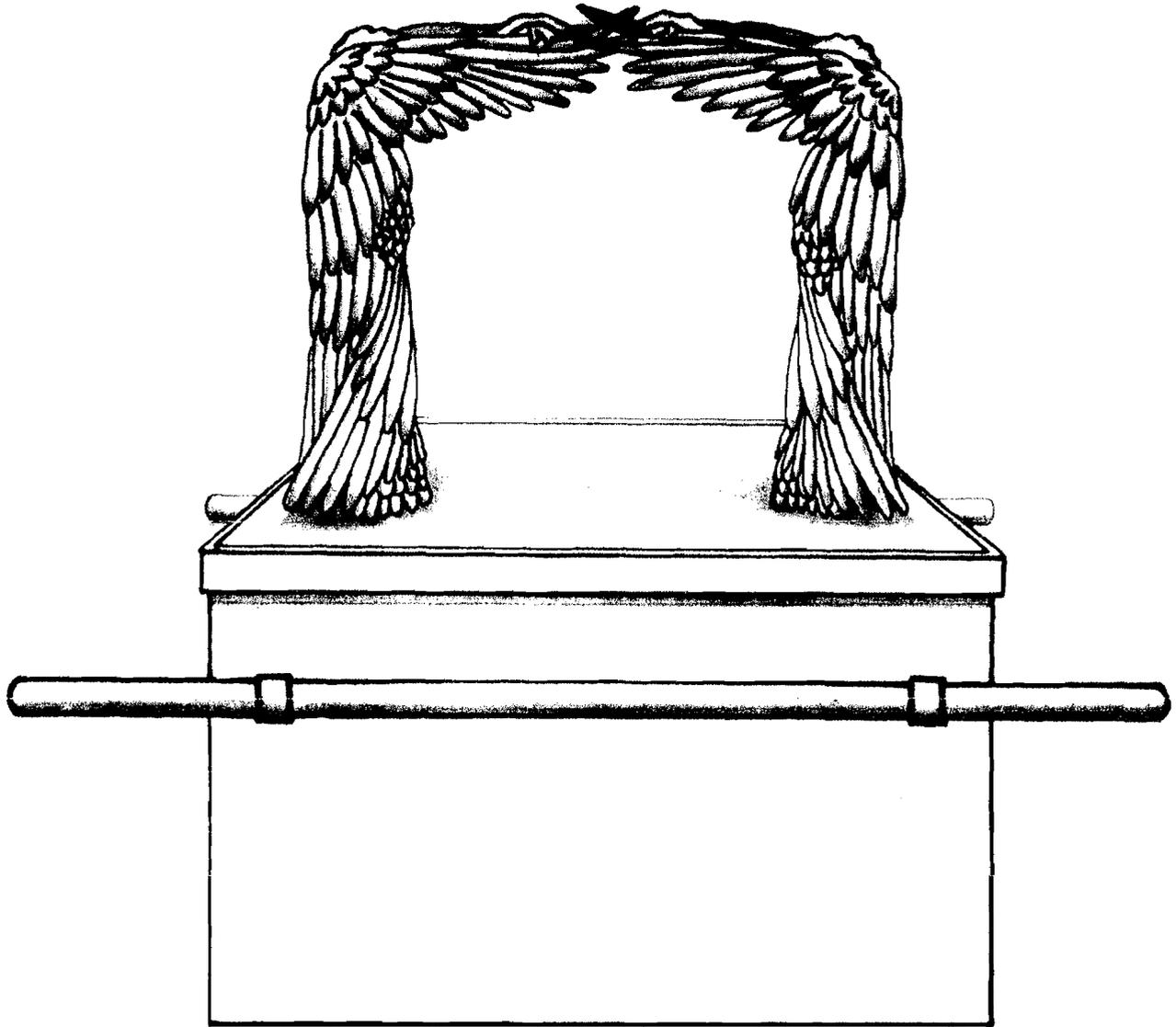
v. 10, 11 In reference to Christ, what is the significance of the ark being made of wood and gold (see Col 2.9, Jn. 1: 14)?

v.17 What made the golden lid a seat / place of mercy rather than a seat / place of judgment (see Lev 16:2, 15, 16~~26~~)? See 1 Sam.6:19, 20 Why was this a place of judgment rather than a place of mercy" What was exposed before the Cherubim when these men raised the lid of the ark?

v 18-20 What attribute(s) of God do the Cherubim represent (see Gen 3:24, Ezk. 1:1-7, 11-14, 10:1-5, Rev 4:S-9)? What do they constantly have before their faces?

THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE

Every disciple when he is **fully trained** will be **like** his **master** - Lk.6:40
OLD TESTAMENT K N PASSAGES

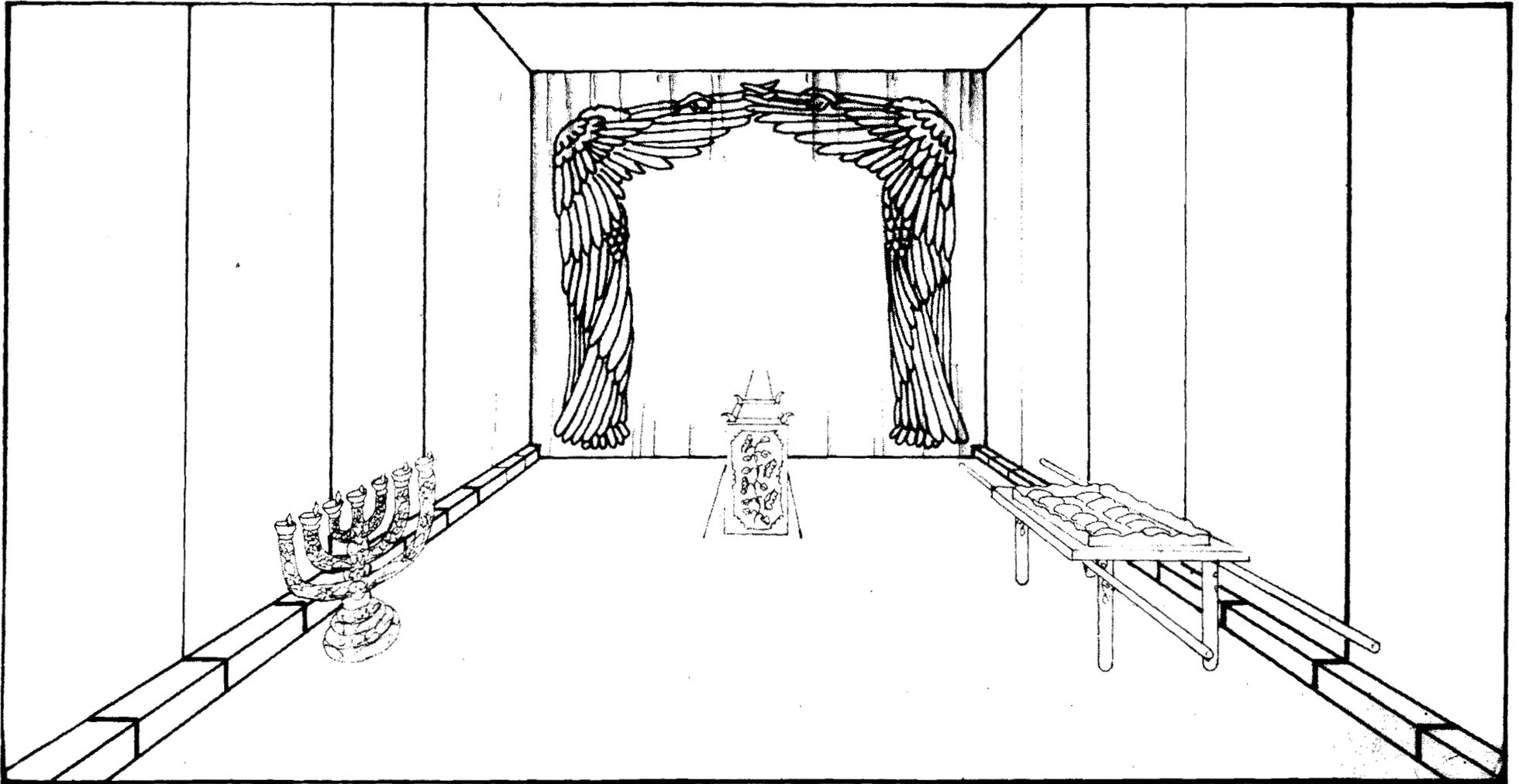


The ~~Ark~~ of the Covenant

Figure 4

THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE

Every disciple when he is fully trained will be *like* his master - Lk.6:40
OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES



The Holy Place

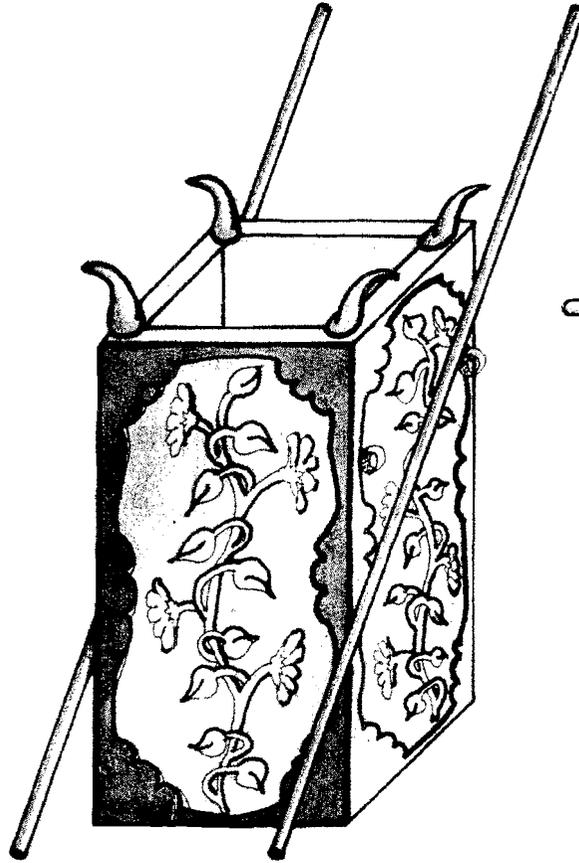
Figure 5

THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE

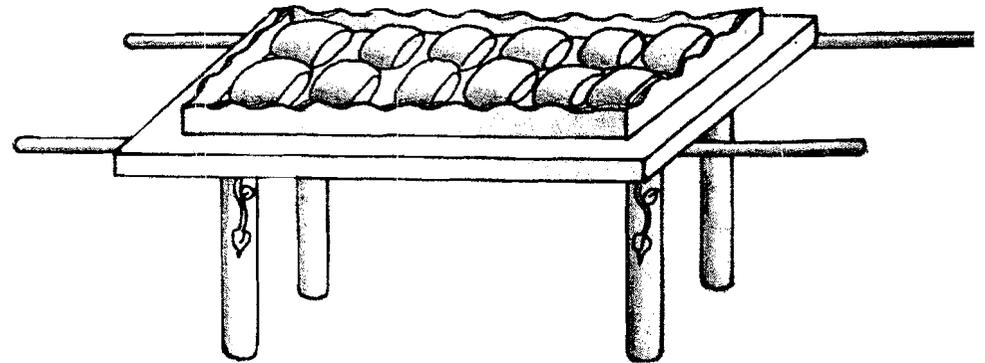
Every disciple when he is fully trained will be like his master - Lk.6:40
OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES



The Lampstand



The Altar of Incense

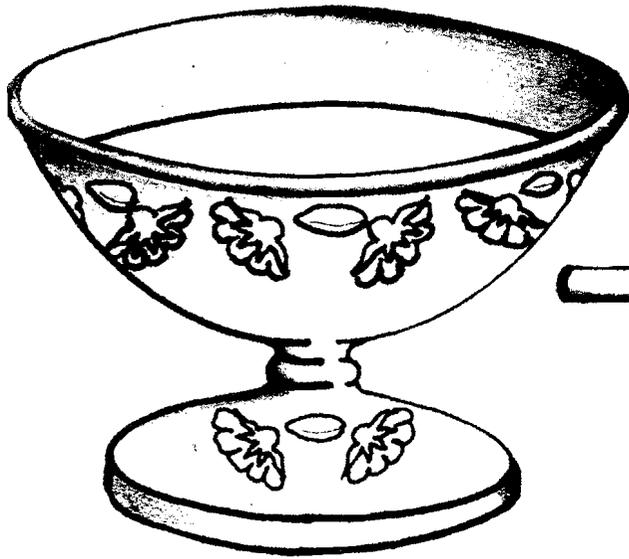


The Table of Showbread

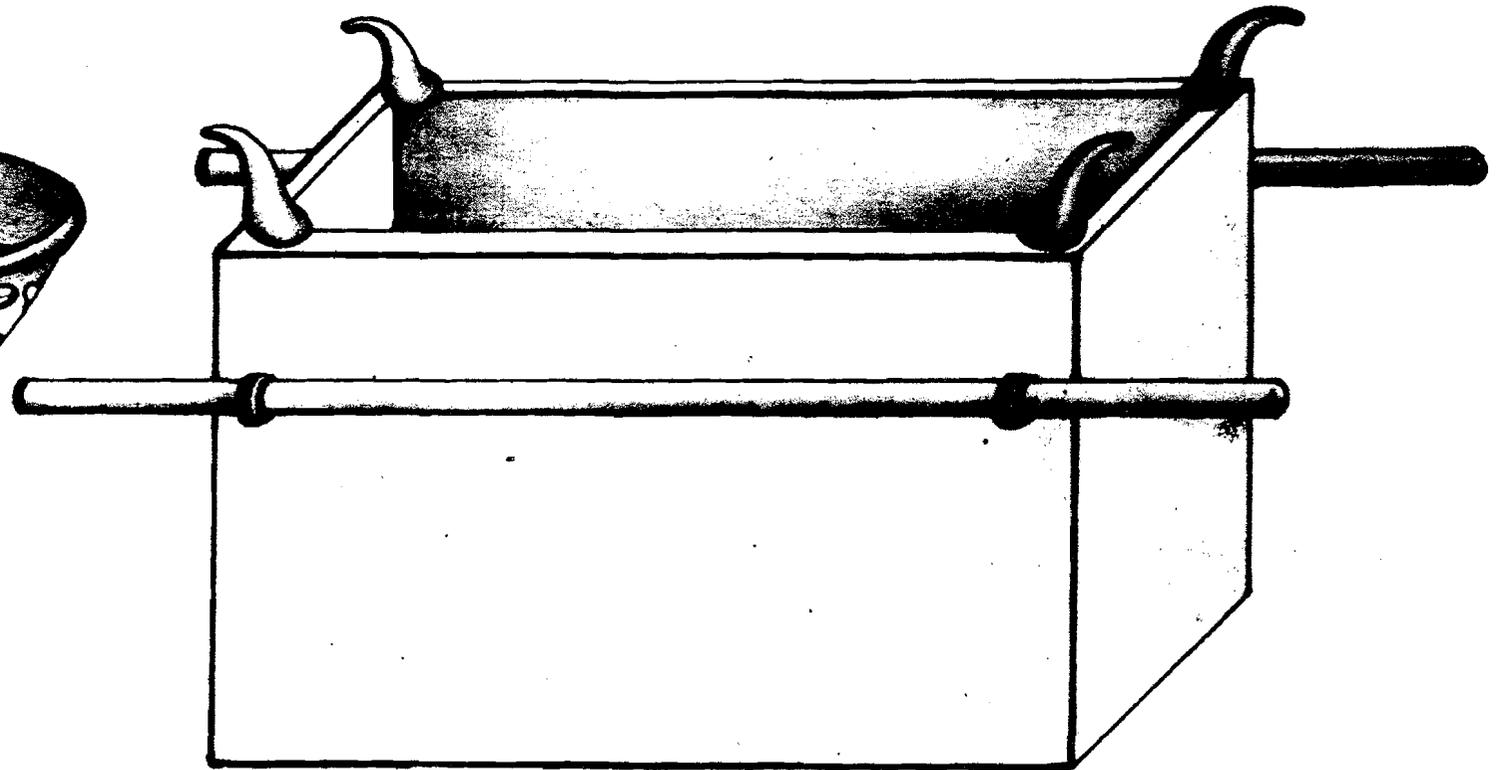
Figure 6

THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE

Every disciple when he is fully trained will be like his master - Lk. 6:40
OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES



The Laver



The Brazen Altar

Figure 7

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

TABERNACLE

ARK Exodus 25

v.16-21 What was placed in the ark? What other items were placed in it (see **Heb.9:4**)? What are these three items a reminder of to Israel (see **Ex.32:7, 8, 19**, **Num.11:4-6, 18-20, 21:5**, **Num.16:1-3, 11, 13**)? What were they a reminder of to the cherubim? What do these three items **tell** us about the Lord **Jesus** (see **Jn.8:29**, **2 Cor.5:21**, **Jn.6:31-35, 48-51**, **Eph.1:20-22** [i.e. What is it that distinguishes God's appointed leader in this passage and in **Num.17**])?

v.22 On what basis does God meet with man (see **Rom.3:25**. The Greek word "propitiation" is the same word which is translated "mercy seat" in the OT)?

VEIL Exodus 26 (see Figure 5)

v.31 What do these colors and the Cherubim tell us about the person of Christ?

v.33 What was the purpose of the veil? What does it picture (see **Heb.10:19, 20**)?

Of what significance is **Mt.27:51** in light of **Ex.25:22**, **Heb.10:19, 20**, and **Jn.14:6**?

ALTAR OF INCENSE Exodus 30 (see Figure 6)

v.8 With reference to Christ, what does the incense picture (see **Ps.141:2**, **Heb.7:25**)?

v.10 What must occur first before the incense **can** be burned? Upon what basis does the Lord **Jesus intercede** for us (see **Heb.7:25-28**)?

v.9, 34-38 What is strange incense? What does it picture (see **Prov.28:9**, **Mt.6:5**, **Lk.18:9-14**)? Who was the incense for? Why was this prohibition **given** (see **Jas.4:3**)?

LAMPSTAND Exodus 25 (see Figure 6)

v.33, 34 An integral part of the lampstand was the almond. It is a symbol of resurrection life (as in **Num.17:1-10**). What three things are necessary then for there to be light or testimony (see also **Ex.27:20, 30:7b, 8a**)?

v.37 What was the purpose of the lampstand in the holy place? What does it represent for the spiritual priest of the NT (see **Jn.1:4, 5, 8:12, 12:35, 36, 2 Cor.4:6**)? How does the lampstand picture the believer (**Rev.1:20, Phil.2:15**)? What does Christ as the lampstand illuminate?

TABLE Exodus 25 (see Figure 6)

v.30 What was the table for?

Leviticus 24

v.5 How many loaves were there?

v.7, 8 What did they represent? With the table representing Christ in the above passages, what does this picture for us?

v.9 With the bread picturing Christ, what was its relationship to the priests and what did this supply for them?

LAVER Exodus 30 (see Figure 7)

v.18-21 What is the purpose of the laver? What does bronze represent (see **Rev.1:15, 2:18, 23**)? See **Ex.38:8**. What are mirrors used for? What do they suggest about the laver (see **Jas.1:22-25**)? What parallels are there with **John 13:8-10** and **Eph.5:26** (the word "washing" in **Eph.5:26** is the same word that is translated "laver" in the OT)? What is absolutely essential before one can serve the Lord (see **2 Tim.2:21**)?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

TABERNACLE

BRAZEN ALTAR Exodus 38 (see Figure 7)

What was the first thing one encounters when coming into the tabernacle court? What was the purpose of this altar?

v.1, 2 What was the largest piece of furniture? What does this suggest about its importance? What must first be taken care of as one would approach God? Horns represent power in many places in the Scriptures. What does the sacrifice of Christ have power to do?

v.4 Where did the fire burn in the altar? What does this tell us about Christ's sufferings?

What is judged on the brazen altar (see Num.16:37-40)?

PRIESTS, GARMENTS, CONSECRATION (Session 22)

GARMENTS Exodus 28

v.2, 5 What were these garments meant for? What do they tell us about the Lord Jesus, our High Priest?

v.9, 10, 12 Where were these stones carried? What does the shoulder represent? Was there any distinction between the individual tribes here? How are the people of God represented in the presence of God?

v.15, 17-21, 29 What is the difference between these and the former stones? Where are these carried? What does over the heart suggest? What do both of these descriptions tell us about Christ as our High Priest and believers as His people?

v.33-35 The High Priest's ministry was always characterized by _____ represented by the bells and _____ by the pomegranates. Can there be testimony without fruit or fruit without testimony? Explain.

v.36-38 What was Israel's guarantee of acceptance before God? What is the Christian's guarantee of acceptance (see Jn.17:19, Eph.1:6)?

CONSECRATION Exodus 29

v.4 What is the first aspect of consecration (see Jn.13:10, Tit.3:5)?

v.5 What is next (see Isa.61:10, Rom.13:14)?

v.7 What follows this (see I Jn.2:20, 27, 2 Thess.2:13)?

v.10, 11, 14 What is necessary here for service to God?

v.15, 16, 18 What aspect does the whole burnt offering bring in here? What does the laying on of hands signify?

v.19, 20 What are ears for?; hands?; feet? What are all three to be cleansed by?

v.24 What must the priest's hands be full of before he can serve God? What are the Christian's hands to be full of (see Jn.1:16, Eph.3:19, 5:18)?

v.27 What were the priests to feed upon? What does the thigh picture; the breast? What is to sustain us as believers?

Summarize the qualities necessary for true service to God.

OFFERINGS (Session 23)

Leviticus 1-7. There are five offerings divided into two types. The first three are the burnt, meal, and peace offerings. These are voluntary offerings. The second type are the sin and trespass offerings. These are required.

OFFERINGS

What do the following characteristics common to all the offerings tell us about the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus?

- (1) Spotless (see Heb.9:14)
- (2) Hand laid on the head of the sacrifice (see 2 Cor.5:21, Lev.16:21)
- (3) Slain (see I Pet.1:18, 19)
- (4) Special direction for the blood (see Heb.9:12, 23, 24)
- (5) Blood and fat always for the Lord (see Lev.3:16, 17, Rom.3:25, I Jn.2:2)

The general significance of each of the offerings is as follows:

Burnt - Total voluntary self-giving Meal - Righteous character Peace - Fellowship

Sin - Sin completely put away Trespass - Restitution

Whole Burnt Offering Leviticus 1

v.3, 4, 9 What is the basis of our acceptance before God?

v.3, 10, 14 What animals could be offered as burnt offerings? What provision did this make for the people?

v.6-9 What parallel is seen here with Rom.12:1, 2? What is the difference between placing individual pieces upon the altar and placing the whole animal all at once? Which did the Lord direct them to do?

Leviticus 6:8-13 How often should the whole burnt offering be on the altar (see Ex.29:38-42)? Where did the fire come from upon the altar of sacrifice (see Lev.9:24)? Was the fire ever to go out? What do these things picture: in reference to Christ; in reference to believers?

Meal Offering Leviticus 2

v.1 What do the ingredients of this offering represent about Christ?

v.3 In picture, what sustained the priests?

v.4-7 What two aspects of Christ's sufferings do these verses present?

v.11, 13 What was prohibited; required? What does leaven picture (see I Cor.5:6-8)? Honey is sweetness from what source, above or below? What effect does salt have upon what it is applied to?

Peace Offering Leviticus 3

v.1 What characterizes a male; female? How are both aspects seen in Christ?

v.2 What two aspects of our peace are seen in this verse (see Col.1:20, Eph.2:14)? What is peace?

v.16, 17 What is always God's portion in the peace offering? What is fat? Why did God value it? What does the blood picture (see Lev.17:11)?

Leviticus 7:34 What were the priests' portions? What do they represent? What provided strength for their service

Leviticus 7:19 Who could eat the remainder of the sacrifice?

Sin Offering Leviticus 4

v.2 Was there an offering for premeditated intentional sin? Why?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

OFFERINGS

Sin Offering Leviticus 4

v.6 What does sprinkling the blood seven times indicate?

v.7 Why was some blood applied to the horns of the altar of incense (horns represent power many times in the Scriptures)?

v.11, 12 What does this picture (see Heb.13:11, 12)?

Leviticus 5:1, 4, 7, 11 List what renders a person guilty in these verses. What is the Lord telling us in v.7, 11 (see Rom.10:13, Jn.3:15)?

Trespass Offering Leviticus 5 & 6

v. 5:15, 6:2, 3 What sins are dealt with here? What is “against the Lord’s holy things” (see Lev.22:1-10)?

v. 5:16, 6:4, 5 What is required in each case?

v. 5:17-19 Does ignorance remove guilt? Does it lessen it (see Lk.12:47, 48)? Explain.

FEASTS Leviticus 23 (Session 24)

v.1-3 Sabbath. What is this a reminder of to believers? What type of Sabbath do Christians keep: resting one day per week or a spiritual rest in Christ from their own works (see Ex.31:13-17, Mk.2:27, 28, Col.2:16, 17, Heb.4:9-11)?

v.4-5 Passover. Review Exodus 12 (Session 15). What are the chief elements of the Passover?

v.6-8 Unleavened Bread. See Exodus 12 (Session 15). What does leaven represent (see I Cor.5:6-8)? Why does this feast immediately follow the Passover?

v.9-14 First Fruits. See I Cor.15:20. How does this represent Christ and His resurrection? What is its waving a promise of?

v.15-21 Pentecost. What does the number 2 suggest? What must occur for grain to become a loaf? Why is there leaven present? Is the leaven active and living or has its work and effect stopped? What does Pentecost picture in Acts 2?

v.24-25 Trumpets. What was this to be a reminder of (see Num.10:10)? What effect does hearing a trumpet blown have on the listener? What would the Lord desire that His people be alert to and mobilized for?

v.26-32 Day of Atonement. Leviticus 16

v.2-6 Can anyone approach the presence of God anytime, anyhow? Who alone can enter the Lord’s presence? What is required for him to do so? Aaron must be acceptable before God himself before he could intercede for the people. How does this picture the Lord Jesus, our great High Priest (see Heb.2:17, 4:14-16, 7:24-28)?

v.7-10 There were two aspects involved in accomplishing atonement for the nation, the slain goat and the live one.

v.11-14 Aaron must first have a right to enter the presence of God before he could do so in another’s behalf. What qualified Aaron for this? Comment on the significance of the blood and the incense.

v.15-19 What atoned (covered) for the sins of the nation? What was the significance of the blood being applied to the mercy seat (see Ex.25, Session 21)?

v.20-22 What was “placed” upon the live goat? Where was it taken? What does this illustrate about our sins?

FEASTS

Leviticus 16

v.29-32 Who alone worked on this day? What was the people's part? How does this picture the Lord Jesus and our role in salvation? Whose is the work of atonement? Whose is the response of repentance and rest?

Leviticus 23

v.33-44 Tabernacles (Booths). What characterized this feast (see v.40, 42, 43)? What was their joy in? What was it to be a reminder of (see Lev.25:23, 1 Pet.2:11, Heb.11:9, 13-16)?

NUMBERS 13, 14, 21 (Session 25)

NUMBERS 13

v.1, 17-20 What were these men to do? Why were they to do this? What does the Lord want His people to have direct knowledge of?

v.25-33 What did the spies think about the land? What did they think about those living in the land? What was different about Caleb from the others? Why did the others say they could not go up into the land? Why did Caleb say they could?

NUMBERS 14

v.1-4 How did Israel respond when they heard the report of the spies? Why did they do this (see Neh.9:17)?

v.5-10 How did Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Caleb respond when they heard the words of Israel? Why did they do this? How is 2 Cor.5:7 illustrated by this incident?

v.11, 12 How did the Lord respond to Israel's actions? Why did He say this?

v.13-19 On what basis did Moses appeal to the Lord? What is a compelling reason for God to answer prayer? What was Moses' concern and desire (compare with v.12)? What does this tell us about true leadership and humility?

v.20-25 How did the Lord respond to Moses? Why would Caleb be brought into the land and not Israel? Describe the spirit of each.

v.26-35 How did the Lord respond to Israel? How are they described in v.27? Against whom is all grumbling directed (see Ps 51:4, Ex.16:7, 8)? How is Gal.6:7, 8 illustrated here?

v.36-38 How did the Lord respond to the spies?

v.39-45 Had Israel repented? What is repentance (see 2 Cor.7:9, 10, Mt.3:2, 8)? Was this an act of faith on the part of Israel? What is genuine faith (see Rom.10:17)? Were the Israelites true believers (see v.2-4, 10, 11, 22)? How are the Israelites described in Hebrews 3:7 to 4:6? From the Hebrews' passages, list the specific ways they responded to the Lord. List the specific ways they responded to the Word of God. What does it mean to have a hardened heart? How can we not have a hardened heart? See Heb.3:13. How is sin deceitful? How many real believers were among Israel? How many are there in the church (see Mt 7:13-23, 2 Cor.12:20, 21, 13:5, Rev.3:14-21)? What is the relationship between disobedience and unbelief and between obedience and faith? What is the warning for us from this history (see 1 Cor.10:5-11)?

NUMBERS 21

v.4, 5 What does discouragement / impatience result in? Who did they have to blame for the length of the journey (see Num.14:32-35, Deut.1:2, 3)? What are we not believing about God at such times? Did they have food? What did they think about the Lord's provision of manna for them? What does the manna represent (see Jn 6:31-36)?

v.6 How does a bite from a serpent kill? What does this picture (see Rom.6:23, Jas.1:14, 15, Rom.7:11, 24)?

NUMBERS 21

v.7-9 Did the Lord do as the people requested? What is the difference between removing the serpents and remedying the effect of them? What was the Lord's solution to the poison of sin within them? What does this brass serpent represent (see Jn.3:14)? How is Rom.8:3 and Phil.2:7 illustrated here? In order to make a brass serpent it must be forged in the fire. How does this show what the Lord Jesus endured on the cross (see 2 Cor.5:21, Rom.1:18, Rom.5:9, Mt.26:39 and Ps.11:6 with Jer.25:15)? In what sense were they to look at the brass serpent? See 2 Kings 18:4. What can even the means of God's blessing become to us? What are ways in which this has happened among Christians? Outline a gospel message from Jn.3:14.

JOSHUA 1 & 2 (Session 26)

The book of Joshua portrays our entering into possession of our spiritual blessings in Christ.

Canaan - Place of spiritual blessings. Rahab - Faith. Ark of God - Christ. Jordan - Death and resurrection. Gilgal - Self-judgment: the Word applied to cut off fleshly tendencies. Jericho - Power of the world. Nations - Spiritual forces of wickedness. Joshua - Pictures Christ and /or spiritual leadership.

JOSHUA 1

Deut.6:23. Why did God bring Israel out of Egypt? Why does the Lord bring us out of sin?

v.1, 2 What was Moses not able to do (See Acts 15:10, Num.20:5, 8-12, Deut.34:4, 5, Rom.10:4)?

v.2, 3 "I am giving", "I have given". What is the difference between the two? How did Israel possess Canaan? Though already given, how would it be possessed? What does it mean to walk in the provision of God?

v.4 How is Canaan described here and in Deut.12:9, 10, Deut.6:10, 11, and Lev.26:7, 8? Summarize what these passages tell us about God's provision in the Lord Jesus.

v.5 Who is the "I" in this verse? Does this mean that there will be no opposition at all or that there will be no successful opposition (see Jer 1:18, 19)? Explain.

v.6, 7, 9 What was needed to enter into what God had provided? Where does the Christian obtain strength and courage (see Ps.27:1-3, Eph.3:16, 6:10, 2 Tim.1:7)?

v.7, 8 "Prosperous" is translated elsewhere in the OT as "push forward, advance, break out, come (mightily), go over, be good meet, or victorious." "Success" is translated as "be prudent, have insight, understanding, or skill" as in Ps.119:99. Define true prosperity. The word "meditate" means "to chew the cud" (like a cow or goat). How does this explain why the word of God is not to depart from our mouths? What place do the Scriptures have in true prosperity?

v.11 Who was responsible to prepare for entering into God's provision in Canaan? What did this require? What is the parallel for the Christian?

v.12-15 Read Numbers 32. How was the choice of these 2 1/2 tribes viewed by the remainder of Israel? Did these 2 1/2 have an interest in possessing the land of God's choosing? Were they obeying God by not entering Canaan? Why? What did they do since they did not dwell where the Lord's tabernacle was (see Josh.22:10-29)? How was this viewed by the people of God? What should they have done (see Josh.22:19)? What excuse did they give for the altar (see Josh.22:26-28)? How is 2 Tim.3:5 illustrated here?

JOSHUA 2

v.1 Why did Joshua send spies (see Num.13:1f)? What does this tell us about Joshua?

v.2 How did they know these men were Israelites? What does this illustrate (see Jn.15:19, Phil.2:15)?

v.4, 5 Was this right for her to say? See Heb.11:31 and Jas.2:25. How do we reconcile her lie with these passages? What does her protection of the spies tell us about her relationship with God?

JOSHUA 2

v.6 At the time the spies came, was Rahab a practicing harlot? What does Isa. 19:9 tell us about her present occupation?

v.9-11 Was she a true believer before or after receiving the spies? Explain.

v.14 Why did they speak of the land as not yet theirs? What is the lesson for the Christian?

v.18-21 Why a scarlet cord? What does it represent (see Ex.12:7, 13)?

JOSHUA 3 & 4 (Session 27)

JOSHUA 3

v.1, 15 What did Israel see as they lodged at the edge of Jordan? What are we to learn by this (see Jn.13:5, 6, 6:63, 15:5, Rom.5:6)?

v.3-6 What were they to fix their eyes upon in order to cross Jordan? What are Christians to focus upon (see Heb.12:2, Ps.123:1)?

v.7-13 What would be the guarantee and assurance to them that they would possess the land in victory over their enemies? How does this illustrate Col.2:14, 15?

v.14-17 What did the ark completely cut off by going into the midst? Did any of the waters of the Jordan come upon Israel? How are Jn.5:24 and Rom.8:1 illustrated by this?

JOSHUA 4

v.1-8 What do these 12 stones represent? Which side of the Jordan river were they placed on? What were they to be a memorial of? Why did the 12 men carry them up rather than Joshua?

v.9, 18 What did Joshua place in the midst of Jordan? What happened to these 12 stones? What do these 24 stones picture (see Gal.2:20, Col.2:12, 3:1-3, Rom.6:3-6, 1 Pet.2:24)? Why is this necessary before the enemy is encountered?

v.14 What was it that exalted Joshua in the sight of the people? What is it that has exalted the Lord Jesus so that we fear Him (see Phil.2:5-11)?

v.19-24 What was this a testimony of? What were the sons to see evidenced in the fathers?

JOSHUA 5 (Session 28)

v.1 What power does the enemy have against the Christian who is dead, buried, and raised with Christ (see Lk.10:19, Eph.6:10, Jas.4:7, 1 Jn.4:4)? What power does the enemy have against a Christian who gives place to the devil (see Eph.4:26, 27, Mt.16:22, 23, 1 Pet.5:8, 9, 1 Thess.3:5, 2 Cor.11:3)?

v.2-9 What does circumcision picture (see Col.2:11, Rom.2:28, 29)? What is to be circumcised in a believer (see Deut.10:16, 30:6, Jer.4:4, 9:25,26, Ex.6:12, Jer.6:10, Lev.19:23)? What was to be used to cut off the flesh? How do Christians cut off the flesh (see Heb.4:12)? How does a Christian do this (see Rom.8:13, Col.3:5)?

v.8 After they were circumcised, were they strong in themselves to encounter the enemy? What does this show us (see 2 Cor.12:9, 10, 4:7, 1 Cor.2:3,4)?

v.9 Without being circumcised, the Israelites appeared no different than Egyptians. The Name of the Lord was reproached because of it. What is the parallel for the Christian (see Rom.2:17-29, 1 Pet.2:11, 12)?

v.10 What does the Passover represent (see Ex.12, session 15)? Why must a person be circumcised in order to keep the Passover (see Ex.12:48)?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

JOSHUA 5

v.11, 12 How long had the Lord fed them with manna (see Ex.16:35)? Had they eaten it during the 400 years in Egypt? Did they eat it at any time after these verses in Josh.5? Was this miracle dependent upon their claiming it by faith (see Ex.16:2, 3, Num.11:4-10, 21:5)? Why did the manna cease? How did the Lord provide for their lives after this time?

v.13-15 Who was this man with a drawn sword in his hand (see Ex.23:20-23, Num.22:31)? Whose side was He on, Israel's or Jericho's? Explain. Why did Joshua fall to the ground before Him? What was His message to Joshua (compare Ex.3:4, 5)? What was on Joshua's sandals? What must not be brought into the presence of this holy God (see I Jn.2:15-17, 2 Cor.7:1, Eph.5:26, 2 Pet.2:20)?

JOSHUA 6 & 7 (Session 29)

JOSHUA 6

v.1-5 What principle is illustrated here (see I Sam.17:45-47, 2 Chron.20:15-17)?

v.8-10 What was not to be heard in this battle? What was heard? Of what value are the thoughts and words of man in spiritual conflict (see Mk.7:6-9, Col.2:20-23)? When was the only time that they should speak? What is the principle (see I Pet.4:11, Tit.2:1, Ezk.3:27, Jer.15:19)?

v.17-19 What were the things in the city devoted to? Can believers keep for themselves what belongs to God (see I Cor.6:19, 20, Dan.5:1-4, 18-23)?

v.20, 21 What caused the walls to fall? What caused the destruction of the peoples? How is I Cor.15:10 illustrated by this?

v.22-27 What do these verses tell us about the Word of the Lord (see Ps.19:7-11, Rom.3:3, 4, 4:20, 21, Tit.1:2, Heb.6:17, 18, I Kings 16:34)? How is Gal.2:18 illustrated in v.26 (see I Kings 16:34)?

JOSHUA 7

v.1 Was this an evil (see Josh.6:18, 19)? Who sinned, Israel or Achan? Explain.

v.2-5 What was Israel thinking about their own abilities? Was their assessment correct? Had they returned to the camp at Gilgal? What does Gilgal represent (see Josh.5, session 28)? How is Jer.17:5 illustrated here?

v.6-9 What was the concern of Israel as expressed in this prayer? What was the last thing mentioned in v.9? What is to be our first concern (see Lk.10:41, 42, I Cor.10:31)?

v.10 Was the Lord pleased with this prayer (see Prov.28:9, 13)?

v.11, 12 What does the Lord require for Him to deliver His people? What specific things had they done? How are the truths of Jn.3:27, Rom.12:3, and I Cor.4:7 seen as lacking in v.11? How does the Lord view their sin, as individual or collective (see I Cor.5:6-8)?

v.13 What does the Lord require among His people (see Heb.12:14, 2 Cor.6:17, 18, 7:1)?

v.14, 15 What do these verses illustrate (see Lk.12:3-5)?

v.16-19 How is Num.32:23 illustrated in Achan?

v.20, 21 What led to Achan's sin? Where did his sin begin (see Mk.7:21-23)? What did he not do (see Mt.22:20, 21)? What does I Tim.6:8-10 tell us about Achan's sin? How has this affected the people of God both then and now?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

JOSHUA 7

v.22-26 How is the sin of Achan judged? What is covetousness, actually (see Col.3:5)? How is covetousness seen as idolatry in Achan's actions? If we would judge our own sin, what would we be spared from (see I Cor 11:29-31)? If sin is judged, what does the valley of Achor become (see Hos.2:15)? What is the spiritual lesson?

JOSHUA 8 - 10 (Session 30)

JOSHUA 8

v.1-9 How is this different than Josh.7:2-5?

v.10-23 What strategy did Joshua use in this battle (see v.1, 2, 18)?

v.24-29 Why did the Lord have Israel utterly destroy the Canaanites (see Gen.15:16, Lev.18:20-30, Deut.12:29-31, 18:9-12)? What is the difference between v.27 and Josh.6:17-19, 7:11?

v.30-35 What is the difference between cut and uncut stones? What is the altar of God to be built of (see Ex.20:25)? Why does wielding an iron tool defile the altar of the Lord? Why did Joshua build this altar and write a copy of the law upon it (see Deut.27:1-8)? What place does the Word of God have among the people of God?

JOSHUA 9

v.3-15 How did Joshua and the people evaluate the Gibeonites? How does God evaluate people (see I Sam.16:7, Lk.16:15)? What did they fail to do (see v.14)? What was Israel trusting in (see Prov.3:5, 6, 28:26, Jer.17:5-9, Num.15:39, 2 Cor.5:7)? What did Joshua think he was doing in v.15 (see Deut.20:10, 15, 16)? What was he actually doing (see Ex.23:31-33)?

v.16-27 Should Israel have slain them since they were enemies who had deceived ~~or~~ allowed them to live since they had sworn to them by the Lord (see v.18-20, Num.30:1-2, Jud.11:35, Ps.15:4, Eccl.5:4-6)? Explain. How is Gal.6:7, 8 illustrated here? Does it glorify the Lord to have Gibeonites performing service in the house of God? What is the result of walking by sight and making covenants while doing so?

JOSHUA 10

v.1-11 How was the enemy defeated (see v.8-11, 14, 42, I Sam.17:45-47, 2 Chron.20:15)?

v.12-15 What was the purpose of this sign and wonder?

v.16-27 What does putting the feet on the necks of the kings show (see Lk.10:19, Jn.16:33, Rom.5:17, 6:14, 8:37, 2 Cor.2:14)?

v.42 How was victory sustained and conquest gained?

PSALM 1 & 22 (Session 31)

PSALM 1

v.1-3 What does it mean to be blessed? What is the difference between knowing and delighting; between reading and meditating? What conditions must occur in a person before he can walk? What types of counsel are there (see Jas.3:13-18, Isa.11:2, 30:1, 2, Ps.33:9-11, 106:43, I Chron.10:13, 14, Prov.22:20, 21)? What is the progression from "counsel" to "path" to "seat"? In what sense should we delight in the Word of God (see Prov.2:1-6)? What is the result of such delight and meditation (see v.3, Jn.15:5, 7, 8, Jer.17:5-8)? In what sense will he prosper (see Josh.1:8, Session 26)?

v.4-6 How are the wicked different from the man of v.1-3? What is chaff and what is its end (see Isa.29:5, 6, Mt.3:12)? What does it mean that the Lord "knows" the way of the righteous (see Jn.10:14, 27, 2 Tim.2:19)?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

PSALM 22 *Written 1,000 years before Christ, prophesying the cross.*

v.1 Who spoke these words (see Mt.27:46)? Why were they spoken by the Lord Jesus?

v.2-5 Did God answer Him by delivering Christ from the cross? Did He answer others in times past? Why did He not answer this cry (see Isa.53:5, 10, Mt.26:39, Heb.5:7-9)?

v.6-8 Why did the Lord Jesus Christ describe Himself as a worm (see Isa.53:3, Lk.18:31-33)? How was the mocking and scorn of wicked men fulfilled at the cross (see Mt.27:39-43)? What value did men see in the Lord Jesus (see Isa.53:4, Mk.15:16-20, 29-32)?

v.9-10 Was the Father in heaven pleased with the Lord Jesus? Was the Lord Jesus pleased with the Father?

v.11-13, 16 How were men described in these verses? Did any come to help the Lord Jesus at this time (see Ps.69:20, 21)?

v.14-18 What physical sufferings of crucifixion are described in these verses? How did Jn.19:24 fulfill v.18? How did Jn.20:25 fulfill v.16?

v.19-21, 24 Did the Father in heaven hear His cry for help?

v.22-24 How was v.22 fulfilled in the Lord Jesus (see Ps.40:6-10, Heb.2:9-12)? In what way did the Father "help" the Lord Jesus (see Acts 2:23, 24, 29-36)?

v.25-31 Who is praising in the great congregation (v.25)? Who else is praising (v.26)? How great will be the kingdom of the Lord Jesus who bore our sins at the cross (see v.27-29)? How long shall He reign (v.30, 31)? What is it that they will declare that He has done (see v.31, Jn.19:30, Heb.9:12, 26, 10:12, 14)?

PSALM 119 (Session 32) *Read the entire Psalm*

What is the relationship of the Word of God to each of the following:

Purity: v.9, 11, 133 What is to be the effect of the Word of God coming to our hearts? What does it mean to "hide / treasure" the Word in one's heart? What is meant by having one's footsteps established in the Word?

Counsel: v.24, 118, 160 In what sense is the Word our counselor? What happens to a person who wanders / errs from the Word? Of what value is any other counsel? What is a sum? What does this tell us about the Word? What types of counsel are there (see Jas.3:13-18, Isa.11:2, 30:1, 2, Ps.33:9-11, 106:43, I Chron.10:13, 14, Prov.22:20, 21)?

False Ways: v.29, 101, 104, 128 Upon whom or what are we dependent for truth? What is expected once truth is granted? What toleration of error should we have in our own hearts? What place is given for our own opinion about things?

Liberty: v.45, 165 What is a person free from by walking in the truth? What is peace and what is its source?

Reviving: v.50, 107 What should we never neglect in time of affliction? What will the Lord do if we abide in His Word?

Joy / Delight: v.92, 111 Where is lasting joy to be found? How can we be "sorrowful yet always rejoicing" - 2 Cor.6:10?

Meditation: v.97, 99 What are our heart and mind to always be full of? What does abiding in His Word result in?

Understanding: v.98-100, 105, 130 Where does understanding come from? Why does the Lord grant light to us?

Our Devotion: v.147, 148 Of what value was the Word to the Psalmist? How diligent are you to seek it?

OLD TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

ISAIAH 53 (Session 33) *Read Isa.52:13 through to the end of chapter 53.*

To whom is this passage referring? Explain.

Isa.52:13 How is this similar to Phil.2:7-9?

Isa.52:14 How was this verse fulfilled (see Mt.26:67, 27:14, 26, 30, Mk.15:15, 19, Lk.22:63, 64, 23:11, 22)?

ISAIAH 53

v.1 Who believed the message of the gospel about the Lord Jesus (see Jn.12:36-41, Rom.10:15-17)?

v.2 Is the dry parched ground what sustains the tender plant? Who is this tender sprout / shoot / branch / plant and what will He do (see Isa.4:2, 11:1-5, Jer.23:5, 6, Zech.3:8, 6:12, 13)? Was there anything outwardly in the Lord Jesus that would distinguish Him or draw men to Him (see Mt.13:54-57, Mk.6:2-3, Lk.9:58)?

v.3 How were these things seen in the Lord Jesus (see Jn.1:10, 11, Mk.3:5, Jn.6:60, 66, 7:20, 8:48, 52, 53, 9:16, 24, 29, 10:19, 20, 11:35, Lk.19:41, 42, Mt.27:63)?

v.4 In what sense did the Lord Jesus bare our sorrows and grief (see Mt.8:16, 17)? Even though He did this, how did men look at Him (see Mt.27:41-43, Gal.3:13)?

v.5 Why was the Lord Jesus wounded? In what sense were we healed by His stripes, physically or spiritually (see I Pet.2:24)? What is the basis of peace (see Isa.32:17, Rom.5:1, Eph.2:13-17, Col.1:20)?

v.6 How is this truth seen in I Pet.2:24, 25 and 2 Cor.5:21?

v.7, 8 How do we know that this passage refers to the Lord Jesus (see Acts 8:30-35)? How did the Lord Jesus conduct Himself before His accusers (see Mt.26:59-68, 27:12-14, Lk.23:8-10, Jn.19:9, I Pet.2:21-23)?

v.9 Who were the wicked men (see Lk.23:32, 33)? Who was the rich man (see Mt.27:57-60, Jn.19:38-42)? Did the Lord accomplish righteousness and bare our sins by means of violence (see Isa.42:1-4, Mt.12:14-21)?

v.10 In what sense was the Father pleased to bruise / crush Him (see v.6, Heb.10:5-10, Jn.1:29)? Who is His seed (see Isa.61:8, 9, Ps.22:30, I Jn.5:1, 2)? How will this One who has been delivered unto death have His days prolonged (see Rom.4:25, 5:9, 10, I Cor.15:45, Heb.7:24, 25)? What is the pleasure of the Lord in this verse (see Heb.2:9-12, Ps.147:10, 11, 149:4, Lk.12:32, Eph. 1:5, 9, Phil.2:12, 13)?

v.11 What has satisfied God (see Rom.3:25, I Jn.2:2, 4:10. Propitiation means satisfaction of the righteous demands of the holy God against sinful men)? How will the Lord Jesus justify men (see Rom.3:24-26, Rom.5:9, 2 Cor.5:21, Tit.3:5-7)?

v.12 Where does spoil / booty come from (see Eph.4:7, 8, Col.2:15)? How did God divide Him a portion with the great (see Phil.2:9-11)?

DANIEL 9 (Session 34)

v.1-3 What was Daniel doing while in captivity?

v.4-19 Compare this prayer with those found in Ez.9 and Neh.9. What are the similarities? What elements comprised the prayer of Daniel? Does he speak about "them" or "us"? What is the difference? What was the essence of their sin? List the various words that describe their sin. List the various words that describe the Lord.

v.13 What did Israel not do?

v.17-19 What was the basis of Daniel's appeal to the Lord?

v.20-23 On what basis does the Lord reveal truth to us (see Mt.13:11, 12)?

DANIEL 9

v.24 Seventy “weeks” (KJV) or seventy “sevens” (NIV) are determined to accomplish what 6 things? What is the holy city (see Isa.52:1, Lk.21:24, Rev.11:2)? When will transgression be finished and sin ended in Israel (see Lk.21:24, Rom.11:11, 12, 25-27, Rev.1:7, Zech.12:10, 11, 13:1-2)? When was “reconciliation” (KJV) or “atonement” (NASB) for iniquity made (see Rom.5:10, 2 Cor.5:19, Col.1:20)? When and how will everlasting righteousness be brought in (see Jer.23:5, 6, Rom.1:17, 3:21, 22)? How long will the vision and prophesy be sealed up (see Dan.12:4, 9, Rev.22:10)? Ezekiel describes the temple which will be built in the future (see Ezk.40-44) after the destruction of the sanctuary by the wicked prince (see Dan.9:26). It seems most likely that it is this temple which will be anointed.

v.25 From the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah (see Ez.1:1, 4:24, 6:1-3, 13-15) until the Lord Jesus is 7 “sevens” plus 62 “sevens” or 483 years. What kind of troublous times were there at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah’s building (see Ez.4:1-7, Neh.2:19, 20, 4:1-3, 7, 8, 11, 12, 16, 6:1, 2, 6-9, 10-14)? Why is the Messiah called the Prince (see Isa.9:6)?

v.26, 27 In what sense was the Messiah cut off (see Isa.53:8, Mk.16:21, Lk.24:7)? Who is this other prince who is to come (see Dan.7:23-25, 8:9-13, 23-26, 11:31, 32, 36-39, 12:11, Mt.24:15, 2 Thess.2:3, 8-10, Rev.13:1-18)? When was the city and sanctuary to be destroyed by those who were from the wicked prince (see Mt.24:2, Lk.19:41-44)? By 70 AD the Romans had destroyed Jerusalem and the temple. Is the flood of v.26 literal or figurative (see Nah.1:8)? v.27 describes the 70th “seven” referred to as the “Tribulation”. What will happen in the middle of this final 7 year period (see Mt.24:15, 21, 22, Dan.11:31, 32)?

THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE
Every disciple when he is fully trained will be like his master - Lk 6:40

**NEW
TESTAMENT
KEY
PASSAGES**

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

MATTHEW 5 (Session 1)

v.1-12 **Read** the parallel account in Lk.6:20-26 and **compare**.

v.3 Define "poor in spirit" (see Isa.57:15, 66:2, Rev.3:17, Ps.16:2). What is the basic idea of a **kingdom**? Who are the key individuals in a kingdom? **What** are the 2 basic **functions** of a king? **What** is the basic responsibility of the subjects of the king? In essence, what is the kingdom of heaven?

v.4 What does it mean to mourn (see Ps. 119:136, Ezk.9:4-6, Isa.22:12-14, Amos 6:4-6, Jer.13:15-17, 2 Cor.12:21, Isa.53:3, Jas.4:8-10)?

v.5 Who is humble (see Ps. 37:9-11, Mt.23:12, 1 Pet.5:5, 6, 2 Chron.17:4, Num.12:3, Mt.11:29)? **What** is the relationship between the kingdom of heaven and humility (see Dan.4:30-37)? How does being as a child add to the concept of humility (see Mt.18:3, 4)?

v.6 Why do people hunger and thirst? What happens if hunger and thirst are **not satisfied**? How often do people hunger and thirst? What do these things **tell us about** how **and** why we are to hunger **and thirst after** righteousness? How does Jn.6:35 relate to this verse? **Define** righteousness.

v.7 What does Lk.10:30-37 **tell us about** mercy?

v.8 How necessary is personal purity (see Heb.12:14)? How can we be made clean (see Jer.2:22, 13:23, Rev.7:14, Jn.15:3, Eph.5:26, Tit.2:14)?

v.9 How is **peace** made (see Isa.57:18-21, Col.1:20, Eph.2:13-16, Rom.5:1, Jn.14:27, 16:33, Col.3:15, Ps. 119:165, Gal.5:22, Isa.26:3, Prov.14:30, Phil.4:6-7, 9, Jas.3:18)?

v.10-12 What **types** of persecution are there? What is the relationship between being **persecuted** and being in the kingdom of **heaven**? **Why** did the world hate the Lord Jesus (see Jn.7:7)? **Why does** the world **hate** Christians (see Mt.10:16-23, 2 Chron.36:14-16, Jn.15:18-21, Acts 7:51-57)?

Summarize what it means to be blessed in the kingdom of **heaven**.

MATTHEW 5 (Session 2)

v.13 What is salt **useful for**? **When** does salt become effective? What would cause it to lose **its** taste?

v.14-16 What is the source of light in the believer? What is this light? What contrast is there **between** being set on a hill and being placed under a bushel? In what **sense** does it give light to **all**? **Will** all glorify **the** Father in heaven? Explain.

v.17-20 How does Jn.1:23, 35-37 illustrate vs. 17-19? How does Mt.17:2-8 also illustrate the role **of the** Law and Prophets? In what **sense(s)** does the Lord Jesus fulfill the Law and Prophets? What was the basic purpose of the Law (see Gal.3:21-26)?

v.20 What kinds of righteousness are there (see Rom.9:30-33, Phil.3:8,9)? What was the righteousness of the Pharisees?

v.21-48 What relationship **does** the Lord Jesus have to the Law?

v.21-26 What is the basic principle of this section?

v.21, 22 What is the difference between these 2 verses?

v.23-26 How do these verses relate to the idea of reconciliation (see Prov.16:7, Rom.12:18)? What is contained in the idea of reconciliation? Compare these concepts to the **life** of the Lord Jesus. What **was** true of Him in these regards?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

MATTHEW 5

v.25, 26 Why would a person not choose to settle a matter with his opponent?

v. 27, 28 What is the difference between these 2 verses?

v.29, 30 Do eyes and hands cause us to sin (see Mt.15:18-20)? What is the point of saying that they should be cut off or plucked out if they are not the actual cause of **sin**?

v.31, 32 What was the basic outlook regarding divorce in Jesus' day (see Mt.19:3)? What does the Lord say about it here? What is God's basic thought and directive about divorce (see **Mal.2:14-16**)?

v.33-37 Why should we not make oaths?

v.38-42 What is **different** about v.38 and the verses that follow?

v.43-47 What two types of love are being contrasted here? How is it possible to love as the Lord Jesus states here (see **Rom.5:5**, **Gal.5:22**, **I Jn.4:19**)?

v.48 How does 2 **Cor.2:15**, **16**, **3:5**, **6** relate to this verse? What is perfection(see **Phil.3:12**, **15**)?

MATTHEW 6 (Session 3)

v.1 What is the difference between this verse and Mt.5:16?

v.2-7, 16-18 What motivates your **inner** life and outward actions?

v.8 If the Father in heaven already knows what we need before we even ask, why then do we pray? What is prayer (see I Jn.5:14, 15, **Jn.15:7**, **Prov.28:9**, **Jn.9:31**, **Lk.11:5-10**, **Lk.18:1-7**, **9-14**, **Jn.17**, **Eph.1:16-18**, **Eph.3:14-21**, **Eph.6:18-20**, **Heb.5:7**, **Acts.4:31**, **I Thess.5:17**, **I Tim.2:1**, **2**, **8**, **Rom.10:1**, **Ps.5:1-3**, **Ps.66:16-20**, **Ps.141:2**, **Prov.15:8**, **Rev.5:8**, **I Sam.12:23**)?

v.9 What does the phrase "in this **way**"/"after this **manner**" mean?

v.9-13 What key elements of prayer are included in these verses?

v.9 What is the first and foremost concern that is expressed by this **verse**?

v.10 How does this verse express the essence of our requests to God?

v.11 What is the difference between this request and seeking after prosperity and wealth?

v.12, 14, 15 In what measure can we expect to be forgiven? "**Forgive**" means, literally, "to send away" How does this describe the type of forgiveness that we should extend toward others (see **Eph.4:31**, **32**, **Col.3:12**, **13**)? What will result if we do not forgive?

v.13 On what basis can we be delivered from evil?

v.19-21 What is treasure (see **Ecc1.5:10-17**, **Prov.8:10**, **11**, **18-21**, **Prov.23:4**, **5**, **I Tim.6:8-12**, **17-19**)? How is treasure in heaven stored up? What is the purpose of money (see **Lk.16:1-13**, **Eph.4:28**, **I Tim.6:17-19**)?

v.22, 23 Can we see in the darkness? What prevents light **from** entering our **eyes**? In the **context** of these immediate verses what prevents this?

v.23-34 See **Heb.13:5**

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

MATTHEW 6

v.24 Why can two masters not **be served**? Why are **prosperity** and **material riches never** to be sought after by a **me** child of **God**?

v.25-31 Why should we not be anxious? What types of things do we **become anxious about**? Why do we **become anxious**? What are our **thoughts** about the Lord Jesus at **such times** (see **Prov.12:25**, **Ps.37:1, 7, 8**)?

v.32-34 Compare **Phil.4:6, 7**. What does seeking first **His kingdom and righteousness mean** (see **Rom.14:17**)? Is the Lord **promising to supply** to believers all the things that the **Gentiles / pagans seek or those things** necessary to **life** which God knows that **we** need? Explain

MATTHEW 7 (Session 4)

v.1-5 In what **sense** are we **not** to judge? Are we to judge our **brother** at all (see **I Cor.5:12, 13, 6:1-6**)? **Explain**. What will be our **standard of measure** when we do judge in a proper **manner**? Hypocrisy **means**, literally, "to put on a **mask**" in order to **play a role in a performance**. What does this tell us about the **manner** in which we are to assist those who have a **speck** in their **eye**? What is the overall **message** of this section?

v.6 **What does** it mean to not **cast pearls** before swine (see **Mt.11:25, 26, 13:58, Ps.62:4, Prov.9:7-9, 12:15, 17:10, 18:2, 23:9, Mt.26:62, 63, 27:12-14, Isa.39:2-6**)?

v.7-11 What is it that **we** are to **ask** the Father **for**? **What ideas** are contained in the terms "**ask**", "**seek**", and "**knock**"(see **Jas.4:2, 3**)?

v.11 What does the Lord Jesus **tell** us about **men**? Define **evil** (see **Rom.3:9-18**).

v.12 How **does** this relate to **Mt.22:39** and **Eph.5:29**?

v.13, 14 **What** will a **broad way** accommodate? **What** of a **narrow way**? **Why** do the **amount** of people travel upon each? What **is** a gate? What is the **way**? **Where** does it lead? **Does** the word "**find**" relate to **v.7, 8**? Explain.

v.15 **What disguise and** cloak of deception do these ones wear (see **Jer.23:9-40, Acts 20:29, 30, 2 Cor.11:13-15, 2 Tim.4:1-4, 2 Pet.2:1-3**)?

v.16-20 **What** is fruit (see **Eph.5:9**)? If they are **known** by their fruit, what **does** their **disguise consist of**? **Good fruit** or bad fruit is a result of what? How **necessary** is it to bear good **fruit**? Explain.

v.21-23 How do these **verses relate** to **verses 15-20**? How do verses 16-20 relate to "doing the will of my **Father** in heaven" (see **Jn.15:8**)? Are **performing** signs and wonders an evidence of having saving faith? Did the Lord **Jesus** say "I **knew you at** one time" **or** did He say "I never knew you"? **What** is the **difference**? If the Lord **Jesus never** knew them, how were **they** able to do **these** things; by what power(see **2 Thess.2:9, 10**)? What kind of generation **seeks** after a **sign** (see **Mt. 12:39**)? What should we rather **seek** after?

v.24-26 Who is the wise **man**? **Who** is foolish?

v.28, 29 Why **was** it amazing to them to bear **teaching** with **authority**? What is teaching with **authority**?

MATTHEW 13 (Session 5)

PARABLES OF THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

The Sower - v.1-9, 18-23 Wheat and Tares - v.24-30, 36-43 Mustard Seed - v.31, 32

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

MATTHEW 13

Leaven - v.33 Net - v.47-50 What do these 5 parables have in common?

v.11, 12 How is insight into the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven obtained (see Mt.11:25-27, I Cor.2:9-16)?

v.12 What is the necessary ingredient for progress in the spiritual life? On what basis will the Lord reveal more of His ways to us? What results if we do not have a response of obedience to the Lord's Word (see Lk.8:18)?

v.13-15 Why did the Lord speak to them in parables? Why did they not understand?

v.18-23 Why does a sower plant seed? Of what value are fruitless plants to the sower? What prevents fruit from developing and maturing?

v.22 What are thorns (see Mk.4:19, Lk.8:14)?

v.23 Why was the Word understood by them (see v.13-15, Mk.4:20, Lk.8:15)? What is true of each of these ones? How is it that some seeds bear more than others?

v.24, 25 Where were the tares growing? How can it be possible that two opposing types of life can be growing side by side in the kingdom of Heaven?

v.26 When did the tares become evident? How does this relate to Mt.7:16-20?

v.30 What did the sower keep? What did he do with the rest (see Heb.6:7, 8)? How can we know if we are saved?

v.31, 32 Do mustard seeds actually and naturally grow into trees? How then could this happen? What are the birds (see Mt.13:4, 19, Rev.18:2)? Where are these to be found?

v.33 What is leaven? How does it work? What does it do under the right conditions? What stops the process of leaven? Is leaven represented as something good or evil (see I Cor.5:6-8)? What parallels exist between this verse and Zech.5:6-8? How does 2 Thess.2:7 relate to this verse? Explain. What develops from this mystery aspect of the kingdom of Heaven (see Rev.17:5)?

v.34, 35 Ps.78 gives a general history of what? How is this Psalm a parable (see Ps.78:1-4, 8)? How does this relate to the kingdom as a mystery? What is the mystery of the kingdom of Heaven?

v.44-46 Who is the one who is seeking; a person (see Rom.3:11) or the Lord Jesus Christ? What is the field (see Mt.13:38)? In what sense did the Lord Jesus buy the world (see I Jn.2:2)? What was contained in the world that He paid the price for? What was this treasure (see Eph.5:25)? In what sense did the Lord Jesus buy one pearl (see Eph.5:25)? What is this pearl?

MATTHEW 16 (Session 6)

v.1-4 What kind of request was this? What was obvious to them about the weather that was not obvious to them about the age in which they lived? Why? Who seek supernatural signs and wonders? Why is this so?

v.5, 7 What is the connection between these verses and the previous ones?

v.7, 8 What were the disciples doing here? What should they have done if they had a question about what the Lord had said?

v.11, 12 What is leaven (see Mt.13:33 and questions listed above)? What did the Lord Jesus say about the most respected religious leaders of His day? Did the "great" teachers of God's people teach them the truth of God's word (see Jn.5:37-47, Jer.5:30, 31, 8:8, 23:36, Mt.22:29)? What does it mean to teach with authority (see Jn.3:31, 35, Jn.8:26, 28, 40, Jn.12:49, Jn.15:15, Tit.2:11-15)?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

MATTHEW 16

v.13, 14 **What** difference does it make as to **what** our opinion of Jesus **Christ** is?

v.15-17 Where did Peter obtain **this understanding** about the Lord Jesus? Where does such knowledge originate for **anyone**(see Mt.11:25-27, Mt.13:11, **Jn.6:44**, 65, **Jn.12:37-40**, **Jn.17:6**, Acts 5:31, Acts 13:48, Acts 16:14, Rom.9:14-18, I Cor.2:9-14, Eph.1:17, 18, **Eph.2:8-10**)?

v.18 What will the church be built upon? Who will build the church? Whose church is it? Why will the gates of hell not prevail against the *church*? What are gates representative of (see Deut.22:15, 24, **Deut.25:7**, **Ruth 4:1**, **Prov.22:22**, **Prov.24:7**, **Isa.29:21**, Amos 5:10, 15)? What is the relationship of Peter ("a stone / rock") to the rock ("large rock / **bedrock**")? Has there ever been a time in which the true church has been ruined or destroyed (see **Eph.3:21**)?

v.19 The phrases "shall be bound" and "shall be loosed" in the King **James** Version are translated by other versions as "have been bound and **“have** been loosed". What is the **difference**? Does Heaven **bow** to the **will** of man **or** does man bow to the will of Heaven? Explain.

v.21-23 Why did Peter say this to the Lord? Was he aware **of the source** of his thoughts? Who has **access** to our minds (see Mt. 16:17)? If our minds are **set** upon the things of **man**, what is the **source** of **such** thoughts (see Jas.3:15)?

v.24-26 **What** does it mean to deny oneself? What is self? In the **society** in which Jesus lived, **who would** take up a cross? Jesus said, "Follow me." Where was He going(see **Mt.16:21**)? How do we "save" our lives? How do we lose them? What is it that you desire to gain in this life? **One soul** is of **greater** value than what?

v.27 What will each **man** receive on this day?

MARK 7 (Session 7)

v.2 What had the Pharisees observed? Did **all** of Jesus' disciples not wash their **hands**? **What** genuine **type** of tolerance / forbearance does the Lord Jesus display?

v.3, 4 How had the teaching of the Pharisees been like leaven (see Mt.16:11, 12)?

v.5 Why did they ask this question of the Lord? What was their standard? What did they **expect** everyone to do, including the Lord? If someone did not comply, what would this indicate to the Pharisee? There are 3 levels of **man's** tradition: (1) the "**Useful**" stage where a practice is helpful in achieving a godly objective, (2) the "**Necessary**" stage where it is thought that the godly objective cannot be accomplished in any other way, and (3) "**Idolatry**" where others will be punished if they do not obey the tradition. Where were the Pharisees on this scale? What is idolatry (see **Ezk.14:3-5**, I **Jn.5:21**, **Col.3:5**)?

v.6 What is hypocrisy?

v.6-7 What did these **men** actually believe and follow (see **Jn.5:37-47**)? Is it our words or something else that **tells** what **we** believe? Explain. What effect do false **concepts** have upon our worship?

v.8, 9, 13 What two options always face man? What is the net **effect** of man's traditions? What should be done with them once they are discovered?

v.10-13 Under what pretense did the Pharisees rationalize their disobedience? Which of the two is "Legalism", insistence upon obedience to the Word of God **or** insistence upon **man's** tradition?

v.14-23 Why can external things not defile us? What does? Which of the things listed here are you capable of doing? What is the **origin** of each of them? Do the categories "clean and unclean" have anything to do with the ideas of "healthy and unhealthy" or of "spiritual and unspiritual"? What spiritual benefit does food impart to the Christian (see Rom.14:17, I **Cor.8:8**, **Col.2:16, 17, 20-23**)? What was the point of "clean and unclean" **animals** in Leviticus 11?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

LUKE 14 (Session 8)

- v.1 Why were they watching Him (see Lk.6:6-11)? Who were at this dinner?
- v.2 **Would** a Pharisee normally invite someone like this? Why was he there in front of Jesus? Dropsy is a partial heart failure resulting in swelling of the body. How does dropsy **illustrate the** condition of the Pharisees?
- v.4 Why did they keep silent? Why did the Lord heal this man and send him away?
- v.5, 6 How does Deut.22:4 relate to this? What is different about this silence and the one in v.4?
- v.7-11 What is the point of this parable? Who was being addressed in v.1-6? Who is addressed here? Describe the "atmosphere" at the **dinner** table. What is humility (see Isa.66:2, Ps.51:17)?
- v.12-14 Who had been invited to this **dinner** (see v.1)? What was the motive for inviting those whom he did? What place does self-seeking have in God's kingdom?
- v.15 What is the typical conversation about at social gatherings? What **does** someone usually do if tenseness develops at such occasions? Why did this man consider this to be a "**safe**" comment?
- v.24 How does this verse respond to the statement of v.15?
- v.18 What is an excuse? What other interests were of more importance to these people than God's interests?
- v.21 What connection is there between poor, crippled, blind, and lame with v.11? What do these conditions represent spiritually?
- v.25 Is popularity a thing to be encouraged? Explain.
- v.26 What do all of these ones listed have in common? Define hate. Are love of self and hatred of self compatible? How does Deut.13:6-11 relate to this verse? What is the point of this verse?
- v.27 Who carried crosses? How were they viewed by their society? What will being a follower of the Lord Jesus involve (see 2 Tim.3:12)? What must the multitudes be thinking at this point?
- v.28-30 What is the purpose of a tower (see Isa.5:2)? What happens to the **fruit** if you don't have one? Was the average poor person a landowner capable of building a tower? Is the point of "counting the cost" to have us rely upon our own resources **or** to face us with our own lack of ability?
- v.31, 32 What options are you faced with if an enemy is about to attack you? What hope do you have of victory being outnumbered 2 to 1?
- v.28-32 Is the point of these two stories that we rely upon self and our capabilities **or that** we are actually totally dependent upon the Lord?
- v.33 The NIV translates this as "...any of you who does not give up **everything** he has cannot be my disciple." A very literal translation is as follows: "everyone of you who does not say 'farewell' to all the resources **from** himself cannot be my disciple." What is it that we truly possess which might be contributed toward being a disciple (see v.26, 2 Cor.3:5, Phil.3:4-8)?
- v.34, 35 Can salt become **unsalty**? Explain. If salt is not salty, is it actually salt? What does this tell us about what a true disciple is?

From this chapter summarize the riture of a genuine disciple.

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

JOHN I (Session 9)

v.1-5 What parallels exist between these verses and Genesis 1?

v.1 What is a word? Who is the Word (see v.14)? Why is this an appropriate title for the Lord Jesus?

v.4 What is life? How is the Lord Jesus the Light of men?

v.5 How is light extinguished(see Jn.12:35)?

v.6 What does it mean to be sent from God? What is the difference between being sent from God and sent from men (see Jn.1:19, 24)?

v.7,8 What does it mean to bear witness of the light (see Jn.5:33-35)?

v.10, 11 Why did the world not know Him (see I Cor.1:21)? Why did His own not receive Him (see Jn.3:19, 20, 5:44-47, 7:7, 13, 17, 8:37, 38, 45-47, 12:37-43, 15:21-25)?

v.12, 13 Why did others receive Him (see Mt.11:25-29)? What does it mean to receive Him? Is everyone a child of God? What things do not make one a child of God?

v.14 The Word dwelt (literally, "tabernacled") among us. What **illustrations** of the Lord Jesus are found in the tabernacle (see OT Key Passages, Sessions 20-24)? Describe grace and truth as seen in the Lord Jesus.

v.16 What does everyone who **has** received the Lord Jesus possess (see Col.2:9, 10)? What is grace and **truth**? How is it given to believers?

v.17 What was given through Moses? What is the essence of law? How is it contrasted with the Lord?

v.18 How can we know God? What is the relationship of the Father and Son here?

v.23 Why did the religious leaders need to make the Lord's way straight (see Jer.2:13, 5:30, 31, 8:8, 9, 23:16, 26-28, 36)?

v.26, 27 Why did they not know Him?

v.29 What does this tell us about the Lord Jesus (see Lev.16:15, 20-22, I Cor.5:7)?

v.38 What question does the Lord Jesus ask those following Him?

v.51 What is the illustration being referred to here (see Gen.28:12)? What does this tell us about the Lord Jesus?

JOHN 3 (Session 10)

v.2 Why did Nicodemus come to Jesus by night? What did he think that he already possessed?

v.3 Jesus' answer told Nicodemus what?

v.4 Nicodemus' answer showed that he had what?

v.5 Since he was the teacher of Israel, what should he have understood (see Ezk.36:25-27)? What is water a symbol of (see Eph.5:26)? What role does the Word of God have in the **new birth** (see I Pet.1:23-25, Jas.1:18, Rom.10:14-17)? What role does the Spirit of God have in the new birth (see Jn.3:5, 7, 6:63, Tit.3:5)?

v.6 Of what value is the flesh (see Jn.6:63, Rom.7:18, 8:6-8)? What is the flesh (see Rom.8:5-9, 12, 13, I Cor.3:3, Gal.5:19-21, Col.3:5, I Pet.2:11)?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

JOHN 3

- v.8 What is this telling us about the work of the Holy Spirit?
- v.10 Why did he not understand what the Lord Jesus was saying (see Jn.8:43, 47)?
- v.11 What is implied in this statement? How can one be a teacher of the Scriptures and not know God and never have seen Him?
- v.14, 15 What are the parallels between the cross of the Lord Jesus and the serpent in the wilderness (see Num.21:4-9 and OT Key Passages, Session 25)?
- v.16 How **has** God expressed His love for the world? Are **further** demonstrations **necessary** to show His love for mankind (see **Rom.8:32**)? Define perish. What is eternal life (see Jn.17:3)? Who pays for a gift, the giver or the receiver? What is the only appropriate response to **being** presented with a gift (see Jn.1:12)?
- v.17, 18 What is the relationship between these verses and John 5:22, 27-29?
- v.19-21 How do men demonstrate their love of the darkness? What does light do? How does this relate to **Mt.5:14**?
- v.27 Why were people going to the Lord Jesus for baptism? What is the source of any **testimony** or influence for God?
- v.29 Why did John rejoice? **Does** this describe you?
- v.30 What is the spiritual principle expressed here?
- v.32 What **kind** of followers were these(see **Jn.3:26**)?
- v.33, 34 In what sense do we set our seal that God is true by receiving His witness? Is it possible to receive some of the Holy Spirit but not all of Him? Explain.
- v.36 "...he that believeth not the Son..." (KJV), "...**he** who does not obey the Son..." (NASB), "...he who rejects the Son..." (NIV). What is the relationship between believe in **the** first part of this verse and disobedience/ rejection in the second part (see Heb.3:18, 19)? **What** is wrath (see Rom.1:18, 2 Thess.1:7-9, Rev.14:10, 11)?

JOHN 13 (Session 11)

- v.1 What occurred at Passover (see Exodus 12, OT Key Passages, Session 15)? What **kind** of love does the Lord Jesus have for His own?
- v.2 How does this relate to **Eph.4:27**? Describe **Judas**(see **Mk.3:13-16, 19, Mt.10:1-4, Jn.6:70, 71, 12:4-6, 13:10, 11, 27, 30, Mt.26:14-16, 25, 47-50, 27:3-5, Acts 1:16-20, Ps.109:1-20, Ps.41:5-9, Lk.16:13**).
- v.3-5, 12 How does this event illustrate **Phil.2:5-11**?
- v.6-11 Why did Peter object to this? What does the dirtying of the feet picture? Is it essential for the Lord Jesus to wash His disciples' feet? What does the "bath" picture; the "foot washing"? What does it mean to have no part with Christ?
- v.12-17 What was the significance of Jesus **washing** their feet as an example? What are we therefore to do? Is a literal washing of others' feet the point of this example (see I **Tim.5:10**)? Explain.
- v.16, 20 How does the Lord Jesus send us (see Jn.17:18, 20:21)? What does it mean to be sent? What connection **exists** between the Christian, the world, and God?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

JOHN 13

v.31, 32 How was the Father glorified? How did the Father glorify the Son?

v.34, 35 How is this a new commandment? How did the Lord Jesus love us (see v.1)? A disciple, by definition, is a learner. What are we to be learning according to these verses? What will be our testimony in the world?

v.36-38 What did Peter think about **himself**? What did he think about the Word of God spoken by the Lord Jesus (see Mt.26:31-35)? What two options are always before us (see Prov.3:5, 6, 2 Cor.5:7)?

JOHN 14 (Session 12)

v.1, 2 What is the house of God(see I Tim.3:15, Gal.6:10, Eph.2:21, 22, 2 Cor. 6:16-18, I Pet.2:5, 4:17)? The word "mansion / dwelling place / abode" is used only twice in the NT, here and in v.23. What is this place that is being prepared? Is it a Literal building **or** is it the believer himself? How is it that this happens?

v.3 In what sense was the Lord Jesus going to "come" to them (see v.16-18)? "...that where I am, you may be also." Where is the Lord Jesus (see v.10, 11, 20)? Does the phrase "where I am" include more than the idea of a location merely? Does it also connote being like Him? Explain.

v.4 - 6 Who or what is the way? What is the difference between having the truth and being the truth? Which is true of the Lord Jesus? Is there any other way to forgiveness and acceptance with the Father? Explain.

v.7-10 What does this tell us about the Lord Jesus? What connection is there between what the Lord Jesus spoke and the Father doing His works?

v.10-12 What works did the Lord Jesus do (see Lk.7:22)? In what sense will believers do greater works; greater in quality or in quantity? What is the great work that the Lord Jesus was anointed for (see Isa.61:1, 2, Lk.4:17-21)? What is the great work that the church is anointed to **perform** (see Jn.15:26, 27, 16:7, 8, 20:21-23, Acts 1:8, Lk.24:44-49, Mt.28:18-20)?

v.13, 14 Does repeating the words "in Jesus' name" mean that **we** are praying in His name? To truly request something in another's name means that we are doing so on his behalf We are presenting the petition that he himself would if he were present to do so. We are acting as an ambassador of sorts. We have authority only to represent the interests of the one who has commissioned us. What does this tell us about the nature of true prayer? What significance does this give to praying according to the will of God (see I Jn.5:14, Mt.6:9, 10)? On what basis will prayer be answered?

v.15-20 To whom will the Father give the Holy Spirit? In what sense does the believer behold and know the Holy Spirit? How is it that the believer will be able to behold the Lord Jesus? What does this tell us about the ministry of the Holy Spirit(see Jn.16:13-15)? What is the most essential knowledge that the Holy Spirit brings to us (see v.20)?

v.21-24 How is love defined here? On what basis will the Lord Jesus reveal Himself to **an** individual? Is the love of the Father for the Christian conditional? Explain.

v.25-27 What is one of the primary works that the Holy Spirit will perform? What is peace? What is its source?

v.28, 29 Will the coming of the Lord Jesus to His own be recognizable by them? In what sense was / is the Father greater than the Son (see Jn.17:5, Mt.24:36, I Cor.15:24-28)? In what sense is the Father not greater than the Son (see Jn.1:1, 10:30, Col.2:9, Rev.5:11-14)?

v.30, 31 Who is the ruler of the world (see Jn.12:31, 16:11, 2 Cor.4:4, Eph.2:2, 6:12, I Jn.4:4, 5:19)? What does it mean "he has nothing in Me"? How was the love of the Lord Jesus for His Father shown?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

JOHN 15 (Session 13)

v.1 See Isa.5:1-7. How is the Lord Jesus the true Vine?

v.2-6 How is it that a branch bears **fruit**? When does it bear fruit? What **must** take place before it **does**? What is fruit (see **Eph.5:9**, **Gal.5:22, 23**, 2 Pet.1:5-8)? Is **every branch equally fruitful** (see **Mt.13:23**)?

v.2 What happens if a branch bears no **fruit**? What does it mean to be pruned / cleansed?

v.5 How dependent are we upon the Lord Jesus? What is it that cannot be done apart from the Lord Jesus?

v.6 Is the one being described here actually saved? What is the **difference between** being taken away (v.2) and being thrown away (v.6)? Do both end up in the fire? Who is gathering them (see **Mt.13:40-42**)?

v.7 What conditions are mentioned here and in John 14:14? What is the relationship **between** them?

v.8 What is the evidence **of** being a genuine disciple? What glorifies God?

v.9 How has the Father loved the Son? Did the love of God prevent sorrow, **affliction**, or **evil** actions of others from coming upon the Lord Jesus? What type of circumstances **can** we **expect** during our **own** lives? **Are** our circumstances a gauge of God's love or favor? Explain.

v.10, 11 How do we abide in the Father's love? What is the source of joy?

v.12 How is this possible (see **I Jn.4:7-21**)?

v.13-17 **Who** are the **friends**? What privilege do **friends** have that others do not?

v.18-25 Why does the world hate Christians? Why did the world hate the Lord Jesus (see **Jn.7:7**, **8:44**)?

v.15, 20 Are believers still slaves? Explain

v.26, 27 What will the Holy Spirit do when He comes? How will He do this?

JOHN 16 (Session 14)

v.1 How is it that the Lord's **Word** can keep us **from** stumbling (see Ps. 119:9, 11, 105, 165)? What is stumbling?

v.1-4 What does this tell you about the religious status quo? What type of people will be the persecutors of believers (see Acts 26:9-11, Phil.3:4-6)? Why do they do this (see **Jn.7:7**, **8:36-47**, **I Jn.3:12, 13**)?

v.7, 8 Why is it an advantage for the Holy Spirit to come? To whom was the Holy Spirit to come? What would be the means of His conviction of the world?

v.8-11 Our conscience convicts us of what? The Holy Spirit convicts or convinces us of things that our conscience never could. What is the difference between conviction of sins (plural) and conviction of sin (singular)? What is the **root** of all sin? Our conscience convicts us of unrighteousness. What does the Holy Spirit convicts us **of**? Is the Holy Spirit's conviction regarding judgment to come **or of judgment** which has already been accomplished? **Explain**. Of what was Paul speaking in Acts 24:24, 25? In the preaching of the gospel, we should speak about the same things that the Holy Spirit is speaking to men about.

v.12-16 How is truth imparted to the believer? What is the primary work that the Holy Spirit does? How is it that the believer will see the Lord Jesus?

v.17-19 Whom were the disciples inquiring of to understand the Lord's Word? Did they receive **any** satisfactory answer? Why?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

JOHN 16

v 20-22 When was He speaking of? Why did each respond as they did (see Rev.11:8-10)? What is a source of constant joy to us? Do you rejoice always? Explain

v 23-24 What is another source of joy? What does it mean to ask in the Father's name (see Jn.14:13, 14, Session 12)?

v.25-27 What does this tell us about the Father's relationship with the believer? Is His love (here it is the Gk. word *phileo*) spoken of as conditional in these verses? Explain.

v.28-32 Were the disciples humble or congratulating themselves here? Explain

v.33 What effect is the Word of God to have (see Ps.119:165)? What is the difference between "in Christ" and "in the world"? What does it mean that the Lord Jesus has overcome the world?

JOHN 17 (Session 15)

v.1 What motivated the Lord Jesus? How was it that the Father was to be glorified?

v.2, 6, 9, 24 How are believers described in these verses? What are the implications of this?

v.2 What is the specific authority mentioned here?

v.3 What is eternal life? What type of knowledge is this?

v.4 What does this tell us about glorifying God?

v.5 Why did the Lord Jesus pray for what was rightfully His?

v.6-8 How did these know who the Lord Jesus is?

v 9-18 In what ways is the word "world" used in these verses?

v 9, 10 In what sense are we given to the Lord Jesus and yet are the Father's? Does v.10 extend beyond believers to include other things as well? Explain What is true of all His own?

v.11 What does it mean to be kept in His name? In what sense are believers "one" even as "We"?

v.12 What name was given to the Son (see Mt.1:20-23)? How did the Lord Jesus guard them?

v.13 What was the joy of the Lord (see Heb.1:9, Ps.40:6-8, Heb.2:11, 12, 12:2, Mt.11:20-27)? What is to be the purpose of the Word the Lord Jesus has spoken according to this verse?

v.14-16 What does it mean to not be of the world (see Jn.8:23, 7:7, Rm.12.2, Phi1.3:19, 20, Col1.3:1-5, I Jn.4:5, 6, Col 2.20-23)? Why does the world hate the believers?

v 17-19 What does it mean to be sanctified? How was the Lord Jesus sent into this world (see Jn 10 36. Phil 2 5-8, Heb 10 5-7, Jn 6 38)?

v 20 Why was it called "their" word?

v 21-23 What is unity (see Eph.4:3, 4)? What demonstrates unity to the world? Has the Lord Jesus' prayer been answered? Is there unity in His church which He has built for Himself? Define glory (see Ex 33:18, 19). How has the Father loved the Son?

v 24-26 What is the love of God connected with? What is the knowledge of God based upon?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

ACTS 2 (Session 16)

v.2, 4, 6, 11 What parallels can be seen between these verses and **Isa.59:19-21**?

v.4, 6, 11 What is the evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit (**see Acts 4:8-12, 31, 9:17-20, 13:9-10, 49, 52 - 14:1, 6:5-7, 10, 7:55, 56, Mt.10:19, 20, Lk.1:15, 41, 42, 67, Eph.5:18, Ex.35:30-35, Deut.34:9, 1 Sam.10:6, 10, 2 Sam.23:2, 2 Chron.20:14, 24:20**)?

v.4-11 **What** is speaking in tongues? What is the purpose of speaking in tongues (**see I Cor.14:21, 22**)?

v.16-22 How does the passage in Joel relate to what had just happened? **In** what ways is it different?

v.23 Who was responsible for the death of Christ? Explain

v.24, 27 Why was it not possible for the Lord Jesus to be held in the power of death?

v.24-36 What specific things resulted due to **the** Lord Jesus being raised **from** the dead?

v.38, 39 How are men saved; by repenting **or** by the Lord **calling men** to Himself? Explain. On what basis will men receive the Holy Spirit? Is **speaking** in tongues the evidence of having received the **Holy** Spirit?

v.37-40 Was this all that Peter had said to them? Does v.38 contain the entire gospel message? Explain.

v.41 What did they respond to? Did these 3,000 people speak in tongues? Did they receive the promise of the Holy Spirit according to v.38, 39?

v.42 What did they immediately begin doing upon being saved? How does this demonstrate a true evidence of having received the promise **of the** Spirit? How do these things show what ought to characterize the church?

v.43-47 Who performed signs and wonders, the apostles or the 3,000 (**see Heb.2:3, 4**)? What does it **mean** that they had all things in common (**see Acts 4:32-35**)? How was **their oneness** of **mind** expressed? Was the focus of the church upward, outward, or inward? Explain.

ACTS 7 (Session 17)

See Acts 6:11-15. What specific accusations were brought against Stephen?

v.1-7 How does his answer **refute** the charge that he was **speaking** against "this holy place"? Where is a "holy place" here on earth (**see Isa.57:15, 66:1, 2**)?

v.8-13 How does the life of Joseph parallel that of the Lord Jesus and that of the Jewish leaders?

v.14-16 What comment does this make about "**this** holy place"?

v.17-37 **What** comments are made here about Moses as a man? How does this relate to the charge of "**speaking** blasphemous words against Moses"? List specific **parallels between** the Lord Jesus and Moses. Why was the burning bush a "holy place"? Was the God of glory present and manifesting **Himself in** the temple in Jerusalem at this time (**see Ezk.10:3, 4, 18, 19, 11:22, 23**)?

v.35 How did this description relate to the condition of the Pharisees (**see Lk.19:14, Jn.19:15**)?

v.36-38 How do these verses relate to the charge of "altering the customs handed down to us by Moses"? What had Moses received and handed down to the people? What had the Pharisees **received** and handed down (**see Mk.7:3-13**)?

v.39 How does this relate to the charge of "**speaking** against the law"? Who was actually doing this?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

ACTS 7

v.39-50 How did this in their history relate to their **concept** of "this holy place"? Whom / **what** were these people worshipping at the time of the Lord Jesus and Stephen (see **Mk.7:6-9**)?

v.44 What is a pattern? How does the "pattern" relate to the charge of "destroying this place"?

v.51-53 Who was actually against God, Moses, and the Law; Stephen or the **Pharisees**?

v.54-60 Idolaters do the works of their father (see **Jn.8:44**).

v.55, 56 What contrast is seen here and in Heb.10:127 Why was the Lord **Jesus** standing?

v.59, 60 What does this tell you about Stephen (see **Lk.23:46, 34**)?

ACTS 10 (Session 18)

v.1, 2 Describe Cornelius. Did all of his **commendable** deeds save him (see Acts 11:13, 14)?

v.3-8 Why **was** he instructed to **send** for Peter rather than hearing the **gospel** from the angel? **What** could Peter testify to **that** the angel could not?

v.9-16 Does this vision have anything to do with dietary restrictions **such** as are **found** in Leu.11? Explain.

v.17-22 Who engineered these events and encounters? Can we expect the Spirit of **God** to lead **and** guide us (see Jn.16:13, Rom.8:13-16)? Explain.

v.19 What was Peter **contemplating** when the Spirit illumined him? What is the parallel for us (see Ps.119:18)?

v.23, 28 What is the significance of these verses in the history of Christianity?

v.26 What kind of man was Peter at **this** point? Why did the Lord choose Peter to **come** to Cornelius rather than another?

v.35 Who is welcome in the Lord's presence?

v.36 How does the title "He is Lord of all" relate to v.35? What **kind** of peace was being preached (see Rom.5:1)?

v.37, 38 To what extent were the person and works of the Lord Jesus known throughout Palestine (see Acts 26:26)?

v.38-43 In every presentation of the gospel, 4 **elements** are present: the Problem, the Solution, the Response, and the Result. How are these 4 elements seen in Peter's message?

v.44-48 What is the relationship between v.43 and v.44? How was the truth of Acts 2:38, 39 evidenced here? What did this event **happening** in this manner demonstrate to all?

ROMANS 1 (Session 19)

v.1 Define slave I bondsman, apostle. set-apart.

v.1-3 What is the central message of the gospel from these verses?

v.4 What is the evidence of the reality of the gospel?

v.5 What is the goal of the gospel (see Rom.16:25, 26, I Tim.1:5)?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

ROMANS 1

- v.8-15 What is the compelling drive of Paul's life?
- v.16 In what **sense** is the gospel the power of God (**see** I Cor.1:17-19)? What is the gospel?
- v.17 In what sense is the word "righteousness" used in this verse? What is the basis of **increased** understanding / revelation of this righteousness? What are the interrelationships between the words "righteous", "**live**", and "faith"?
- v.18 What provokes God's wrath? **Who** merits it? What do people do with the truth?
- v.19 How do people know about God?
- v.20 How else do people know truth about **God**? What does it **mean** that they are **without excuse**?
- v.21 What has **man** done with the truth which he **possessed**? Is the issue here one of knowledge vs. ignorance? Does hell await only those who have heard the gospel and rejected it? Explain. **Define** speculation / imagination.
- v.22 What is a **fool** (**see** Lk.24:25, Gal.3:1, 3, Mt.7:26, Ps.14:1, 107:17, Prov.1:22, 14:9, 10:18, 12:15, 14:16, 15:5, 18:2, 28:26, 29:11)?
- v.18-23 Summarize what this section teaches us regarding the **sinfulness** of **man**; the **wrath** of God upon **sin**; the blameworthiness of **men**, **and** the possibility of being saved apart from hearing and **believing** the **gospel**.
- v.21-28 Outline the stages of departure from the Lord. What is the **first** step?
- v.25 What was the lie (**see** Gen.3)? What creature is served here in this verse?
- v.26, 27 Why do people commit wicked acts of immorality?
- v.28-32 Wicked acts proceed from where (**see** Mk.7:20-23)?
- v.32 What does this tell us about the **disposition** or inclination of **man**?

ROMANS 2 (Session 20)

- v.1-3 Is it ever possible to legitimately judge **others** without condemning ourselves (**see** Mt.7:1-5, I Cor.5:9-13)? Explain.
- v.4-11 What two categories of people are **noted here**? On what basis will **men** be judged (**see** Mt.12:36, 37, I Cor.4:5, 2 Cor.5:10, Ezk.7:8, 9, Rom.2:16, 2 Thess 2:10, 12)?
- v.7, 8 Is the external act an expression **of the orientation** of the heart (**see** Mt.7:15-23, 12:33-37, Mk.7:20-23)? Explain.
- v.9, 10 Why will judgment be to the Jew **first** (**see** Lk.12:47, 48, 1 Pet.4:17, 18)?
- v.12-16 On what basis will **men** be judged here? Will anyone be saved apart from repenting and believing the gospel? Explain. Whether under the Law (the Jew) or not under the Law (the Gentile), will anyone be justified before God on the basis of their performance/ works?
- v.17-24 What can we not rely upon in the judgment? What is God looking for (**see** Ps.51:6, Mt.12:7)?
- v.25 What gives value to the external act (**see** Isa.1:10-18, Ier.7.22, 23)?
- v.26, 27 How does this relate to I Sam.16:7?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

ROMANS 2

v.28, 29 What does circumcision picture (see Col.2:11-13)?

v.29 Jew means "praised one". What contrast is brought to light here?

ROMANS 3 (Session 21)

v.1,2 What advantage is it to have the Word of God?

v.3,4 What is true about man's words? What is true about God's Word? What is man saying about God when he does not believe His Word?

v.5-8 What is the basic premise expressed by this mind-set? If good results, does that excuse questionable OF wrong means by which it was attained? Does the "good" end justify the evil means? Explain.

v.9 How does this verse relate to Rom.2:1?

v 10-18 Summarize the condition of man. What is the fear of God (see Prov.8:13, Heb.12:21, Lk.12:5)?

v.19, 20 Why are the Gentiles accountable to God (see Rom.1:18-32)? Why is the Jew accountable to God? How does the Law close the mouth of the Jew?

v 21 What is the righteousness of God not dependent upon? What bears witness to it? Why is righteousness not based upon law?

v.22 Why does righteousness come by faith?

v.22, 23 Why is there no distinction? Why does the Law not assist in obtaining the righteousness of God?

v.24 What is a gift? What is grace (see 2 Cor.8:9, 9:8, Eph.2:8, 9, Rom.11:6)? Redemption is a price paid to purchase a possession Summarize on what basis a person is declared righteous before God.

v 25, 26 What is propitiation? What does it mean that the Lord Jesus is our mercy seat? How did this demonstrate God's righteousness? When was this demonstrated? Could God justify without being just? Explain

v 27-30 Why is boasting ruled out? Why are there not various means of justification?

v.31 In what sense is the Law established? In what sense is it nullified?

ROMANS 4 (Session 22)

v.1, 2 Summarize the thought here

v.3-5 What are the relationships between faith and works? What type of works are being referred to? Whom does God justify? What does this tell us about our works?

v.6-8 What was the occasion of David writing Ps.32:1-5. On what basis was he commending himself to God?

v.9 What is the blessing that is spoken of here?

v.9-11 What is the relationship between Abraham's faith and circumcision? What is the purpose of a sign?

v.12, 13 In what sense is Abraham the father of the circumcision? What was the promise based upon?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

ROMANS 4

v. 14-17 What is a promise dependent upon? What is complying with a law dependent upon? Why does law make faith void and nullify the promise? Why does the law bring about wrath? What is the relationship between faith and grace? What is the significance of mentioning "life from the dead and "calling into being that which does not exist" in this context?

v.18-22 What does the "deadness" of Abraham and Sarah illustrate in this chapter?

v.20, 21 What is the essence of faith?

v.23-25 What is the basis of our justification? What does the resurrection of the Lord Jesus demonstrate?

ROMANS 5:1-11 (Session 23)

v.1 What is the difference between peace with God and the peace of **God** (see **Phil.4:6, 7**)? What is the basis for each? Define peace (see **Jn.14:27, 16:33, Eph.2:14, 15, Col.1:20, 3:15**).

v.2 On what basis do we stand? What is grace? What is our hope? How does this relate to faith, grace, and to the Lord Jesus?

v.2, 3, 11 What 3 things do we exult / boast in?

v.3-5 How does this relate to the hope of the glory of God from v.2? What is the Lord's purpose for afflictions? What do we have in abundance in the midst of tribulation? Is love something other than God **Himself** (see **I Jn.4:7, 8, 12, 13, 16**)?

v.6 What 2 descriptions are given of us in this verse? What was the "right time" (see **Gal.4:4, Mk.1:15, Eph.1:10, Tit.1:2, 3**)?

v.7, 8 What is the contrast presented here? What is a sinner? What is **the** demonstration of God's love toward sinful man?

v.8, 9 What contrast is shown **here**? How does the blood of Christ result in justification? How will we be saved from wrath?

v.10 When can it be truly said that an enemy is reconciled with his antagonist? What does it mean to be saved by His **life**?

v.11 What does it mean to exult / boast in God?

ROMANS 5:12 - 6:11 (Session 24)

ROMANS 5

v.12 What is sin? What is the origin of sin? What is death? Why did death spread to all men; from Adam's one act **or** due to individual acts of sin? Explain.

v.13 What is the relationship **between** law and sin? What does it mean to "impute"?

v.14 Why did death reign? Why is the phrase regarding Adam's offense included? In what specific ways is **Adam** a type or illustration of Christ?

v.14-21 Outline the contrasting parallels:

In Adam	or	In Christ
	etc.	

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

ROMANS 5:12 - 6:11

ROMANS 6

v.1 What is the logic of this suggestion? What is the faulty premise?

v.2 In what respect have we died to sin (see Rom. 6:11, 12)?

v.3-4 What type of baptism is being spoken of here (see I Cor.1:13-17, 10:1,2, 12:13, Gal.3:27)? What is done with dead and buried things? What does "the glory of the Father" refer to here (see Eph.1:19-23, 2 Cor.13:4)? What was the purpose of now being raised up out of death?

v.4, 5 What has died? What is made alive (see Gal.2:20)?

v.6 What is meant by "our old man" (see Rom.5:12-19)? Is the "body of sin" referring to our individual bodies or to our corporate connection to Adam as the head of sinful humanity? Explain. In what sense is the body of sin "destroyed / done away with / made powerless / abolished"?

v.6-11 How permanent is this deliverance from sin and death? Explain. Why will Christ never die again? Was death ever master over Him? What kind of life do we now live?

ROMANS 6:12 - 23 (Session 25)

v.12 Why should we not do this?

v.13 How are our bodily members described here? Who is it that wields a weapon? How do I Sam.21:8, 9 and Lev. 14:14, 17 illustrate this?

v.14 How does being under law lead to sin being master over you? What severs the mastery of sin over us?

v.15 What is the logic of this verse? What is its faulty premise?

v.16-18 What is the condition of every man? What is a slave? Whom are you a slave to? What type of freedom does the Christian have? What role does the truth play in this?

v.19-22 Describe why slavery to God is true freedom (see Jn.8:34). What is death? What is eternal life?

v.23 What is the difference between a wage and a gift? Outline a gospel message from this verse. If we are slaves to God, why is eternal life not a reward for our service?

ROMANS 7 (Session 26)

v.1-6 What is the main point of this section? Can we both be joined to Christ and under the law at the same time? Explain.

v.4 Did anyone bear fruit for God while under the law? What relationship does the believer now have with the law?

v.5 "While we were in the flesh" is a synonym for what? What was the result of the activity of the law?

v.6 What does "released / delivered" mean? What were we bound to? How do we serve God? Explain.

v.7 What is the logic behind this question? What is its faulty premise?

v.7-11 Did Paul covet before "the commandment came"? In what sense is he meaning that the commandment came: when he first heard of it or when it came to him in conviction? Explain. What then resulted when it did come? In what sense was Paul "alive" before the commandment came (see Phil.3:4-6)?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

ROMANS 7

v.8-11 "**Thou** shalt not covet" is the last of the **10 Commandments**. It **deals** with a different **realm** than the other commandments. What general realm is **addressed** by the **9** Commandments **in contrast** to this **last one**?

v.12-14 What was the problem, the law or **man**? **Explain**.

Paul describes himself as dead (v.9, 10, 11, 13, 24), of **flesh** (v.14, 18, 25), in bondage to sin (v.14, 23, 24), **indwelt by sin** (v.17, 18, 20), **having no good** (v.18), **powerless** (v.15, 18, 19, 23), **evil** (v.19, 21), a prisoner of sin (v.23), wretched (v.24), and having only his **mind** to **combat** sin (v.22, 23, 25).

Does this describe a **justified** person / a true believer **or** is he describing the state of an unbeliever? **Explain**.

ROMANS 8:1-17 (Session 27)

v.1 **Why** is this so? What type of condemnation is being referred to?

v.2 What is **freedom** (see 2 Cor.3:17, 18)? Who alone can **deliver** us?

v.3 **Why** was the **Law** ineffective? What did God do that the **Law** never could (see Rom.7:10)?

v.4 What was the requirement of the Law? How is this fulfilled in us?

v.4-11 What **2** categories of people are seen here?

v.5 **What** naturally follows if one is "according to the **flesh**"; "according to the Spirit"?

v.6 What is the contrast between the mind-set of the flesh and that of the Spirit? **Define death**; life.

v.7, 8 What are unbelievers unable to do? Are the truths of the Bible universal spiritual principles that **will** "work" if "applied" whether one is a Christian or not? **Explain**.

v.9-11 What **results** from being "in the Spirit"? What **type** of life is being spoken of in v.11?

v.12-14 Who are alive? Who are the sons of God? What does the Spirit of God lead us to do? Is this optional? **Explain**.

v.15 What type of slavery leads to fear?

v.15, 16 What is the instinctive cry of the heart from a true son of God? What is the source of this cry? What witness does this provide?

v.17 What follows from the fact of being a child? Who is the pattern / **example** of being a son of God? What is true of every son of God?

ROMANS 8:18-39 (Session 28)

v.18 What will be the experience of all of God's people in this **life** (see 2 Cor.4:16-18)?

v.19-25 Why does the creation **eagerly** await the final day? Why do **we**?

v.21 **What** are the contrasts noted here? How does this describe true **freedom**?

v.23 Have our bodies as yet been redeemed? What aspect of redemption do believers **presently** partake of (see Rom.3:24, Eph.1:7, Col.1:14)?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

ROMANS 8:18-39

v.24, 25 What is our hope (see Rom.5:2, Col.1:27, I Jn.3:2, 3, Rev.21:3, 4)? Do Christians persevere? Explain.

v.26-27 Why do we not know how to pray as we should? How dependent upon God are we? Explain What is prayer?

v.28-30 What is the good toward which all things are working? What is God's purpose? For what have believers been predestined? What is predestination?

v.30 What is an absolute certainty from this verse? How does this relate to Phil.1:6?

v.31 What does it mean that God is for us? How does this relate to Josh.5:13, 14?

v.32 What is the logic behind this verse?

v.33 Satan is the adversary, the accuser of the brethren as in Rev 12:9, 10 and Job 1. What is the answer to this question?

v.33, 34 "God justifies, who condemns?" is the question. What does it mean to justify? How does this answer this question?

v.34, 35 "Christ intercedes, who separates us from His love?" is the question

v.35-39 Are all of these things compatible with the love of Christ? Will God in His love shelter His people from these things? Explain.

v.39 What is the conclusion? Why is this so?

ROMANS 9 (Session 29)

v.1-5 What concerned Paul? What are your concerns? What was he willing to do that people might come to know the Lord Jesus (see Ex.32:31, 32)? To what degree does this describe your life?

v.6 What is meant by "Israel" in this verse?

v.7-13 Who are the children of God? Upon what is this based?

v.13, 14 Is this unjust? Is it unfair? What is the difference between the two?

v.15-18 What is God's mercy dependent upon? What is it not dependent upon? Is the Lord obligated to show mercy to all? Explain.

v.19 What is the error of this way of thinking?

v.20-23 What is the reply? Who prepared the vessels for glory? Who prepared them for destruction?

v.24-29 Who then shall be saved? What parallels exist between Israel and "the church" today?

v.30-33 How is righteousness obtained? Who is the Stumbling Stone (see Mt.21:42, I Pet.2:4-8)? What is the essence of the offense (see Gal.5:11, 6:12, 14)?

ROMANS 10 (Session 30)

v.1 Describe Paul from this verse (see Rom.9:2, 3). Describe yourself from this verse.

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

ROMANS 10

v.2, 3 If you seek to establish your own righteousness, what are you **stumbling** over (see Rom.9:30-33)? Why are faith in Christ and works of law mutually exclusive and antagonistic principles? How does a person seek to establish his own righteousness? How does the record of Cain and Abel illustrate this? What is the opposite of subjecting oneself?

v.4 In what sense is Christ the end of the law for righteousness?

v.5 What expectation of life is there **from** the law (see Gal.3:10-12)?

v.6-8 What is the point of this section? Why do we not have to "**ascend**" or "descend" in order to obtain righteousness?

v.9-11 What is our deliverance dependent upon? How does it become effective? Is every person saved?

v.12, 13 Why is God no respecter of persons **!** partial (see Rom.3:9)? What does it mean to call upon the name of the Lord?

v.14, 15 What is a preacher (see Eph.6:15, Isa.52:6-10, 58:1, 2 Tim.4:2, 5, Mt.3:1, 2, 4:17)? What is the gospel?

v.16-21 What precedes faith? What or whom is faith placed in? Is faith a power used to obtain things **or** is it trust **in** the revealed Word of God contained in the Bible? Explain. What does God require in response to hearing His Word (see Heb.3:7 - 4:2)? What **was** the real difference between Jew and Gentile?

ROMANS 11 (Session 31)

v.1-5 What principle does this illustrate? Who are the true people of God (see Heb.3:12-19, Rev.3:1-5)?

v.6-10 How are **grace** and works mutually exclusive principles? What are the parallels between these verses and Isa.6:8-13? Why were these people hardened?

v.11-16 Why were the Gentiles offered salvation? What effect was this to have upon the Jews?

v.17-18 What is the rich root of the olive tree? What **supports** the branches? Upon what are believers dependent?

v.19-24 Why were some broken off? Why were others included? What is the proper orientation of the heart in light of this?

v.25-32 When will Israel's salvation take place (see Zech.12:10 - 13:1, Rev.1:7)? Are the Jews enemies or beloved (see I Thess.2:14-16)? Explain.

v.33-36 Who can know the mind of the Lord (see I Cor.2:16)? Explain. Can we persuade God about a good idea we have had? Is God obligated to do anything for us in response to something we've done? Explain.

v.36 What is the source, continuance, and goal of all? What then can we contribute to Him and His purposes?

ROMANS 12 (Session 32)

v.1 Explain why this verse is begun with the word "therefore"

v.1, 2 How do Dan.3:28 and Lev.1:3-9 illustrate these verses? What is worship (see Mt.4:10, Deut.6:13-15, Jn.4:23, 24, Phil.3:3, Rev.4:8-11, Josh.5:14, I Chron.16:29, Ps.95:6, 96:7-9, 99:5)? How does conformity to this age take place? Is this **present** age different from other ages? Explain.

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

ROMANS 12

v.1, 2 How is the mind of the believer transformed? What renews the mind? What does it mean to "prove what the will of God is"? Summarize the teaching of these two verses.

v.3 What does a renewed mind think about **self**? How do we know if we have sound judgment?

v.3-8 What has God given each believer? What is the relationship of the members of the body to the Head; to each **other**?

v.9 Define hypocrisy(see **Mk.7:6, 7, Mt.23:13-15, 23-33, Acts 5:1-11**). What does it mean to abhor evil (see **Prov.8:13, Ps.119:127, 128**)?

v.10, 11 How does v.11 relate to v.10? What is the opposite of giving preference to one another?

v.12-15 What type of people are Christians to be? Why is this to be so?

v.16 What is the opposite of associating with the lowly?

v.17 How does Mt.7:12 and **Mt.18:28-30** relate to this verse? Explain.

v.18 Is it possible to be at peace with **all** men and with God at the **same** time? Explain

v.19-21 Why are we not to seek our own revenge? What rather should we do?

ROMANS 13, 14 (Session 33)

ROMANS 13

v.1-7 What is to be our relationship to government? Why? What is the purpose of government? Should the Christian always do **everything** that the **government** says to do (see Acts 4:15-20, 5:17-29, **40-42**)? **Explain.** How is good and evil to be defined; by the standards of the government **or** by the standard of the Bible? Is the government due our taxes? **Explain.**

v.8-10 What is the only debt we ought to owe? How is true love the fulfillment of the Law?

v.11-14 What are believers to be doing until the coming of the Lord? What is the **difference** between making provision for the flesh and putting on the Lord Jesus?

ROMANS 14

v.1, 3, 13, 19-21 What is the basic message of this chapter?

v.1, 4, 10-12 Who will judge each?

v.2, 5, 6, 15, 17, 20 What type of issues are at stake or under consideration here? What does the kingdom of God consist in? What does it not consist in?

v.6-9 What is our focus to be? What is it not to be?

v.22, 23 On non-regulated things (i.e. those not specifically addressed in the Word of God), what is to govern us?

Summarize the principles to abide by when **addressing** issues such as these among the brethren

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

ROMANS 15, 16 (Session 34)

ROMANS 15

v.1-3 What is to motivate us? If the Lord Jesus was seeking to please Himself, what would He not have done?

v.4 What does this tell us about the OT? What type of instruction is he **talking** about (see 2 **Tim.3:16, 17, I Cor.10:6-11**)? What does the word "whatever" mean here (see **Ps.119:89, 160, Mt.5:17-19, 24:35**)?

v.4, 5 What is the source of perseverance and encouragement?

v.5, 6 How is oneness of mind described here?

v.7-13 In this context what does it mean to "accept" one another? Was it a mystery in **the** OT that Gentiles would also become the people of **God** (see Acts 15:14-18)? Explain. How does this relate to Eph.3:1-12?

v.13 What is hope? What is its source? What accompanies belief?

v.14 Who is qualified to carry on ministry in the church?

v.16 How is priestly work described here?

v.17-21 What was Paul's ambition?

v.25 What characterized his life? What characterizes your own?

v.27 What principle is shown here (see Gal.6:6, I Cor.9:6-14, I Tim.5:17, 18)?

v.29 Why did Paul have this confidence?

v.30-33 What things are we to be praying about?

ROMANS 16

v.1, 2 How is Phoebe described?

v.3-5 What is true of **Prisca** and Aquilla? Where was the church meeting (see I Cor.16:19, Co1.4:15, Philemon 2)?

v.6, 7, 9, 10, 12 How are saints described in these verses?

v.17-20 What is characteristic of **all** saints? What causes division within the church? How are people led astray?

v.25, 26 What establishes us? What is "obedience of faith" (see **Rom.1:3-6**)?

I CORINTHIANS 11 (Session 35)

v.1 What are we to imitate?

v.2 In what sense did they remember Paul? What is the connection between the traditions and v.1? What does 2 **Thess.2:15** tell us about these traditions? Are these the same as those condemned by the Lord Jesus in **Mk.7:5-13**? What is the difference?

v.3 What is the basic theme addressed in this verse?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

I CORINTHIANS 11

- v.4 **Does I Tim.2:8** relate to the prayer spoken of here? Explain.
- v.4, 5 Is the word "head" **used** in the **same** sense in each **occurrence** in these verses? Explain.
- v.5, 6, 15 Is it **disgraceful** for a woman to have her hair **cut off**? What should she then do according to these verses?
- v.7 What does the **man** represent? the woman (**see Eph.5:23**)?
- v.7-10 What is the basic role / purpose of the woman **from** creation (**see Gen.2:18**)?
- v.7, 10, 15 Why should the woman have her head covered (**see Eph.3:10, I Pet.1:12, I Tim.3:16**)?
- v.13 **What** is the answer to **this** question?
- v.15 Is this covering the **same** as that of v.5, 6? Explain.
- v.16 What does this tell us about the practice of the church at large?
- v.17 How does this relate to v.2?
- v.18-22 What characterized the coming together of the church in **Corinth**?
- v.23-26 What is it that is to take place at this meeting (**see Lk.22:15-38, Mt.26:26-30**)? List specific things. What has the church **been** commanded to do (**see v.24; 25**)? How does the bread **and** the cup present a parable of what Christianity is and ought to **be**? Is there any **proscribed formula** or ritual **for** how this gathering is to be conducted?
- v.27-32 What is an unworthy manner? How does **Lev.7:20, 21** relate to **examining** and judging ourselves?
- v.33, 34 What should also characterize our associations with the saints?

I CORINTHIANS 15 (Session 36)

- v.1-4 **What** is the essence of the gospel? Why is it good news? What saves us? **Explain**. How can one believe in vain?
- v.5-8, 11 What is the point of this section? What message was preached?
- v.9-11 What does Paul **think** about himself, What does v.10 tell us about the relationship between grace and works? What is the only way that a person **can** perform a good work which meets with God's approval?
- v.12 What was being preached by their proclamation?
- v.12-19 Does it **matter** if the resurrection is a truth? Explain. Do the Scriptures teach the resurrection of all men (see **Isa.26:19, Ezk.37:12-14, Dan.12:2, Lk.20:35-38, Jn.5:28, 29, Rev.20:4, 5**)?
- v.20-28 What is the **significance** of **firstfruits** (**see v.23 and Lev.23:9-14**)? On what basis will **men** die or be made alive? What authority and rule will be abolished (**see Eph.1:21, 6:12**)? In what sense is the Son subject to the Father?
- v.29 The word "**for**" can mean "in the place of". Is this baptism doing something to influence the spiritual condition or destiny of those who have already died **or** is it describing those who continue to join the ranks of Christians **because** the resurrection is true? Explain.

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

I CORINTHIANS 15

v.30-34 Of what significance is the resurrection with respect to preaching / teaching? What kind of bad company and **sinning** is primarily in view here?

v.35-44 What type of resurrection body shall there be for believers (**see Phil.3:20, 21**)? Will all **believers** be identical in heaven? Explain.

v.39 **Does** this verse have **anything** to do with evolution? Explain.

v.45 In **what** sense is the Lord Jesus the last Adam? In what sense is the Lord Jesus a **life-giving** spirit?

v.47 In what sense is the Lord Jesus the second man?

v.48, 49 What is it like to be as Adam? as Christ?

v.50 If flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, then who can?

v.51 What does "sleep" mean? Who is "we"? What change will take place?

v.52-55 When will this happen? What constitutes victory over death?

v.56 Why is the law the power of **sin**?

v.57 What victory is referred to here? Wherein is victory found?

v.58 What is "the work of the Lord"? What is "toil in the Lord"?

2 CORINTHIANS 2, 3 (Session 37)

2 CORINTHIANS 2

v.14-16 What is being illustrated here? What is the source of any **fragrance**? What is the answer to Paul's question?

v.17 What does it mean "to peddle" (**NASB, NIV**) something (this is the meaning of the **KJV** "corrupting")? What does it mean to "speak in Christ in the sight of God"?

2 CORINTHIANS 3

v.1-3 Who was Paul's letter? How did they serve as such? How did this letter become written? What is being written there?

v.4-6 What is our confidence? What is the source? What do we have to contribute? Explain. What is the "letter" and why does it **kill**?

v.7 What is the ministry of death?

v.7-11 What are the specific contrasts presented here?

v.10 What does this **tell** us about the law?

v.11, 12 What is the hope that is referred to?

v.13-16 What is not **seen** while the veil lies over their heart (**see 2 Cor.4:4-6**)? What is the veil? What happens to it in Christ?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

2 CORINTHIANS 2, 3

2 CORINTHIANS 3

v.17, 18 What does this tell us about the Holy Spirit? What is liberty? What does the Spirit **allow** us to see? What results from seeing the Lord **Jesus**? How does this happen?

2 CORINTHIANS 5 (Session 38)

v.1-4 What is this tent / house? Who dwells therein? What is our **dwelling** from heaven?

v.5 What is the Spirit a pledge of?

v.6-8 Why are we of good courage? When are we not? Define faith; sight.

v.9, 10 What is the ambition of the Christian? What pleases God? **Why** do we have this ambition? What is this judgment (see I Cor.3:10-17)? Upon what bases will we be judged (see **Ezk.7:3**, **Mt.12:36**, **I Cor.4:3-5**, **Hos.7:2**)?

v.11 What motivates believers? What is the fear of the Lord (see **Heb.12:18-21**, **Ps.90:11**, **Prov.8:13**, **Deut.17:18-20**, **Job 28:28**, **Ps.119:120**, **Ps.9:20**, **19:9**, **34:11-14**, **60:4**, **86:11**, **119:38**, **Prov.1:7**, **Isa.8:12, 13**)? What are we to do based upon this fear?

v.13-15 What controls us; our love for Christ **or** His love for us? Explain What was the desired goal of Christ's dying for us?

v.16 How do we recognize Christ now; as what He was as a man upon the earth **or** what He is now at the right hand of God? How do we recognize other believers; by what they are in the flesh and in society **or** by what they are spiritually?

v.17 Define "in Christ". What is a creation? **Who** is the Creator? What has passed away? What has **come**?

v.18-20 Define reconciliation. Who needed this? Whose work was it? What is the means now of the world being reconciled? What authority and responsibility does an ambassador have?

v.21 Explain what is being described here?

GALATIANS 1 - 3 (Session 39)

GALATIANS 1

v.1, 11, 12 What was the origin of Paul's gospel?

v.4 Why did the Lord **Jesus** give Himself for us?

v.6 In light of the above, explain Paul's **amazement**.

v.6-10 What is the gospel? Why is there only one gospel? What element of tolerance is to be admitted with respect to different "gospels"? Whom does a bond-servant please? What is a bond-servant?

GALATIANS 2

v.3-6 What brings believers into bondage? What becomes of the gospel if one yields to this **type** of bondage?

v.6, 11-14 Is it ever safe to follow **any man**? List the specific descriptions of Peter at this point in his **life**.

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

GALATIANS 1-3

GALATIANS 2

v.16 On what basis are we declared righteous before God?

v.18-20 Are we saved by grace and then "grow" or "mature" or "are sanctified" by law?

v.19, 20 Does the law impart life? **Why?** How does a real Christian live? What does crucifixion tell us about our contributions? What is the essence of Christianity and of all godliness?

v.21 If we "contribute" through self-effort / law keeping, what does this say about the cross?

GALATIANS 3

v.1 To adopt another gospel is to be what?

v.2, 3 On what basis is the Spirit of God provided? **What** is "perfected by the **flesh** a synonym for?

v.8 What was the essence of the gospel that was preached to Abraham?

v.8-14 What 2 contrasts are presented here? Why is law not the means of righteousness? Why are the works of the law under a curse? In whom does the blessing of Abraham come to all? Whom is a promise dependent upon?

v.15-18 Which covenant has priority, Abraham or Moses? Does the Law **modify** the covenant of Abraham at **all**? Explain. What is the **difference** between a **law** and a promise?

v.16 To whom were the promises spoken? What promise is specifically in view in this section (**see v.8**)? In Whom are all nations blessed?

v.19-21 What was the purpose of the law? How long was it to be in effect? Who is the seed to whom the promise **has** been made?

v.22 What promise is being spoken of?

v.23-25 What was the purpose of the law here? What relationship do we have to law once we've come to Christ?

v.26-29 What spiritual distinctions remain in Christ Jesus? Are there still slaves and masters, male and female here on earth in the church (**see Col.3:18, 19, 22**)? In what sense then are "all one in Christ Jesus"? What significance does the **law** have in light of **v.27**?

v.29 How does this verse **summarize** the whole 3rd chapter?

GALATIANS 4-6 (session 40)

GALATIANS 4

v.1-7 Are Christians slaves or sons? Explain. Can we be both (**see Rom.6:16-22**)?

v.3 What are the elementary things **of the** world here and in v.9, 10? What are they in **Col.2:8, 20**?

v.5,6 If you **are** under the law, what do you need that you do not possess?

v.11 What does a returning to the **law** indicate?

v.12-15 What was the occasion of Paul preaching the gospel to them the first time? Is it God's will that **all** believers be well at **all** times (**see I Tim.5:23, 2 Tim.4:20**)? Explain.

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

GALATIANS 4 - 6

GALATIANS 4

v.16-30 What was the apparent response to Paul's message?

v.16-18 What did Paul tell them? What did the teachers of the law wish the people to follow? What **choice** are we always faced with? **What** motivates the teachers of law? What are believers shut **out from** by following their teaching?

v.19 Will Christ be formed within law keepers? Explain.

v.21-31 What do the following represent in this section?

Hagar Sarah Ishmael Isaac

v.29 Why is this the case?

v.30 What is the undeniable conclusion of the Scriptures regarding the law?

v.31 What relationship do believers have to Hagar? Explain

GALATIANS 5

v.1 What is freedom (see v.13)? Are we free to **observe** the law **if we so** choose? Explain.

v.2-4 Are Christ and the law compatible? Explain.

v.5 What is the contrast to these things as practiced by the Galatians?

v.6 If circumcision is the sign of the covenant with Abraham (see **Rom.4:9-13**), why is it not important for all who have **faith** as he did to also be circumcised?

v.9 Describe the process and effect of leaven (see I **Cor.5:6-8**, **Mt.13:33**)? What was the **Galatian's** leaven?

v.11 What is the contrast between the cross and circumcision? What does this tell us about why Christians are persecuted?

v.14 How does this fulfill the law?

v.16 What is the desire of the flesh?

v.17 What is the conflict that exists between the two of them?

v.18 Who is not under the law (see **Rom.8:2-4, 14**)? Explain.

v.22-25 Describe a Christian.

GALATIANS 6

v.7, 8 Describe the type of sowing that the Galatians were doing.

v.12-15 Why would this keep one **from** being persecuted for the cross of Christ? What is the **only** legitimate thing a believer can boast in? Explain.

v.13 What is the real motivation behind all law keeping?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

EPHESIANS 1 (Session 41)

- v.1, 2 What does it mean to be described as saints and **faithful** in Christ?
- v.3 What is provided for any in Christ Jesus? What is a spiritual blessing? How do Josh.1:2, 3, 13:1, Num.33:51-56, Obadiah 17, and Eph.6:11-13 illustrate "the **heavenlies**"?
- v.4-6 What was the purpose of God's choosing of us? In what sense have we **been** predestined (see **Rom.8:28-30**)? What comparisons are there between the image of His Son and the adoption **as** sons? What prompted God to choose us? Where are all of these blessings to be found?
- v.7, 8 What is the connection between redemption and His blood? What is forgiveness? What is the measure of the extent of God's forgiveness (see **Mt.18:21-35**, **Isa.43:25**, **44:21, 22**, **Jer.50:20**, **Mic.7:18**, **19**, **Ps.103:10-13**, **Heb.10:17**)?
- v.8-12 What is the mystery of His will? What is a mystery (see **Eph.3:4, 5**)? What place **does** Christ have in God's plan? In your life? What does it mean for Christ to have first place in everything (see **Col.1:18**)? What is the glory of God (see **Ex.33:18-23**)?
- v.13, 14 What specific things are we told of our salvation in these verses? What place does truth play in our salvation? What is truth (see **Jn.14:6**, **17:17**, **1 Jn.5:20**, **Jn.6:63**)? What does a seal indicate? A pledge? What does it mean that we are God's possession?
- v.15-19 What specifically does Paul pray for here? Why is this needed? Where does this type of understanding come **from**?
- v.19, 20 What is the measure or evidence of God's power? How is the power of God demonstrated in His people? What does the "right hand" indicate?
- v.21-23 What place does the Lord Jesus have in God's purposes? In what sense is Christ the head of the church? In what sense is the church the **fullness** of Christ?

EPHESIANS 2 (Session 42)

- v.1 In what sense is dead used here? What is the difference between trespasses and sins?
- v.2 What is the course of the world? Who is the prince of the power of the air? What is his realm? Who is he **working** in? Are the **sons** of disobedience believers or unbelievers (see **Eph.5:6**)? Explain.
- v.3 What motivates those who are in the world? What is the difference between the desires of the flesh and those of the mind? How did we become children of wrath?
- v.4 What is the measure of God's love (see **Jn.3:16**, **1 Jn.4:9, 10**, **Rom.5:8**)? What is mercy (see **Lk.10:33-37**)?
- v.5 What does it mean to be made alive? What is grace (see **2 Cor.8:9**)? From what are we saved?
- v.6 What does being "in Christ" mean (see **Jn.15:1-6**)?
- v.7 What is God's purpose as described here?
- v.8 How is it that we have been saved? What is not **from** ourselves? What is the gift of God? Who pays for a gift; the giver or the receiver?
- v.9 What is the relationship between works and boasting?
- v.10 What are we? What are the implications of being created? What are good works? What does it mean to walk in them? What does it tell us **if we** do not walk in good works?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

EPHESIANS 2

v.11, 12 How are Gentiles described?

v.13 **What** have we been brought near to? How was this done?

v.14-18 What is peace? How was it brought about? How is the law described here? How was the enmity of the law put to death? Why was the law enmity? What type of peace was preached? **What** is the contrast between the Spirit and the law in this section?

v.19-22 Is the "foundation of the apostles and prophets" meaning the apostles and prophets themselves **or** that which **has** been laid by them (see I Cor.3:10, 11)? Explain. Of what **significance** is the cornerstone in a building? Describe a temple.

EPHESIANS 3 (Session 43)

v.2 What is stewardship (see I Cor.4:1, 2, 9:16, 17, Col.1:25, Lk.16:1, 2)?

v.3-5 What is revelation? What is its source? Where will one find this revelation?

v.6 Was it a mystery that the Gentiles would become the people of God (see Acts 15:14-18, Rom.9:22-23, Ps.2:7-9, 22:27, 28, Ps 67, 86.9, 117, Isa.2:2-4, 11:10, 42:1-7, 49:5-7, 60:1-3, 66:18-21, 55:3-5, Zech.2:10, 11, 8:20-23, 14:16-19, Mal.1:11, Deut.32:43)?

v.2-10 What is the mystery (see Rom.11:7, 25-32, 16:25, 26, I Cor.2:6-10, Eph.6:19, Col.1:25-29, I Tim.3:16)? How do 2 Thess.2:7, Rev.17:5-7, and Mt.13:10-17, 34, 35 relate to the mystery Paul is speaking of here?

v.7 What does the word "minister" mean (see I Cor.3:5-7)?

v.8 Why was Paul the least of all saints (see I Cor.15:9, I Tim.1:15)?

v.9-11 What was the purpose of the creation as stated here? Who are the rulers and authorities in the heavenlies (see Eph.6:12)? How was the wisdom of God **made** known to Satan (see Job 1:8-12, 2:3-6)?

v.12 What is boldness (see Heb.4:15-16, 10:19)? What is its source?

v.14-19 What specific things is Paul praying for? How is the word "dwell" being used here? Who **will be** able to grasp the love of Christ? How **will** it occur? What is the fullness of God (see Col.1:28, 29, 29-10, Jn.1:16)?

v.20 What is it that God is able to do far beyond anything we may ask or think?

v.21 Has God always been glorified in His church (see Mt. 16:18, Jn. 17:1-26)? Explain.

EPHESIANS 4 (Session 44)

v.1 What is the **difference** between being a prisoner of Rome and being a prisoner of the Lord? What is our calling (see 2 Thess.2:14)?

v.2 What is forbearance (see the life of the Lord Jesus, Phil.4:5, Rom.14:1-13, 15:1-3, 7, I Thess.5:14, 15, I Cor.9:19-23, 2 Thess.3:6, 14, 15, Jude 22, 23)? Does forbearance require compromise of principle? Explain.

v.3-6 What is unity (see Jn.17:11, 13-16, Phil.2:1, 2)? Does **unity** already exist or must it be created? Explain.

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

EPHESIANS 4

v.7-10 What is the background illustration in view here (see **Ps.68:12-18**)? Does this passage indicate that the Lord Jesus descended into hell **or** that He came **from** Heaven to earth? Explain.

v.11-13 How does this relate to the prayer of 3:20, 21? What are the purposes of the **gifts**? What does God use to equip His people (see 2 Tim.3:16, 17)? What are the saints to be doing? How is maturity described here (see **Heb.5:11-14**)? What is different about the unity of the Spirit in v.3 and the unity of the faith spoken of here?

v.13, 14 What is the difference between children and maturity in these verses? How are false doctrines developed (see Acts 20:30, **Gal.6:12, 13, 2 Pet.2:1-3, I Kings 12:26-33**)?

v.15, 16 What prevents the instability of the previous verse (see 2 **Tim.2:14-18**)? What 2 things are to be present in any word which we speak? How is it that the body will be built up?

v.17-19 Describe the natural condition of man. List specific characteristics

v.20, 21 How did we learn Christ? Do we hear Him or hear about Him? Explain

v.22-24 What needs to be done with the mind as described in vs.17-19?

v.25 What is to characterize all of our speech?

v.26 Is it ever permissible to be angry (see **Mk.3:4, 5, Jn.2:14-17, Job 32:1-10, Ezk.3:14, Ps.119:53, Neh.13:23-27, Acts 17:16, 17**)? Were any of these instances resulting from **personal insults or injuries**? What are we to be angry over, what are we not to **be**?

v.27 What is it that gives the devil a place / opportunity?

v.28 Why should we labor?

v.29 Why should we speak?

v.30 What grieves the Holy Spirit (see **Jn.16:14**)? What will be redeemed on that day (see **Rom.8:23**)?

v.31, 32 On what basis are we to forgive each other (see **Mt.18:21-35**)?

EPHESIANS 5 (Session 45)

v.1 What is the relationship between being a child and imitating God?

v.2 What does it mean to walk in love (see I **Jn.3:16-18**)? How has Christ loved us? "Sweet-smelling aroma" is the identical phrase that is used in **Gen.8:21**. What was the response of the Lord to this offering in Genesis? In the Lord Jesus?

v.3, 4 In what sense should these things not be named among believers? How is the giving of thanks the contrast to these?

v.5, 6 What is the evidence of being a saint? How is idolatry defined here?

v.7-14 What is to be our association with those walking in darkness? What are the **differences** between the fruit of the Spirit / light here and that of **Gal.5:22**? In what way are we to reprove / expose the deeds of darkness?

v.12 Why should we not speak of these things (see **Deut.12:30, Ex.23:13**)?

v.15-17 How do the wise walk? How is foolishness described? What is the relationship between being unwise, not redeeming the time, and foolishness?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

EPHESIANS 5

v.18-21 Considered in its grammatical structure, what does this passage teach us? The main verb is:

BE FILLED

The remaining verbs: **SPEAKING** **SINGING** **GIVING THANKS** and **BEING SUBJECT** are subordinate to and attendant upon the main verb.

Outlined, the passage appears as follows:

BE FILLED (with the Spirit)

	SPEAKING	to one another
in Psalms	SINGING	to the Lord
in the name	GIVING THANKS	to God
in fear	BEING SUBJECT	to one another

In Col.3:15-17 what parallels and contrasts are seen?

v.22-33 What is the subject being addressed in this section? What do we learn about the Lord Jesus as Bridegroom? About the Church as bride? What specific things are the husband to do? the wife?

v.24 Is this an absolute directive with no exceptions (see Acts 5:1-11, 29)?

v.26, 27 How is the church to be sanctified and cleansed? What effect is the Word of God to have upon the church (see Rev.19:7, 8)?

v.31,32 Why is polygamy not the will of God for marriage?

EPHESIANS 6 (Session 46)

v.1-3 What is the reason set **forth** for obedience? What is the difference between obedience and honor? How would honoring your father prolong your days (see Deut.6:1-9)?

v.4 How ought children to be brought up? What does this involve (see Prov.13:24, 19:18, 22:15, 23:13, 14, 29:15, 17)?

v.5-9 How ought we to perform our duties? Whom are we actually serving in all that we do? To whom do **we look** to for reward? Explain.

v.10 What does it mean to be strong in the Lord (see 2 Cor.12:9, 10, Job 17:9, 2 Chron.27:6)?

v.11-13 Against whom is our struggle, men or spiritual powers? Explain. What is **required** to **stand** against them? What is a scheme?

v.14 What is truth (see Jn.17:17, 2 Thess.2:13, Ps.51:6, Ps.119:142, 151)? What role does the truth of the Word of God have in resisting the attacks of the enemy (see Mt.4:1-11)? What does a breastplate protect? How critical is guarding one's heart (see Prov.4:23, Mk.7:18-23)?

v.15 Why do we wear shoes? How is it that we should walk according to this verse?

v.16 What is the purpose of a shield? Where does faith come **from** (see Rom.10:17)? If the shield is **faith**, what then are the flaming darts **of the** evil one?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

EPHESIANS 6

v 17 What does a helmet protect? What is salvation? How does it protect our minds (see 2 Cor.10:5)? What is the one offensive weapon we are given in this **battle**? The word translated "word" (Gk. *Rhema*) means "a specific utterance". How is this different from the Word of God considered as a whole? With which "word" are we to meet each individual **attack**?

v 18 What role does prayer play in this battle? How does the Holy Spirit contribute to our being able to pray in this way (see Rom.8:26, 27)? Is this telling us to pray in tongues? Explain.

v.19, 20 How are we to preach the gospel? What is the source of this boldness?

PHILIPPIANS 2 (Session 47)

v 1, 2 How does v 1 provide the basis for our behavior in v.2? What is to characterize believers?

v 3, 4 What are we to think about ourselves? What are we to think about others? What is to occupy our concern? What place does self-interest and self-seeking have among believers?

v.5 Who is the example for believers?

v.6, 7 Even though He was God in the fullest sense, what did the Lord Jesus do? Was it robbery for Him to be equal with God? What is robbery? What is a **servant**? In what sense was the Lord Jesus made in the likeness of men (see Heb.2:14-18)? In what sense was He not **like** men (see 2 Cor.5:21, Heb 4:15)?

v 8 What does it mean to humble oneself, What was the extent of the Lord's obedience? What did it **mean** to die on a cross? What is the point of the Lord becoming obedient unto death in light of v.5 (see Mt.16:24, Lk 9:23, Gal.5:24, 6:14)?

v.9-11 Who exalted the Lord Jesus? When was this done? Who exalts believers (see 1 Pet.5:6)? When will each man's praise come to him from God (see 1 Cor.4:5)? How should we live until that day (see vs.1-5)? Will anyone ever be exalted like the **Lord** Jesus? What will everyone in Heaven and earth do at the name of Jesus (see Isa.45:22-25)?

v.12, 13 Are we to work **for** our salvation or work **out** our salvation (see Eph.2:8-10)? What is the difference? How can a believer do good works? How dependent are we upon the Lord?

v.14-16 How are believers to live in this world? What is to be their occupation?

v.19-22 What distinguished Timothy **from** others? What are your own interests? What are the interests of Christ Jesus? How is proven worth developed? Who was able to observe this in him (see Acts 16:2, 1 Tim.4:12)? How does a child serve **his** father? How does Timothy display the characteristics of a true disciple (see 1 Cor.4:17)?

PHILIPPIANS 3 (Session 48)

v.1-3 What is false and true circumcision (see Rom.2:28, 29, Gal.6:12, 13, Col.2:11)? What is true worship (see Jn 4:23, 24, Rom 12:1, 2)? What is false worship (see Mk.7:6, 7)? **Why** is confidence in the **flesh** foolishness (See Prov 28:26, Jer.17:5, Jn.6.63, Rom.7:18)?

v 4-6 **Of what** value is our religious ceremony, cultural heritage, position among men, education, enthusiasm and devotedness. or strict religious observance⁷ Paul calls all **Of** these things confidence in what?

v 7, 8 "Gain" and "loss" are banking terms "Gain" means assets. the things of worth. value, and enrichment "Loss" means debts, things outstanding against us, impoverishment How did Paul think of **his** **fleshly attainments** before he was converted? How did he see them once he saw Christ? Once he knew **the** **Lord** Jesus, what did he think **about** everything in vs 4-6?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

PHILIPPIANS 3

v.9-11 What is his one & sire now? Where does righteousness come **from and** how is it attained (see Rom.1:16, 17, 2:21, 22, 4:4-6, 9:30-32, 10:4, 9, 10)? What does it mean to know Him (see Jn.17:3)? What 3 things are associated with **knowing** Him in v.10? What is the power of His resurrection (see Eph.1:19, 20, I Cor.4:19, 20, Rom.14:17, Phil.3:21)? Before **resurrection** comes suffering and death. What is the purpose of suffering (see Heb.5:8, I Pet.2:19-24, 4:12-19, 2 Cor.1:3-11)?

v.12 What had **Paul** not already obtained? What was He **determined** to do? What was the purpose for which **Christ** laid hold of him (see 2 Thess.2:14)?

v.13, 14 Does Paul forget everything **from** the past **or** **some things**? Explain. What is the goal for which he is striving?

v.15, 16 What does "perfect" mean here in contrast to v.12? What is the focus and desire of the **mature**? Why will God reveal to you if this is not your perspective? Whatever **our** level of understanding and maturity is, what should we do?

v.17-19 Are we ever to follow men (see I Cor.11:1, Gal.2:11-14)? Explain. What **makes** someone an enemy of the cross? In what sense is the **belly** a god? What does it **mean** to mind earthly things (see Mt.16:23, Col.3:2, 5)? What does it mean to boast in the cross (see Gal.6:14)?

v.20, 21 Our "conversation / citizenship / commonwealth is in Heaven. It is from Heaven that we derive our citizenship. How do the people of any tribe or culture behave? How do those of the culture of Heaven conduct themselves? What is the expectation of those whose birth is from Heaven?

COLOSSIANS 1 (Session 49)

v.4 What is the relationship between faith and love (see Gal.5:6, I Thess.1:3, I Cor.13:13)?

v.5 What is our hope (see Col.1:23, 27)?

v.6 What is the purpose of the gospel coming to believers? Can there be fruit apart **from an understanding** of grace? Explain.

v.9-14 What are the key elements of Paul's prayer? What part does spiritual understanding, wisdom, and knowledge play in the spiritual life? What is the purpose of power in v.11? How are we made meet / qualified to share in the inheritance of the saints? What does it mean to be in a kingdom? Redemption is a price paid to purchase a possession. Where is redemption to be found?

v.15-17 If God is invisible, in what sense is the Lord Jesus the image of **God** (see 2 Cor.4:4, Jn.1:1, 14, 18)? Does first born mean the first created **or** the heir and highest honored of all creation (see Ps.89:27, Deut. 21:15-17, Heb.1:6)? Who is the Creator? Could it be possible for the Lord Jesus to **be** created and yet be before all things? What is the entire creation totally dependent upon?

v.18 What characterizes the head as opposed to the members? What is the Lord Jesus the Head of (see Col.2:10)? What is He the beginning of? How does this "beginning" relate to Jn.1:1 and Rev.3:14? In **what sense** is the Lord Jesus firstborn in this verse (see I Cor.15:20-23, Acts 26:23)? What place is the Lord Jesus to have in your life? In what specific ways does the Lord Jesus "have the preeminence / first place" in v.15-18?

v.19 What **fullness** does the Lord Jesus possess (see Col.2:9, Jn.1:14-17, Col.2:3)? Why **was** the Father pleased with the Lord Jesus (see Mt.3:17, Jn.8:29)?

v.20-22 Reconcile means to bring enemies into subjection thereby establishing **peace** and **friendship**. What has the Lord Jesus reconciled to Himself (see Rom.5:10, 11, 8:20, 21, I Cor.15:23-28, 2 Cor.5:18-20)? Peace is a state of spiritual well-being. What is the **primary** sense of peace that the **cross has secured** (see Rom.5:1, Eph.2:14-18)? What is the purpose of **God** in reconciliation?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

COLOSSIANS 1

- v.23 What condition is stated for this goal to be attained?
- v.24, 25 Are the afflictions of Christ mentioned here that which He suffered on the cross or what Paul and other gospel servants suffer due to preaching the gospel? Explain.
- v.26, 27 What is the mystery?
- v.28, 29 What is the purpose of gospel ministry? What should **all** of our teaching **and** interaction with others focus upon? What resource is available to accomplish this?
- v.24-29 Why does Paul labor mightily? Does this describe your life?

COLOSSIANS 2 (Session 50)

- v.1-4 For what end was **Paul** laboring? What is encouragement? What type of wealth is he speaking of here? What is the relationship between wisdom / knowledge and Christ? What is the preeminent occupation of our lives (**see Col.1:18, 27, 28**)?
- v.3 What sources are there for wisdom and knowledge (see **Jas.3:15-17**)?
- v.4 What will keep us **from** being deluded?
- v.6, 7 How are we to walk and be built up? What does "in Christ" **mean** (see **Jn.15:4, 5**)? How do we become rooted, built up, and established?
- v.8-15 What is our only protection? What is true "in Him" and "with Him"?
- v.8 See v.2-4 What does it mean to be taken captive? What are the elementary principles of the world referred to here (see **Col.2:20-23, Gal.4:3**)?
- v.9 What does this mean?
- v.10 What do we partake of as being in Him?
- v.11-13 What does circumcision picture (see **Ex.6:12, Jer.6:10, Lev.26:41, Phil.3:3**)? What does baptism picture? How complete is the forgiveness of God?
- v.14 What was the certificate of debt against us (see **Gal.2:10, 13, 3:21, 22, Rom.7:9, 10, 8:2-4, Eph.2:14-16**)?
- v.15 Who were these rulers and authorities (see **Eph.1:20, 21, 3:10, 6:12**)?
- v.16 What is the significance of "therefore" here? Who is our judge (see **Jas.4:12**)? What do all these items have in common? Who was the Sabbath for (see **Ex.31:16, 17**)?
- v.17 What is the difference between a shadow and the reality? If Christ is the reality, what does this tell us about all the ceremonies and external ordinances of the Law which preceded Him?
- v.18, 19 What defrauds you of your prize and stunts growth? How do we grow? What is the warning about relying upon subjective experiences such as angel visitations, dreams, visions, and one's own understanding?
- v.20-22 Who submits themselves to such decrees? Why is the **Christian** not to be governed or influenced by such things? What does **2 Jn.8-11** have to say about this? What warning does **Prov.30:6** and **1 Cor.4:6** give?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

COLOSSIANS 2

v.23 Of what value are these rules, regulations, systems, and formulas? What place do these things have for the Christian?

2 THESSALONIANS 2 (Session 51)

v.1 What type of gathering is this?

v.2 What **influences** o w minds (see 2 Cor.10:5)?

v.3 Who is responsible for our being deceived? What must take place before the day of the Lord **comes** (see I Tim.4:1-3, 2 Tim.4:1-5, Mt.13:31-33, 24:14, 24, Lk 17:26-33, 21:8, 12-19, 34-36, Rev.2:9, 3:9, 17:1-6)? What prepares the way for the **man** of lawlessness?

v.4, 9, 10 What characterizes this man (see Dan.7:17-25, 9:24-27, 11:29-39, Rev.13, 11:7, 8)?

v.2-5 Why did Paul tell them these things (see Mt.24:4, 5, 23-25, I Thess.5:1-5)?

v.6, 7 What is the difference between **what** restrains him and **who** restrains him (see Jn.15:26, 27, 16:7-11)?

v.7 What is the mystery of lawlessness (see Mt.13:33)? Who is the mother of abominations and immorality (see Rev.17:2-5)?

v.9 Are **performing** signs and wonders an evidence of **being truly** of God (see Mt.7:21-23, Rev.13:13-15)?

v.10 Why were these deceived? What must be done to be saved (see Rom.6:17, 18)?

v.11, 12 Why will God do this (see Prov.1:23-33)?

v.13 What elements comprise our salvation here?

What place does the truth have throughout this section (see v.2, 3, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17)?

v.14 What is the goal of our salvation? Glory is the outshining of the excellence of God's character.

v.13-15 What will ensure this taking **place**? What are the means of our salvation according to v.13?

v.16, 17 Who alone can accomplish this? What type of comfort do believers have (see 2 Cor.1:3-7)?

HEBREWS 1 (Session 52)

v.1 What is the emphasis of this verse? What is the difference between speaking "in" and speaking "through"? List the various portions and manners in which God spoke in the OT.

v.2 In what **sense** did this usher in the "last days"? How did God speak in His Son (see Jn. 1:18, 8:26-29, 40, 42, 10:25-32, 12:45-50, 14:6-11, Mt.24:35)? What sense of finality does God's speaking to us in His Son communicate to us? What is an heir? What is His inheritance (see Eph.1:18, 22)? How does the phrase "through Whom" relate to Gen.1:3, Jn.1:1-3, Col.1:16? The word "world" is literally "ages". The Lord Jesus created both the earth and the ages. What is the difference?

v.3 What do these 3 descriptions tell us about the Lord Jesus? How do these 3 descriptions explain Col.2:9? How does "purification" relate to Mk.2:5-12? How was purification accomplished (see Heb.9:11-15, 10:10-14)? Where has He been seated (see Eph.1:20-22, Phil.2:8-11)?

v.4-14 In what specific ways is the Lord Jesus superior to angels?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

HEBREWS 1

v.4 What do these names of the Lord Jesus mean: **Immanuel** - God with us (Mt.1:23), Jesus - Jehovah's salvation (Mt.1:21), King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev.19:16), Word (Jn. 1:1, Rev.19:13), Alpha and Omega (Rev.22:12, 13, 1:8). What names of the Lord Jesus are found in **Isa.9:6**?

v.5 When were these things spoken (see **Ps.2:7**, Acts 13:33)?

v.6 Whom does the Father command to worship? The word "worship" is the **same** as in Mt.4:10. What type of worship are we to render to the Lord Jesus (see Rev.5:11-14)?

v.7,8 What are angels called? What is the Lord Jesus called?

v.9 Why was the Lord Jesus **full** of gladness?

v.10 Of whom is this spoken (see v.8)?

v.11, 12 Who is unchanging (see Heb.13:8)?

v 13, 14 What is the difference between the Lord Jesus and the angels in their works?

HEBREWS 3 & 4 (Session 53)

HEBREWS 3

v.1 How are true believers described here? What is our focus to be? In what sense is the Lord Jesus **an** apostle? Apostle means sent forth with a commission. What is the main function of a high priest (see Heb.5.1)?

v.2-6 List the contrasts between Christ and Moses. What is the house of God (see **I Tim.3:15**)?

v.7-11 Read **Ps.95:6-11**. When is "today"? What does it mean to harden one's heart? When should we not harden our heart? What is the difference between seeing God's works and knowing His ways (see Ps.103:7)? What provokes the anger of God?

v.12, 13 What warning does this give us? This word for "fall away / departing" is used elsewhere only in Lk.8:13 and in **I Tim.4:1** What does it mean? How is sin and its effects described here?

v.14, 15 What insures becoming a partaker of Christ? What is the relationship between "holding fast" and "hearing His voice"?

v.16-19 How many of Israel were truly saved? How many in the "church" are saved (see Mt.7:13, 14, 19-23, Rev.3:1-4, 15-20)? **Are** disobedience and unbelief the same? Explain.

HEBREWS 4

v.1 Why are we to fear?

v.2 When does the Word of God **become** profitable to us?

v 3-5 How is this rest **described** here? What parallel can be seen in 2 Cor.5:17 and Eph.2:10?

v.6 Who enters His rest? What is **belief**?

v.7 When is the time to believe?

v.8 How is the rest described here (see Deut 12:8-10)?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

HEBREWS 3 & 4

HEBREWS 4

v.9-11 What kind of rest is being described here? The word "rest / **sabbatism** / Sabbath-rest" is used only here in the NT and is not the same word used for the weekly Sabbath. What works have we ceased **from**? Are diligence and rest compatible? Explain.

v.12, 13 What is the relationship of v.12 to the preceding? What can the Word of God do which no **man** can? What implications does this have for psychotherapies? What does God know?

v.14-16 What kind of High Priest do we have? What should we then do? In what sense was the Lord **Jesu**: tempted in **all** things as we are; by experiencing temptation to every possible conceivable sin or by being tempted in the same manner that we are (see I **Jn.2:16**)?

HEBREWS 7 (Session 54)

Read Gen.14:17-24

v.1, 2 Which is first, king of righteousness or king of peace (see **Isa.32:17**, **Rom.5:1**, 14:17)? Explain

v.3 In what sense did this priest have no father or mother; literally or by having no recorded father or mother? Explain. What "sacrifice" did he bring to Abraham (see **Gen.14:18**)? What does this picture?

v.3,4 Who was he like? What constituted his greatness?

v.4-10 Who pays homage, the greater or the lesser? Who blesses, the greater or the lesser? Since Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, who is the greater? Since Levi came **from** Abraham (through Isaac and Jacob), and Abraham had the promises, who is greater, Abraham or Levi? Who then is the greater of **Melchizedek** and Levi (see v.7, 9)?

v.11 On what basis did Israel receive the Law? Did the Law accomplish the perfection of righteousness (see v.18, 19)?

v.12 Has the priesthood changed? **As** such, what place does the Law have in the new priesthood? How is the Law described in v. 18, 19, **8:7**, 13, 9:9, 10, 10:1, 8, 9? Are Christians under the Law? Explain.

v.13-17 The fact that the Lord Jesus was not a Levite tells us what about His priesthood? On what basis did the Lord Jesus become a priest?

v.18-22 How is the Lord Jesus superior to the Law? Why is this a better hope? Why can He be a guarantee?

v.23-25 What is the Lord Jesus able to do? Why? Why couldn't the former priests do this?

v.26 How is the Lord Jesus described here?

v.26-28 Contrast the priesthood of Christ with that of Aaron.

HEBREWS 8 (Session 55)

v.1 What is the significance of a High Priest who is seated?

v.2-5 What kind of tabernacle is He talking about? Why must it be erected according to the pattern (see **Ex 25:40**, I Chron.28:19, **Ezk.40f**, **Zech 4**)? Has anything been built without a plan? What are the implications of this?

v.6 In each of these, why are they better than the first covenant?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

HEBREWS 8

v.7, 8 What **fault** was found with the **first** covenant?

v.9 What does it **mean** that God did not care for them?

v.10 What **was** the Law of Moses **written** upon (see 2 Cor.3:3, 7)? Where is His **Law** written **now** for the Christian? Is **being** the people of God different **now** for the **Christian** than it was for Israel (see Rom.9:6-8, 2 Cor.6:14 - 7:1, Rom.2:28, 29)?

v.11 **Why** will this instruction not be needed?

v.12 In what **sense** does God not remember **our** sins; in not **recalling** them to mind in order to judge us **or** in not having **them** in His memory at all? Explain.

v.13 What place does the Law have for the Christian?

HEBREWS 11 (Session 56)

v.1 Is this a definition or a description? What is **faith**? What is it based upon (see Rom.10:17)?

v.2 How is a testimony **obtained**, by faith or by works? Explain.

v.3 Why is it that it is by faith that we understand? How were the worlds / **ages made** (see Ps.33:6, 9)? How does 2 Cor.5:7 relate to our understanding?

v.4 If **Abel** did this by faith, what does this necessarily presuppose? **Was** it **Abel's** attitude **or** his offering that **God** testified about? Explain. In what **sense** does he still speak?

v.5, 6 What does it mean to walk with God(see Gen.5:21-24, Amos 3:8)? What pleases God (see Col.1:10, Heb.13:21, 1 Jn.3:22)?

v.7 What did Noah believe? How does the **ark** picture salvation? How is **fear** compatible with **faith**? How did he **become** an heir of righteousness?

v.8 What is the only appropriate response to the call / Word of God(see Gal.5:6)? How did he know where to go (see Acts 7:2, 3, Rom.8:14)?

v.9,10, 13-16 Why does the description "pilgrims and strangers" - 1 Pet.2:11 suit believers? What was his eye set upon? What of things that they had left? Who is God not **ashamed** of!

v.9-12 What is any promise dependent upon?

v.17 Why does God test us (see Jas.1:2-4, 2:21-23, 1 Pet.1:6, 7, Ex.15:25, 20:20, Deut.8:2, 3, 16, 17, 13:1-5, Job 23:10)?

v.17-19 How did the birth of Isaac prepare Abraham for the death of Isaac (see Rom.4:19-22)? Describe the process that led Abraham to the conclusion that God would raise Isaac from the dead. How **was** Gen.22:1-10 a type / illustration of Christ?

v.20 In what sense was it by faith that Isaac blessed his sons?

v.21 How is worship by faith (see Jn.4:23, 24)? What is the **significance** of Jacob worshipping leaning on top of his **staff** (see Gen.32:24-31, Ps.147:10)?

v.23 Why did Moses' parents hide him?

v.24-29 What does a choice to believe God necessarily entail? What must **be refused**, abandoned, chosen, embraced, and received?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

HEBREWS 11

v.30, 31 When had Rahab believed (see **Josh.2:8-14**)? What was her faith based upon?

v.32-40 What does true faith result in?

JAMES 2 (Session 57)

v.1-9 What is the motivation behind partiality? What place does self-seeking have in true Christianity? Are riches a sign of being blessed by God? Is poverty a sign of unbelief! Explain. **What** is the great law of the kingdom (see **Rom.13:8-10**)? Why can showing partiality never be obedience to the **will** of God? .

v.8-13 What was one of the chief purposes of the Law (see **Gal.3:24**)? What is the **fulfillment** of the Law? If you do not love in one point, how does this make one guilty of all? What is the law of liberty(see **v.8, Jas 1:25**)? How is love true freedom? What is the relationship between mercy, love, and liberty in these verses?

v.14-17 What type of works is James saying we must have: works of the law (see **Rom.3:28**); dead works (see **Heb.9:14**); works of the flesh (see **Rom.4:1, 2, Gal.5:19**); works of darkness (see **Rom.13:12**); wicked works (see **Col.1:21**); our own works (see **2 Tim.1:9, Heb.4:10**); **or** the work of faith (see **1 Thess.1:3, 2 Thess.1:11**); work of God (see **Jn.6:29, Rom.14:20**); faith working through love (**Gal.5:6**); and God working in you (see **Phi.1:2:13**)? James says a person described in v.14-17 has no faith. John says he has no _____ (see **I Jn.3:16-18**).

v.18 Is it possible to visibly demonstrate the invisible reality of faith apart **from** an external act of obedience? Explain.

v.19 Is faith an acknowledgement of fact? What is faith?

v.20 If God is not at **work in** you, do you have genuine faith (see **Eph.2:8-10, Phil.2:12, 13**)?

v.21-23 The quote "Abraham believed God. ." occurred in **Gen.15:6**. Was he justified by faith at this time or by works? Abraham offered Isaac in **Gen.22**. Was he justified by faith at this time or by works? **In** whose sight are we justified by faith (see **Rom.4:2**)? **In** whose sight are we justified by works?

v.24 Justify means to declare righteous. Read **Lk.7:29, 30**. The multitudes justified God. Did they make God righteous **or** declare Him to be righteous? How does this relate to being justified by faith before God and **being** justified by works before men?

v.25, 26 In whose sight was Rahab justified by this deed? Read **Josh.2:1-14**. Had Rahab repented and believed before or after she received the spies?

2 PETER 1 (Session 58)

v.3, 4 How will we become partakers of the Divine nature? What is the Divine nature (see **Rom.8:29, 2 Cor.3:17, 18, Jn.1:16, 17, 1 Jn.3:2, 3, Phil.3:20, 21**)? With respect to life and godliness, what do we lack? What are the means through which we experience this? What conditions must exist for a promise to be realized? What is in the world (see **Gal.1:4, 1 Jn.2:15-17**)?

v.5 What value does the Lord place upon diligence and self-discipline (see v.10, 15, **Rom.12:11, 1 Cor.9:27, 1 Tim.4:7, 15, 16, 2 Tim.2:15, Tit.2:11-14**)?

v.5-7 What qualities are we responsible to maintain and pursue in our lives?

v.8-11 What are the results if we have such qualities? What is the evidence of our being called and chosen? What is the difference between "blind" and "short-sighted / unable to see afar off"? How will an abundant entrance into the kingdom of the Lord be provided?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

2 PETER 1

v.12 What does it **mean** to be established in the truth?

v.13-15 **What** did Peter have as his utmost concern as his death approached?

v.16 Why was he eager for them to be able to recall his teaching?

v.16-21 What is even more sure than the **greatest** of spiritual experiences? Did Peter urge them to follow him because of his experiences **or** to give heed to the Word of God? Do we **follow** the man of God **or** the Word of God? What will enlighten us even after the departure of the apostles?

v.20, 21 Why ought we to base our faith upon nothing else but the Scriptures? Are the Scriptures the ideas of men? How did the men who wrote the Scriptures know what to write? What does it mean that men were "moved" by the Holy Spirit?

I JOHN 1,2 (Session 59)

I JOHN 1

v.1-4 What was manifest? What association did John have with the Life? Why was he writing to them? Fellowship means to share in common. What connection is there between the Word of God and experiencing the manifested life in the Lord Jesus?

v.5-7 **God** is Light (v.5), God is Love (I Jn.4:8), God is Spirit (Jn.4:24). How do these 3 descriptions summarize the revealed nature of God? What is light; darkness? Describe the process of **walking**. What is the basis of fellowship with the saints? How **can** one be assured that the blood of Jesus cleanses him from all sin? What is the blood of Jesus associated with in the NT (see Mk.14:24, Lk.22:20, Acts 20:28, Rom.3:25, 5:9, I Cor.10:16, 11:25, Eph.1:7, 2:13, Col.1:14, 20, Heb.9:12-14, 12:24, 13:12, 20, I Pet.1:2, 19, I Jn.1:7, Rev.1:5, 5:9, 7:14, 12:11. These are all the NT references to the blood of Jesus)? Is the blood of Jesus ever to be "used" as a protection from evil, danger, or demons? Explain.

v.8-10 Sin (v.8), sins (v.9), and sinned (v.10). What are the distinctions between these? What is the remedy for committing sins (see Prov.28:13)? What can we confidently expect God to do? On what basis will God say that we have sinned (v.10)? Why ought we to confess when convicted?

I JOHN 2

v.1, 2 What was another purpose for his writing besides 1:4? Advocate is "one called alongside to help." How does the Lord Jesus "help" us when we sin? To what extent has the Lord Jesus satisfied the righteous demands of the holy God (propitiation)?

v.3-6 How do we know if we are genuine believers? How did the Lord Jesus "walk"?

v.7-11 What is another evidence of having genuine faith? What can be said of you if you do not **love** your brother?

v.12-14 What categories of believers are there? Are **all** "little children" (see I Jn 2:1, 28, 3:7, 18, 4:4, 5:21)?

v.15-17 Are the world and the things in it equivalent? Is it possible to love both the Father and the world? What is the world? What is **all** that is in it? What is it that will remain forever?

v 18, 19 How do we recognize antichrists, those who are either against Christ or presume to take His place?

v.20, 21 How do we know?

v.25 Who is this pronuse dependent upon?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

I JOHN 1,2

I JOHN 2

v.26 What is a third reason for his writing to them (see 1:4, 2:1)?

v 27-29 In what sense do we need no one to teach us? In what sense do we need teachers? What will bring shame at His coming? What is a third way we can be assured of being a genuine believer (see 2:3, 10)?

I JOHN 3 - 5 (Session 60)

I JOHN 3

v.1-3 What is the measure of the greatness of God's love? What will be the cause of our becoming like him? What is our standard to which we must become **conformed**? Is current Christian practice our standard of conduct?

v.4-10 How is sin **defined** here? What was one purpose of the Lord Jesus' appearing? Can genuine believers continue in **practicing** sin? Explain. If you are not practicing righteousness, what can you have no assurance of? Can one be like the devil and be of God? Why does a genuine believer not practice sin?

v.11-15 How are Cain and Abel **examples** of these truths? Why would the world hate believers? How is hate equivalent to murder?

v.16-18 In what sense are we to lay down **our** lives for the brethren? How should we love?

v.19-24 How will we know that we are of the truth (see 3:14, 2:10, 4:7, 20)? How will loving the brethren give assurance to our hearts that we are children of God even if we may have sinned? On what basis will prayer be answered? What are the 2 great commandments? What is the 4th test that assures us that we are of God (see 2:3, 10, 28)?

I JOHN 4

v.1-6 How do false spirits show themselves? On what basis have they been overcome? What is the 5th test if someone is **truly** of God (see 2:3, 10, 28, 3:24)?

v.7-14 How do we know love? Things that we do which are like the Lord Jesus are an evidence of what? Define love.

v.15-21 What gives confidence in the day of judgment? Why does perfect or mature love cast out fear? In this context, what is God like? How then are we like Him in this world? Why do we love? Is it possible to love God but not your brother? Explain.

I JOHN 5

v.1-5 Whom does the child instinctively love? What is the evidence of loving the children of God? What is the evidence of loving God? In what sense are believers overcomers? Are all believers overcomers or only some? Explain. What is the 6th evidence of being of God (see 2:3, 10, 28, 3:24, 4:6)?

v.6-12 What is the testimony? Water pictures what (see Eph.5:26)? What will the Spirit of God never be in conflict with? What is "the Life" to which John is referring (see 1:2, 3)? What is the 7th evidence of truly being born again (see 2:3, 20, 28, 3:24, 4:6, 5:4)?

v. 13 What is the 4th reason for his writing to them (see 1:4, 2:1, 26)?

v 14, 15 What is the great condition for answered prayer (see Mt.6:10, 26:42)? What word describing prayer is repeated in these verses? What is the difference between asking and demanding or confessing?

NEW TESTAMENT KEY PASSAGES

I JOHN 3 - 5

I JOHN 5

v.16, 17 Are there categories of sin (see Jn.19:11, 2 Chron.21:13, Ezk.16:51, 52)? On what basis will the guilt and gravity of sin be measured (see Lk.12:47, 48, 20:47, Mt.11:20-24)? How does Prov.11:19 relate to sin unto death? How did the Pharisees commit this sin (see Mt.9:34, 12:24, 30-32)? How did Saul commit this sin (see I Sam.15:1-3, 9-11, 18, 19, 22, 23, I Chron.10:13, 14)? How did Judas (see Jn.6:70, 71, 12:4-6, Acts 1:24, 25)? Is prayer always to be made regardless of the sin committed (see Jer.7:16-20, 14:10-12)? What summarizes sin unto death (see Jer.11:9-15)?

v.18 How are we kept from sin? What is the final evidence of **being born again** (see 2:3, 10, 28, 3:24, 4:6, 5:4, 12)?

v.19-21 The **world** "lieth in wickedness" (KJV), "lies in the power of the evil one" (NASB), "is under the control of the evil one" (NIV). Which of two **realms** are all men under (see Acts 26:18, Col.1:13)? What is the purpose of understanding? Where does it come **from** (see I Cor.2:9-16)? Who is the true God? What idols are we to keep ourselves **from** (see Ezk.14:3, Col.3:5)?

REVELATION 1 (Session 61)

v.1 What is this book revealing?

v.11-13 Where did John find the Son of Man? Who is the Son of Man (see Dan.7:13, 14, Mt.24:30, Rev.14:14)? What type of robe was He wearing (see Ex.28:2)? Gold represents what is of God: enduring, costly, and untarnished. He is girded across His breast. What does this communicate to us?

v.14 What does whiteness portray (see Prov.16:31, 20:29, Dan.7:9, 10)? What **will** the fire do (see I Cor.3:13-15)? What type of perception does the Lord Jesus have (see Heb.4:13)?

v.15 What will happen wherever the Lord walks? Where does He walk (see Rev.2:1)? Who appeared to Daniel (see Dan.10:5, 6)? Describe His word (see Ps.29:3-9).

v.16 What is in His right hand (see v.20)? How does this illustrate Eph.1:20-22? What is the sharp two-edged sword (see Eph.6:17, Heb.4:12, Rev.19:15)? What do we see in the face of Jesus (see 2 Cor.4:6)?

v.17 What is the only proper response one may have when seeing the glory of God (see Ex.3:6, Isa.6:5, Ezk.1:28, 3:23, Acts 9:3, 4)? **Who** is the First and the Last (see 22:12, 13, 1:8)?

v.18 What does the One who has the keys do? What keys does the Lord Jesus have (see 3:7)?

v.19.20 How does v.19 provide an outline for the **book** of Revelation (see 4:1)? What is a lampstand and its purpose (see Zech.4)?

REVELATION 2, 3 (Session 62)

The messages to the 7 churches have significance in several ways. They **speak** to the individual churches addressed. They speak to individual believers. They outline the course of the church's history.

Ephesus - The Apostolic Era (until about 100 AD)

Smyrna - The church under Rome's 10 edicts of persecution (until about 300 AD)

Pergamum - The worldly church as the state religion of Rome (until about 400 AD)

Thyatira - The Roman Catholic system (beginning about 400 AD)

NEW TESTAMENT K N PASSAGES

REVELATION 2, 3

Sardis - The Protestant system (**beginning about** 1500 AD)

Philadelphia - The revived missionary church (beginning about 1700 AD)

Laodicea - The **lukewarm** church of the last days (beginning in the early 1900's AD)

Each message to the 7 churches contains:

- (1) A description of the Lord Jesus as found in the vision of chapter 1 which specifically relates to the condition of that assembly.
- (2) The Lord's statement, "I know..."
- (3) **A** message to the overcomer
- (4) A call to hear what the Holy Spirit is saying.

Only Smyrna and Philadelphia have no word of **reproof**; the suffering church and the obedient church. Only these 2 churches are contrasted with the pretended "church which is actually a synagogue of Satan.

From these 7 messages, what does the Lord specifically commend? What does the Lord **specifically** condemn?

What is an overcomer (see I Jn.5:1-4)?

REVELATION 2

v.4 What is our "first" love (see Lk.15:22 where the same **Greek** word is translated "best")?

v.6, 15 **Nicolaitan** comes from 2 Greek words, *Nikao* - "I conquer" and Laos - "the common people"
What does the Lord Jesus hate in His church (see 3 Jn.9, 10)?

v.10 If Christians have authority over "all the power of the enemy" - Lk.10:19, and the Lord Jesus has all authority in heaven and earth - Mt.28:18, then how could Satan cast some of them into prison where they would die?

v.13 "**Antipas**" means "**against all**". What does it mean to be a **faithful** witness?

v.20 What are the tests of a true prophet of God (see Deut.13:1-11, 18:18-22, Jer.23:14-22, I Jn.4:1-6)?

REVELATION 3

v.8 Why was the open door set before them?

"Laodicea" means "the people's rights". What is the focus of those whose orientation is "rights"?

v.15, 16 Coming into the city of Laodicea travelers encounter a natural cold spring of water for their refreshment. On the opposite side of the city, there is a natural hot spring for healing. How does this relate to the Lord's statements to this church?

v.17 How does this relate to their spiritual condition and to John 15:5?

THE DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE
Every disciple when he is fully trained will be like his master - Lk.6:40

BASIC
DOCTRINE

BASIC DOCTRINE

GOD (Session 1)

GENESIS 1: 1 *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”*

- 1) When **did** this occur?
- 2) What does this tell us about God in relation to time?
- 3) What does this tell us about God in relation to space?
- 4) What else can we learn about God **from** this verse?
- 5) What did God do here?
- 6) What properties and /or conditions must exist for something to be created? What does this tell us about God (see Acts 17:24, 25)? What does this tell us about the creation (see Heb.11:3)?
- 7) What contrasts are present in this verse?
- 8) What is God **not** from this verse? If God were the sum of all creation or a spirit permeating or living in all of creation (as in Hinduism), what impossible contradictions would exist in His being if this were so?
- 9) What necessary moral consequences flow from the fact that God created?
- 10) How does this verse disprove evolution? Did God use evolutionary means to bring about the **universe** as we know it? Explain.
- 11) Why does the Bible not begin with a philosophical inquiry into the being and nature of God?
- 12) What is the foundational spiritual principle found in this first verse of the Scriptures?

GOD (Session 2)

GOD IS SPIRIT - Jn.4:24 The following characteristics relate to God as Spirit.

Living Ps.42:2, Acts 14:15. What distinguishes life from non-life? Are **all** living things identical? What differing types of life can we observe (see 1 Cor.15:39)? Can we expect that a dog **will** understand everything about a man? Can we expect that man **will** understand everything about God? Explain.

Invisible 1 Tim.1:17. Will we ever see God (see Mt.5:8, 1 Tim.6:16)? Explain

Incorporeal (not made up of matter) Lk.24:39. If God has no form or bodily parts, what do these passages mean (see Isa.65:2, Neh.1:6, Ps.34:16, Ps.91:4)?

Infinite Ps.90:2, Ps.139:7-10, 1 Kings 8:27, Rev.4:8. Where is God? With respect to what is God infinite?

Personality Ps.139:17, Jas.1:18, Gen.28:13, Ps.78:40, Ezk.6:9, Isa.43:24, Ps.147:10, 11, Zeph.3:17
What are the basic elements of personality that God possesses?

Self-Sufficient Acts 17:25. Does God have any needs? Explain

Omnipotent (all powerful) Job 42:2, Lk.1:37. What can God do? What can God not do (see Hab.1:13, 2 Tim 2:13, Heb.6:18, Tit.1:2)? Does this contradict Lk.1:37? Explain.

Immutable (unchanging) Mal.3:6, Jas.1:17, Ps.119:89, Heb.6:17, Heb 13:8. Does Jer.18:8 contradict this? Explain Does the fact that God doesn't change mean that He must always do the same things at all times (see Josh 5:12)? Explain.

BASIC DOCTRINE

GOD

GOD IS SPIRIT

Omniscient (all knowing) Ps.139:4, Mt.11:27, I Cor.2:10, 11, Ps.147:5, Isa.46:9, 10, Ps.147:4, Mt.10:29, 30, Mt.6:8, I Sam.23:11, I Cor.4:5. List the specific categories of things that God knows.

GOD (Session 3)

GOD IS LIGHT - I Jn.1:5 The following characteristics relate to God as light

Trinity I Cor.8:6, Jn.1:1, 14, Acts 5:3, 4. In these verses, who is referred to as God?

a) What do these Old Testament passages and their New Testament parallels tell us about the Lord Jesus? Isa.6:1 and Jn.12:37-41, Joel 2:32 and Rm.10:9, 13, Isa.40:3 and Mt.3:3, Ps.68:18 and Eph.4:7, 8, Isa.45:23 and Phil.2:10, Deut.32:39 and Jn.8:58.

b) What attributes of God are seen in the Lord Jesus in each of the following verses? Jn.1:4, Heb.7:3, Heb.13:8, Jn.14:6, I Jn.5:20, I Jn.3:16, I Jn.4:16, Lk.1:35, Jn.17:5, Mt.28:20, Col.2:3, Mt.28:18, Isa.9:6.

c) What works of God are ascribed to the Lord Jesus in the following verses? Jn.1:3, Col.1:16, Jn.5:27-29, Col.1:17, Heb.1:3, Mt.25:31, 32, Mk.2:10.

d) What was the Lord Jesus willing to receive from men and angels in the following verses? Jn.5:23, Jn.20:28, Heb.1:6, Rev.5:8-14.

e) What claims did the Lord Jesus make about Himself in the following verses? Mt.22:42-45, Jn.5:23, Jn.8:19, Jn.8:58, 59, Jn.10:28-33, Jn.14:8, 9, Jn.17:3, 5.

f) What do these Old Testament verses tell us about the Messiah? Isa.7:14, Isa.9:6, Mic.5:2, Ps.45:6, 7, Ps.110:1, Jer.23:5, 6.

g) What is the Angel / Messenger of the Lord revealed to be in the following verses? Gen.16:7-13, Gen.22:11-18, Ex.3:2-4, Jud.13:15-23. The Angel of the Lord is never mentioned in the New Testament. Based upon who He was revealed to be in the Old Testament and that He never appears in the New Testament, who do we conclude that He is? (Note: both the Hebrew and the Greek words for "Angel" also mean "Messenger" and are translated that way in various Old and New Testament passages).

h) How do these Old Testament verses demonstrate the Trinity at work? Gen.1:26, Gen.11:7, Isa.6:8, Isa.48:16?

i) What is true of the Holy Spirit from the following verses? Heb.9:14, Ps.139:7, I Cor.2:10, Lk.1:35, Neh.9:20, Rom.15:30, Jn.16:13, I Cor.2:11, Eph.4:30, I Cor.12:11, 2 Cor.13:14, 2 Cor.3:17.

j) What works of God are seen in the Holy Spirit from the following verses? Gen.1:1, 2, I Cor.12:4-6, Jn.6:63, I Pet.1:10-12.

Unity Deut.6:4, I Tim.2:5. In what sense is God one?

Glory Ex.33:18-23. What is the glory of God? What is the united purpose and practice of the Godhead (see Jn.17:1, Jn.16:13,14)?

BASIC DOCTRINE

GOD (Session 4)

GOD IS LIGHT - 1 Jn. 1:5 The following characteristics relate to God as light

True "...the only true God...Thy word is truth..." - Jn.17:3, 17

Define "truth" Are the following statements true or false? Explain your answer for each

- a) Truth can be known.
- b) Truth can be communicated.
- c) Truth is not a matter of one's own perspective.
- d) There is absolute truth.

Truth is one, i.e., anything that is true is in harmony with all other truths. Agree / disagree. **Explain.**

The Bible contains both absolute truth (i.e. All have **sinned**) and relative truth (i.e. **Lazarus** is dead). Agree / disagree. Explain.

The only valid basis upon which anything **can** be known for certain is if there be revelation **from** an infinite, personal, non-arbitrary source. Agree / disagree. Explain.

Righteous / Just "*For the Lord is Righteous: He loves righteousness*" - Ps.11:7. What is the basic idea of righteousness? What does this tell us about the nature of God? What is meant by justice (see Ps.58:10, 11, Mt 10:41, 42, Mt.16:27)?

Jealous "*For you shall not worship any other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God*" - Ex.34:14. In what sense is God jealous? Is jealousy on our part appropriate in some or in no situations (see Gal.5:19, 20, 2 Cor.11:2)?

Hate Ps.5:4-6, Ps.11:5, Jer.12:8, Hos.9:15. Does **God** love everyone? Explain. What is hate as it relates to God?

Sovereign 1 Chron.29:11, 12, Eph.1:11, Col.1:17, Heb.1:2, 3, Prov.21:1. Is there anything outside the realm of God's ordering and control? Explain.

Holy "*Holy. Holy. Holy, is the Lord God Almighty...*" - Rev.4:8. How is holiness different from righteousness? What does it mean to be holy?

GOD (Session 5)

GOD IS LOVE - 1Jn.4:8 The following characteristics relate to God as love

Love Describe the love between the Father and the Son (see Jn.3:35, Jn.5:20, Jn.10:17, Jn.14:31, Jn.15:10).

- a) What elements comprise God's love to man (see Eph.2:4-8)?
- b) How can an inferior / subordinate show love to a superior (see Jn.14:15, 23, 24, Jn.15:9, 10, 1 Jn.5:3)?
- c) What is the relationship between purity and love (see 1 Tim.1:5, 1 Pet.1:22)?
- d) Is love primarily an emotion (see Mt.5:44)? Explain.
- e) The following verses use a different word for love (Gk. *Phileo* - affectionate devotion). What **element(s)** does this add to the concept of love (see Jn.16:27, 1 Cor.16:22, 1 Pet.1:22, Heb.13:1)?
- f) What do these tell us about true love (see Mk.10.21, Eph.4:15)?
- g) Is God's love unconditionally given to everyone (see Rom 8:35-39, Lam.3:22, 23, Ps.78:58, 59, Hos.9:15, Mal.1:2, 3)? Explain.

BASIC DOCTRINE

GOD

Love

h) What is the difference between God's love for the world and His love for the believers (see **Jn.3:16**, **Jn.14:21-23**)?

Compassion / Mercy **Eph.2:4**, **Lk.10:33-37**. Define mercy. Is God obligated to show mercy **equally to all** (see **Rom.9:15-18**)?

Patience / Longsuffering **Ps.78:38**, **2 Pet.3:9**. Towards what is the patience of God directed in these verses?

Providence / Benevolence **Acts 14:17**, **Mt.5:44, 45**, **Lk.6:32-35**. How else is **the goodness and** love of God shown to men?

Grace **2 Cor.8:9**, **Eph.2:5-8**, **Eph.1:7, 8**, **Tit.2:11, 12**. What is **grace**?

Good **Ps.119:68**, **Mk.10:18**

Guide **Ex.15:13**

Joy **Zeph.3:17**

Preserver **Deut.32:10**

Savior **Isa.12:2**

Kindness **Rom.2:4**, **Eph.2:7**, **Lk.6:35**

MAN (Session 6)

"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; and let them rule...over all the earth...in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them'" - Gen.1:26, 27.

What attributes of God would you expect to be seen in man **from** the above?

What was man's relationship to the creation to be? Is this a present reality (see **Rom.8:20-25**, **Heb.2:5-8**)? Explain.

As being created, what does this tell us about man?

Many people believe that there is no God. They think that man was not created but rather evolved **from** other life-forms. What are the implications of evolution with respect to:

- (1) humanness in contrast to animals.
- (2) responsibility/ accountability.
- (3) purpose.
- (4) morality.
- (5) man's place in the universe.

Ps.58:3 When is a man constituted a human being? What does this **tell** us about abortion?

Gen.2:15-17, **Jn.8:34, 36**. What is freedom? In what sense were Adam and Eve **free**?

Compare **Mk.8:35** and **Lk.9:25**. Man is viewed as a unity, as acting as one. See **2 Cor.5:10**. Is it possible for one's heart to be right and the actions through the body to be **sinful**? Explain.

Mt.10:28. What aspects of man's constitution are noted here? Man is seen as **having** two parts. What is the soul capable of (see **Ezk.18:4**, **Ps.107:9**, **Lev.26:11**, **Job 30:5**, **S.of S. 1:7**)?

I Thess.5:23. Man is viewed here as having 3 parts. What are the general aspects of each part? **See** **I Cor.6:12, 13, 9:27**. **Describe** the relative roles of each aspect of man's constitution.

Rom.8:16, **I Cor.6:17**. What role does the human spirit take?

What is the purpose of the body (see **2 Pet.1:13**, **I Cor.6:13**, **2 Cor.4:7**, **Heb.10:5**)?

Amos 3:3, **1 Jn.1:7**. On what basis does fellowship exist?

BASIC DOCTRINE

MAN

Mt.25:46, Acts 24:15. How long will man exist?

Gen.2:18, I Cor.11:9. What is the created role of the woman in relation to the **man**?

Gen.2:24. Man is viewed as one yet as two. How does male and female being one relate to the image of God?

Describe man and his environment as created by God (**see Gen.1:28, 31, 2:8, 9, 25**)

Gen.2:15. Could man have been like God without working? Explain.

SIN (Session 7)

What characterized the nature of sin as seen in its origin in **Ezk.28:15-18** and Isa.14:11-14?

Review OT Key Passages, Session 2.

Gen.3:1-13

What is the essence of sin?

Consider **carefully** the steps that led to sin, the nature of temptation, and the relationship between **Eve, the Lord**, and Satan during this process.

Describe how sin came to be.

SIN (Session 8)

What do these verses tell us about the extent of sin (see Gen.3:16-19, **Rom.3:23**, 8:19-22, Job 15:14-16, Job 25:5, 6, **Prov.20:9**, Ps.14:1-3, **Rom.3:9-18**, I Kings 8:46)?

Jn.19:11. Are some sins worse than others? Explain.

Ezk.16:51, 52, 2 Chron.21:13. Are all men equally evil? Explain.

What effects has sin had upon our: MINDS - Rom.1:28-31, 8:5-7, Eph.4:17-19 BODES - Rom.1:24, **Eph.2:3**, 4:19 HEARTS - Rom.1:21, Mk.7:20-23, Eph.4:18, **Gen.6:5** WILL - Rom.1:32, **Jn.8:34**, **Rom.7:14-24**, Jn.5:40.

What penalties does sin bring (see **Rom.6:23**, **Ezk.18:20**, Prov.14:12, **Rom.2:5-8**, 2 **Thess.1:S-10**, Gal.6:7, 8)?

How did sin enter the world (see **Rom.5:12**)?

Rom.5:15-17. What resulted for all men because of Adam's sin?

What connection has developed **because** of sin (see I **Jn.3:8**, 10, Acts 26:18, 2 **Cor.4:4**, **Jn.8:44**)?

What do men, by their **basic** nature, lack (see 2 **Tim.3:4**, **Jn.5:42**, Jn.3:19, Rom.3:11)?

Describe man's abilities since sin (see Rom.5:6, **8:7, 8**).

Against whom is sin committed (**see Ps.51:4**, Mt.18:21)?

Rom.2:15. What is conscience?

BASIC DOCTRINE

SIN

What else do we learn about conscience **from** the following(see I Cor.10:29, I Tim.4:2, I Tim.1:5, 2 Cor.1:12, 1 Cor.8:7, Rom.9:1)? What is its standard of right and wrong? **Does** everyone's **conscience** direct them to do good (see Prov.30:20)? Is **our** conscience to be our guide? Explain.

Mt.9:11-13. How do these diseases illustrate sin and its effects: fever - lame - blind - **mute / dumb** - deaf - leprosy - withered hand - palsy - epilepsy?

SIN (Session 9)

Sin has resulted in all men becoming:

GUILTY (deserving of punishment) - Ps.32:5, Jas.2:9, 10, Jas.4:11, 12, Prov.20:9

CORRUPT - Rom.3:9-18, Ps.14:1-3, Gen.6:11,12, Eph.4:17-19, 22, Mk.7:20-23, Job15:14-16, Gal.6:7, 8, Rom.1:24, Eph.2:3

in BONDAGE / POWERLESS / CAPTIVES - Jn.8:34, Rom.6:16-23, 2 Pet.2:19, Rom.7:7-24, Eph.2:3, Rom.5:6, Rom.8:7, 8, Ps.16:2, Isa.64:6, Jer.13:23, Job14:4, Ps.49:7, 8, Jn.6:44, 65, Jn.8:44, Acts 26:18, 2 Cor.4:4, I Jn.3:8-10, I Jn.5:19

MISERABLE - Mt.11:28, Isa.57:20, 21, Ps.16:4, Ps.32:3, 4, 10

DEAD - Rom.5:17, 6:23, Eph.2:1, 5, 4:18, Rev.20:13-15

ENEMIES - Rom.5:10, Col.1:21, Jas.4:4

DARKENED - Rom.1:21, Jn.12:35, 36, Eph.4:18, I Jn.2:11, 2 Cor.4:4

CHRTST (Session 10)

Review Basic Doctrine, Session 3. Is the Lord Jesus **fully** God (see Jn.1:1, Col.2:9)? Explain. Which verses will you use to demonstrate this truth?

Why did the Lord Jesus become man (see Jn.1:14, 18, Heb.1:2, 3, 1 Tim.1:15, Mk.10:45, Lk.19:10, Ps.40:6-8, Heb.2:14, 17, I Jn.3:5, 8)?

How did the Lord Jesus become man (see Isa.7:14, Lk.1:30-35, Mt.1:2-23, Phil.2:5-8)?

What did He empty Himself of (see Phil.2:5-11, Jn.17:4, 5)?

How did He live while upon earth (see Jn.8:29, 5:19, 30, 8:28, 12:49, 14:10, 4:34, Lk.2:49, 3:21, 22, Lk.4:1, 14, 5:16, 17, 6:12, 9:18, 28, 29, 10:21, 22, 11:1, 22:17, 19, 31, 32, 40-46, 23:46, Heb.9:14, Acts 10:38)?

Describe the Lord's quality of life as a man (see Jn.8:29, 46, 17:4, 2 Cor.5:21, Heb.4:15, 7:26, I Pet.2:22).

What do these verses tell us about the moral perfection of the Lord Jesus (see Jn.1:17, Mt.11:19, 29, Lk.2:40, 51, Mk.3:5, Lk.19:41, Jn.11:5, Mk.10:13-16, 21, Mt.9:36, Jn.8:11, Lk.10:21, Jn.7:7, Jn.2:14-17)?

BASIC DOCTRINE

CHRIST (Session 11)

"Jesus said to him, "Follow Me" - Mt.8:22. "I gave you an example that you should do as I did to you" - Jn.13:15.

How did the Lord Jesus conduct Himself with the following types of people and in the following contexts?

In religious meetings - Mt.4:23, 9:35-38, Mk.1:21-28, 3:1-6, 6:2-6, Lk.4:16-37, 13:10-17, Jn.6:41-67, 7:14-44, 8:12-20, 10:22-39, 18:19-21.

At dinner - Lk.5:29-39, 7:36-50, 10:38-42, 11:37-54, 14:1-24, 19:1-27, 22:14-34, Jn.12:1-8

With enthusiasts / fans - Lk.8:4, 9, 10, 9:57-62, 11:27-32, 14:15-35, Jn.2:23-25, 6:2, 11, 14, 15, 25-41, 8:30-59, 12:12-19.

Outcasts - Lk.5:12-14, 29-32, 7:36-50, 8:26-39, 43-48, 13:11, 12, 18:35-43, 19:1-10, Mk.7:24-30, Mt.9:10, 11, Jn.4:4-26, 5:1-14, 9:1-11, 35-41.

Children - Mt.18:1-14, Mk.10:13-16, Lk.18:15-17.

Devil - Mt.16:23, Lk.4:1-13, Jn.12:31, 14:30.

Multitudes - Mt.9:36, 14:14, Mk.6:33, 34, Lk.6:17-19.

Rich - Mk.12:41-44, Lk.6:24, 25, 12:13-21, 16:14, 15, 19-31, 18:18-30, 19:1-10.

Self-righteous - Lk.5:30-39, 6:1-5, 10:25-37, 16:14, 15, 18:9-14.

Hypocrites - Mt.23:13-36, 27:1-14, Lk.6:39-46, 11:37-54, 12:54-59, 13:14-17, Jn.8:1-11.

Legalists (who say, "my rules are the same as God's law") - Mk.7:1-13, 6:6-11, 10:25-37, 15:1-32, Jn.5:16-18, 36-47.

Hardhearted - Mt.26:57-68, Mk.12:1-12, Lk.5:17-26, 11:29-32, 17:20, 21, 20:1-8, 22:52, 53, 66-70, Jn.2:14-22, 18:19-23.

Sincere - Mt.8:5-13, 9:18-30, 11:2-6, 15:20-28, 20:29-34, Mk.12:28-34, Lk.4:38, 39, 5:12-14, 18-25, 7:6-10, 18:35-43, 23:39-43, Jn.1:36-42, 43-51, 3:1-15, 4:39-42, 46-54, 11:21-44, 20:11-18.

Family - Mt.12:46-50, Mk.3:21, Lk.2:48, 49, 8:19-21, Jn.2:3-5, 12, 7:3-8, 19:26, 27

Politicians - Mt.27:11-14, Lk.13:31, 32, 23:7-12, Jn.18:33-38, 19:9-11.

CHRIST (Session 12)

"Jesus said to him, 'Follow Me'" - Mt.8:22. "I gave you an example that you should do as I did to you" - Jn.13:15.

How did the Lord Jesus respond to His own disciples when they displayed:

Ignorance - Mt.3:14, 15, 9:14-17, 11:2-6, 13:10-23, 36-52, 17:10-13, 19-21, 18:1-14, 21-35, 19:10-12, 25, 26, 27 through 20:16, 24:1 through 25:46, 26:17-19, Mk.11:20-26, Lk.9:33-36, Jn.4:31-38.

Worldliness - Mt.8:21, 22, 16:24-28.

Pride - Mk.9:33-37, 38-50, 10:41-45, Lk.9:54-56.

Unbelief - Mt.8:23-27, 14:30, 31, 26:33-35, Mk.16:14, 15, Lk.22:60-62, 24:13-32, 36-43, Jn.20:11-29.

BASIC DOCTRINE

CHRIST

Need of instruction - Mt.5:1 through 7:27, 9:36-38, 10:1 through 11:1, 15:32, 38, 17:9, 22-27, 18:15-20, 19:23, 24, 20:17-19, 21:1-7, 23:1-13, 26:1, 2, 26-30, 28:16-20, Lk.10:1-20, 10:21-24, 16:1-13, 18:1-8, 24:44-49, Jn.13 through 16.

Unconcern/irritation at others' needs - Mt.14:15-21, 15:21-28, 19:13-15, 26:6-13, 36-46, 50-54, Mk.10:46-52, Jn.9:1-7.

Fear - Mt.14:25-31, 17:1-8.

Self-seeking - Mk.10:35-40.

Reproof - Mt.15:12-14, 15:21-23, 20:20-28, 26:20-25, Mk.1:37-39, 4:36-41, 5:30-34, 8:31-38, Lk.5:3-11, 10:38-42, Jn.6:60-70, 11:7-16.

Lack of responsiveness - Mt.15:15-20, 16:5-12, Mk.6:49-52, Lk.9:43-45, Jn.2:23-25, 8:31-59, 21:3-14, 15-19, 19-23.

Responsiveness/belief - Mt.16:15-21, Lk.11:1-13, 17:5-10, Jn.1:35-39, 43-51.

Self-confidence - Mt.26:31-35

CHRIST (Session 13)

The offices of the Lord Jesus are three. He is prophet, priest, and king. He is the Way (King), the Truth (Prophet), and the Life (Priest).

PROPHET Acts 3:20-23, Jn.1:1, 14, 16, 3:11, 32, 34, 4:19, 25, 26, 41-44, 5:24, 25, 34, 43, 47, 6:45, 63, 68, 7:16-18, 46, 8:14, 16, 26, 28, 31, 32, 37, 38, 40, 45, 47, 51, 9:39, 12:46, 48-50, 18:37, Mt.7:28, 29, Mk.1:38.

As the Word He speaks to our ignorance, blindness, delusion, futility, foolishness, dullness, hardness, demonic wisdom, distortion, and enmity. He is the image of the invisible God (Col.1:15), and has fully set forth, declared, and explained Him (Jn.1:18, Heb.1:2).

PRIEST As priest, what works are performed by the Lord Jesus (see Heb.9:11-15, I Tim.2:5, Jn.17:1-26, Heb.4:14-16, 7:22-28, 9:24, 25)?

KING What are the primary things that a king does (see I Sam.8:20, 2 Sam.11:1, Prov.8:15, 16:10-15, 20:8, 26, 28, 29:4, 14)?

CHRIST (Session 14)

What do the following symbols/illustrations tell us about the Lord Jesus?

WORD - Jn.1:1 DOOR - Jn.10:7, 9 SHEPHERD - Jn.10:11, 14, 16, 27, 28, I Pet.5:4, Heb.13:20
VINE - Jn.15:1-8 LIGHT - Jn.1:4, 8:12, 12:35 LAMB - Jn.1:29, I Pet.1:19, Rev.5:6, 8 BRIGHT
MORNING STAR - 2 Pet.1:19, Rev.22:16 ALPHA & OMEGA - Rev.1:18, 22:12, 13 ROOT &
OFFSPRING OF DAVID - Rev.5:5, 22:16 THE WAY - Jn.14:6 PASSOVER - I Cor.5:7, Ex.12
ROCK - I Cor.10:4, Ex.17:1-7 MANNA - Jn.6:31f, Ex.16 TABERNACLE - Jn.1:14, Heb.9:1-15,
10:19-21 SERPENT IN WILDERNESS - Jn.3:14, Num.21:4-9 TEMPLE - Jn.2:19-22

BASIC DOCTRINE

CHRIST

PHYSICIAN - Mt.9:10-13 KING - Jn.18:36-37

SALVATION (Session 15)

SUBSTITUTION

Why do men die (see Gen.2:17, Ezk.18:4, Rom.6:23)? What caused the Lord Jesus' death (see Jn.10:17, 18, Mt.27:50, Isa.53:12)?

For what reasons did the Lord Jesus die (see Isa.53:5, 8, I Cor.15:3, Rom.5:6, 8, I Pet.3:18, Rom.6:10, 8:3)?

What two ideas are contained in the word "for" (see 2 Cor.5:14, Gal.3:13)?

What is the essence of substitution (see Rom.5:12-21, 2 Cor.5:21, Isa.53:6, Gen.22:12-14)?

Review the Day of Atonement in OT Key Passages, Session 24. How does this illustrate the Lord Jesus being our substitute'?

PROPIITIATION

Heb.9:14. For whom or for what was the death of Christ intended in this verse? What necessitated His being offered up unto God (see Heb.9:22, Rom.1:18, Jn.3:14 [Num.21:4-9], Rom.2:5, 8, 9, Heb.10:27, 30, 31)?

"Propitiation" means "satisfaction". What was it that was satisfied by the death of the Lord Jesus (I Jn.2:2, 4:10, Rom 3:25, Isa 53:10, 11)?

The word "propitiation" in Rom.3:25 is the same word for "mercy seat" in the Old Testament. "Seat" here means a place where mercy is given. What made this a mercy seat and not a judgment seat (see Lev.16:2, 11-17, 32-34. Heb.9:3-15)?

What was the most significant aspect of the mercy seat (see Ex.25:17-22)?

What was under the mercy seat (see Heb 9:4)? What do each of these items represent: with respect to Israel (see Ex.31:18 - 32:8 [Law], Num.11:1-6, 21:5 [Manna], Num.17:1-10 [Rod]); with respect to Christ (see Jn.6:31-35 [Manna], Eph.1:19, 20 [Rod], Jn.8:29 [Law])?

What do the Cherubim represent (see Gen 3:24)?

What happens if you try to approach God apart from the blood upon the mercy seat (see Num.4:5, 18-20, I Sam.6:19, 20)?

Summarize how these aspects of the mercy seat describe the Lord Jesus and His work of propitiation.

Explain the significance of Rom 3:25 in light of the above.

RANSOM / REDEMPTION

What can pay the debt of our sin (see I Pet.1:18, 19)?

What has this payment resulted in for believers (see I Cor.6:19, 20, Col.1:14, Rev.5:9)?

How complete was this payment (see Jn.19:30)? The word "it is finished" is translated elsewhere as "paid in full" What did the death of Christ "finish or "pay in full"?

BASIC DOCTRINE

SALVATION (Session 16)

RESURRECTION (Footnotes are in *italics* and are listed in the appendix following)

I. The Lord Jesus Christ is the revelation of the infinite God.

1. He claims this Himself (*1-9*)
2. His followers acknowledged that He is God. (*10-12*)
3. His enemies recognized that He made this claim. (*13*)

II. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus demonstrates that His claims are true.

1. That the Lord Jesus knows all is displayed by His prediction of His death by crucifixion and His bodily resurrection on the 3rd day following. (*14*)
2. That He has all power is seen in His statement that He had the power and authority to raise Himself from the dead. (*15*)
3. He suffered an actual death by crucifixion for the sins of all men. (*16-21*)
4. He was buried in a tomb with Roman soldiers assigned to guard the tomb **from** tampering. (*22-27*)
5. On the 3rd day He arose as He had predicted and showed Himself alive to a wide audience of eyewitnesses. (*28-40*)
6. The soldiers were bribed by the Jewish leaders to spread a lie that His body was stolen. (*41-43*)

III. These lies about the facts of the resurrection are disproved by the following.

1. Some unbelievers say, "*The whole thing never happened*"
 - A. If so, how could His followers accuse the Jewish people of the rejection and crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, their Messiah, if He never existed? (*44*)
 - B. Why did more than 3,000 of these antagonists of Christianity feel remorse, ask forgiveness from, and become followers of a non-existent person? (*45*)
 - C. If so, the message of His followers would have been repudiated by the 1,000s of people who supposedly had known of and seen this non-existent person, Christ. (*46*)
 - D. If so, why did these followers speak and write known lies since they themselves taught that liars shall not obtain the very eternal life they spoke of? (*47*)
 - E. Why did these followers die cruel and torturous deaths for a known lie that they had fabricated themselves? (*48*)
2. Others claim, "*No one knows what really happened*"
 - A. All that the Lord Jesus did was public and widely known. (*49-52*)

Skeptics of our day, far removed **from** the actual events, may claim ignorance of what really occurred. But this is precisely what the contemporary audience could **not** do. They were the very ones who were eyewitnesses of the things being told them by His followers. (*53*) It is impossible **to** embellish and contrive myths when your audience are the very ones who experienced the things you are speaking of! Following generations may be deceived into believing untruths, but not the initial eyewitnesses.
 - B. These multitudes, initially indifferent or antagonistic, were not fooled. Neither were they fools. They believed the obvious

The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God' - Psalm 14:1

APPENDIX TO RESURRECTION

I. I The Lord Jesus Christ claims that He is:

- (1) infinite in time (Jn 8:58)
- (2) infinite in space (Mt 28:20)
- (3) LORD (Mt 22:42-45)
- (4) equal with God (Jn 10:30)
- (5) the final Judge of all men (Jn 5:22, 27-29)
- (6) the source of life (Jn 5:21)
- (7) the absolute Truth (Jn 14:6)

SALVATION

APPENDIX TO RESURRECTION

- (8) infinite in knowledge (Mt.11:27, Jn.1:48)
- (9) possesses **all** authority in **Heaven** and earth (Mt.28:18)

L 2 His followers acknowledged His claim to be God:

- (10) **He** did the works of God (Jn.10:37, 38)
- (11) He **received** worship as God **from** men (Jn.9:38)
- (12) He accepted the titles of GOD and LORD (Jn.20:28)

L 3 (13) His enemies recognized His claims to be God when they accused Jesus of blasphemy (Jn.10:33)

II. 1 (14) The Lord Jesus demonstrated that He knows all when He predicted His death and resurrection (Mt.20:18, 19)

II. 2 (15) That He has all power was demonstrated by raising Himself from the dead (Jn.2:19-22)

II. 3 The facts of His crucifixion:

- (16) He was beaten with fists (Mt.26:67)
- (17) Scourged (whipped on the back until raw) (Mt.27:26)
- (18) Beaten on the head with a reed (Mt.27:30)
- (19) Crucified (**by** hanging on a cross by nail-pierced hands and feet) (Jn.19:18, Jn.20:25)
- (20) He died (Mk.15:44, 45, Jn.19:33)
- (21) His side was thrust with a spear (Jn.19:34)

II. 4 The facts of His burial:

- (22) His body was bound in linen wrappings with about 100 pounds of spices according to Jewish burial custom (Jn.19:39, 40)
- (23) He was laid in a tomb cut out of the rock (Lk.23:53)
- (24) A large stone was rolled against the entrance (Mt.27:60)
- (25) Several of His followers watched (Mt.27:61, Lk.23:55, Jn.19:40)
- (26) The Jewish leaders asked of **Pilate**, the **Roman** governor, and received **permission** for a guard in order to prevent theft of the body (Mt.27:62-65)
- (27) They made the tomb secure and set a seal on the stone (to verify any tampering) (Mt.27:66)

II. 5 His resurrection was verified by a large number of eyewitnesses:

- (28) **On** the morning of the 3rd day, His followers found the tomb empty (Lk.24:1-3)
- (29) They were informed by an angel that the Lord Jesus was risen **from** the dead (Mt.28:5-6)
- (30) The resurrection was confirmed by the Lord Jesus' bodily appearance (Lk.24:36-43) to:
- (31) Mary Magdalene (Jn.19:16-18)
- (32) the 2 Marys (Mt.28:1, 9)
- (33) 2 **men** on the road to Emmaus (Lk.24:13-35)
- (34) Peter (Lk.24:34)
- (35) 10 disciples (Jn.20:19-20)
- (36) others (Lk.24:33-36)
- (37) 11 disciples including, Thomas, a doubter (Jn.20:26-29)
- (38) 7 followers (Jn.21:1-3)
- (39) 500 people at one time who **still** were alive as eyewitnesses in 55 AD, 22 years **after** Christ's resurrection (I Cor.15:6)
- (40) These convincing proofs continued over a period of 40 days to these and other eyewitnesses (Acts 1:3)

II. 6 The only contemporary explanation for the empty tomb was an obvious lie.

- (41) The guards, as well as the 2 **Marys**, saw the angel and heard the announcement of Christ's resurrection (Mt.28:1-10)
- (42) The guards told the Jewish leaders what had happened (Mt.28:11)
- (43) The leaders bribed **them** to lie that His body had been stolen by **His** followers (Mt.28:12-15)

SALVATION

APPENDIX TO RESURRECTION

III. Everything about the life and death of the Lord Jesus was public and well known.

III. 1. A (44) Peter accused the crowd at Pentecost of nailing Jesus to a cross and killing Him (Acts 2:22-24)

III. 1. B (45) 3,000 of those accused by Peter repented and were baptized to show that they were becoming followers of the resurrected Christ (Acts 2:36-41)

III. 1. C (46) Paul speaks to the King, Agrippa, about Jesus as if it was a well attested fact and known widely even outside of Palestine (Acts 26:19, 22-26, I Cor.15:6)

III. 1. D (47) All forms of lying were condemned by the writings of His followers (Co.3:5-9, Rev.21:8, 27)

III. 1. E (48) Paul affirms that living dangerously for an obvious lie was a piteous situation (I Cor.15:12-19, 30-32)

III. 2. A (49) The news about Jesus went out everywhere into all the surrounding district of Galilee (Mk.1:28)

(50) Another time, the whole city had gathered around and many were healed (Mk.1:33, 34)

(51) Great multitudes from Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem, and outside the bounds of Palestine proper crowded to Christ and He healed many (Mk.3:7-10)

(52) Once, He miraculously fed a crowd of over 5,000 people (Mt.14:21)

(53) Cornelius, a Roman soldier, along with his family and friends living some 50 miles from Jerusalem, knew in much detail about the life and deeds of the Lord Jesus (Acts 10:1, 37-43)

SALVATION (Session 17)

RESURRECTION

Describe the properties of Jesus' resurrection body (see Lk.24:31, 39, Jn.20:26, I Cor.15:42, 43)

ASCENSION

Where is Jesus now (see Jn.20:17, Acts 1:11, 3:21, Heb.8:1, 10:12)?

What is the importance of Jesus' resurrection and ascension (see Jn.16:7, Acts 3:26, 5:31, Rom.1:4, 4:25, 5:10, I Cor.15:17, 20, 45, Eph.1:20, 22, 4:8, Heb.7:25)?

INTERCESSION

What is intercession(see Rom.8:34, Heb.7:23-25, 9:23, 24, I Jn.2:1)?

Ex.28:9-12, 15-21, 29, 30, 36-38. What is different about the 2 stones upon the shoulders of the high priest and the 12 individual stones upon his heart? Describe how this illustrates intercession. What does the golden plate, "Holiness to the Lord" tell us about intercession? On what basis are we accepted before God? What are the parallels with the Lord Jesus Christ?

SALVATION (Session 18)

PREDESTINATION / ELECTION

Romans 9:6-24

v.II On what basis did God choose individuals?

v.13 Is God obligated to love all individuals at all times? Explain.

BASIC DOCTRINE

SALVATION

PREDESTINATION / ELECTION

Romans 9:6-24

v.14, 15 Is God obligated to treat all men identically? Explain. What is the **difference** between "fair" and "just"? Which is true of God? Explain.

v.16 What does it mean, "the **man** who wills and he who runs"? What is God's choice dependent upon? What is it not dependent upon (see 2 Tim.1:9, Jn.15:16)?

v.18-20 Summarize what is taught here (see Job 33:13, Isa.45:9, 10).

v 21-24 Again, summarize the teaching of these verses

Compare I Pet.1:1, 2 and Rom.8:29. Is there a difference between foreknowledge and predestination? Explain.

What do these verses tell us about predestination (see Mt.11:25-27, Rom.8:29, 30, Eph.1:11, 2:10, Jn.15:19, 6:70, 3:37, Rom.11:5-8)?

How are believers described in these verses (Jn.6:37, 39, 17:6)?

How can a person come to faith in the Lord Jesus (see Jn.6:44, 63-65, Acts 16:14, 2 Tim.2:25, Mt.13:11)?

REPENTANCE / BELIEF

Repentance means, literally, "to have a change of mind-set". Is it the same as being sorry (see Mt.3:2, 8, Lk.13:5-9, Acts 3:19, 11:18, 20:21, 26:20, 2 Pet.3:9, 2 Cor.7:9, 10, Mt.27:3-5)? Explain.

Who should repent (see 2 Pet.3:9, Acts 17:30)?

How is it that one gets from one to the other (see Acts 26:18, Rom.8:6, Col.1:13)?

What does it mean to believe (see Acts 16:31, Jn.2:23, 24, Jas.2:19, Mt.7:21-23, Jn.8:31, 32)?

To whom is the offer of salvation extended (see Mt.11:28, Jn.1:12, 3:15, 16, 5:24, 7:37, 38, Acts 2:21, Rom.10:9-13, Rev.22:17)?

Why will men be judged (see Jn.3:18, 5:40)?

Jn.7:17. What promise is **made** here?

Acts 2:23, 13:48. What two **complementary** truths are seen in these passages?

Can we harmonize in our minds the sovereign choice of God and the responsible choice of man without denying one or both of them? Explain

RECEIVE

Is salvation obtained by merely believing certain facts (see Jas.2:19)? Explain Jn.14:6 in light of this. What are we to receive in order to be saved (see Jn.1:12, Acts 26:18, Rom.5:17, 2 Thess.2:10, Rev.3:20)?

BASIC DOCTRINE

SALVATION (Session 19)

JUSTIFICATION / WORKS

How can man justify God (see Rom.3:4, Lk.7:29)? Is this the same as making God righteous? Explain. Define justification.

How is man justified before God (see Rom.4:2-8, 21-25, 3:20, 24, 26-28, 5:9, Gal.2:16, Tit.3:7)?

James 2:20-26 See NT Key Passages, Session 57

When was Abraham justified by faith (see Rom.4:2, 3, 21, 22, Gen.15:4-6)? When was he justified by works (see Gen.22:1-19)? Which came first? v.22, 23 What is the relationship between these two events?

Was Rahab justified by faith or by works (see Heb.11:31, Jas.2:25)? Explain. Was Rahab a practicing harlot at the time the spies came to Jericho (see Josh.2:6, Isa.19:9)? Explain. When had she believed in the Lord, before or after the spies came to her (see Josh.2:8-13)? Explain. When was she justified by works (see Jas.2:25)?

On what basis is a man justified before men?

What type of works are there (see Rom.3:20, 9:30-32, Heb.9:14, Gal.5:19, Mt.5:16, Eph.2:10, Phil.2:13, I Thess.1:3, 2 Thess.1:11, Gal.5:6)?

Whom does God justify (see Lk.18:9-14, Rom.4:5)?

SALVATION (Session 20)

FORGIVENESS

The word "forgive" means, literally, "to send away".

What does it mean for God to forgive (see Acts 10:43, Col.1:14, 2:14, Eph.1:7, Isa.43:25, 44:22, 55:7, Jer.50:20, Ps.103:12, I Jn.1:9, 2:12)?

In what sense does God not remember our sins (see Heb.8:12, Isa.43:25)? In what sense does He remember them (see Mt.12:36, 37, Rev.20:12)?

How can we know if God has forgiven our sins (see Mt.6:12, 14, 15, Mk.11:25, Mt.18:21-35)?

In Mt.18:21-35, to whom are we being compared in the parable? What is our debt? By comparison, what are offenses against us? What will happen to us if we do not forgive from our hearts? What qualities of heart must we possess in order to forgive?

RECONCILIATION

What was our relationship to God prior to believing in the Lord Jesus (see Rom.5:10, Col.1:21, 22)?

Who was reconciled, us or God (see Rom.5:10, 11, 2 Cor.5:18-20, Col.1:21, 22)? Explain

Define reconciliation.

REGENERATION

Why does man need a new birth (see Jn.3:3, 5, Eph.2:1, Tit.3:3-5)?

BASIC DOCTRINE

SALVATION

REGENERATION

How does a person become born again (see Jn.1:12, 13, I Jn.5:1)?

What means does God use to accomplish the new birth (see Jn.3:6, Tit.3:5, Jas.1:18, 21, I Pet.1:23)?

What does the new birth result in (see Jn.3:3-6, I Jn.2:29, 3:9, 4:7, 5:1, 4, 18)?

How can we know if we have been born again?

ADOPTION

Gal.3:23-26, 4:1-7. What was the job of the tutor or child-conductor? When the child grew up was he subject to tutors? Who then was the child in direct relationship to? What specific things have resulted from our adoption in the above passages?

SALVATION (Session 21)

CROSS / UNION WITH CHRIST

What does it mean to have died with Christ (see Gal. 2:20, 2 Cor.5:15, I Pet.2:24, Rom.6:2-11)?

What does it mean to Live in Christ (see Jn.15:1-8, 17:21-23, 1 Cor.1:30, 6:17, Rom.5:10, 8:9-11, 2 Cor.3:5, 6, 4:10, 11, 5:17, Eph.1:3, 2:5, 6, 14, 18, 21, 22, Col.1:27, 28, 2:2, 3, 8-14, 3:1-4)?

Who is our life? Col.3:4

Who is our hope? Col.1:27

Who is our wisdom? I Cor.1:30

Who is our righteousness? I Cor.1:30

Who is our sanctification? I Cor.1:30

Who is our power? I Cor.1:24

Who is our peace? Eph.2:14

Who is our glory? Jn.17:22

Are these "things" that can be given or distributed apart from the Giver Himself? Explain.

Christ is all - Col.3:11

To live is Christ - Phil.1:21

Apart from Me you can do nothing - Jn.15:5

What is the essence of genuine Christianity?

SALVATION (Session 22)

LAW

What is the essence of any **law**? What does any law **not** provide us?

There are at least 15 ways the word "law" is used in English. The NT uses the word "law" in at least 7 ways. **Identify** these 7 ways.

1. Rom.4:16
2. Rom.7:21, 23, 8:2
3. Jn.10:34, I Cor.14:21, **34**
4. Rom.2:12, Acts 13:39, Eph.2:15
5. Gal.5:23, 6:2, Heb.7:16, Jas.1:25, 2:8
6. Rom.2:15, 7:22, 8:7, I Cor.9:21, Jas.4:11, 12
7. Rom.4:14, 6:14, 10:4, Gal.2:16, 21, 3:2, 11, 5:4, 18, Phil.3:9

In a single verse the word "law" can be used in more than one way. How is "law" used in these verses?

Rom.2:14, 4:15, 5:13, 7:25, 9:31, I Cor.9:21, Gal.3:21, 4:21

SALVATION (Session 23)

NEW COVENANT AND THE LAW

Rom.11:6, Gal.2:21. How does the Law **nullify** the grace of God? What does the death of Christ tell us about the Law?

Galatians 3

v.10-14 Why are works of the Law under a curse? Why are men not justified by the Law? Since the Law is not of faith, upon what **principle** does it operate? What does the Spirit bring that the Law could never do (see v.2)? What then must be the basis of our justification, redemption, and sanctification?

v.14 What was the blessing of Abraham (see v.6-8)? How does the promise of the Spirit come? What is a promise dependent upon? What is obeying a law dependent upon?

The word "promise" is used in v. 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22. How does "promise" contrast with "law"?

v.16 Who is the "Seed"?

v.19 How long was the Law to be in effect?

v.21 Was the role of the Law **ever** to impart life?

v.24 What was its role?

v.25 What is its relationship to the one who has faith in Christ Jesus?

Galatians 4

v.21-31 What results from being under Law? Explain the **argument** of Paul in these verses.

SALVATION

NEW COVENANT AND THE LAW

Galatians 4

v.21, 30 Rather than wanting to be under the Law, what does God say ought to be done with it?

Galatians 5

v.4, 5 Are the Law and faith compatible? Explain. What is the contrast in these two verses?

2 Cor.3:5-11 List specific contrasts seen in these verses. What is the "letter that kills"?

Heb.7:11-16 On what basis did the people receive the Law? Did that Law bring about perfection, illness, life, and blessing? What need existed which necessitated a different priesthood? With the change of priesthood came also a change in what? Is the priesthood of Christ based upon the priesthood of Levi? If Levi is set aside, then what else has been set aside?

Rom.8:2-4 What could the Law not do? Why? Why is the Law totally impotent to give life, righteousness, or holiness? Who alone can accomplish these things?

List the specific descriptions of the Law and what its relation is to the Christian (see Heb.7:12, 18, 19, **8:6, 7, 13, 9:8-10, 24, 10:1, 8, 9, 15-17, Acts 15:9-11, Rom.10:4**).

SALVATION (Session 24)

SECURITY

Rom.8:1 What is true of those who are in Christ?

Jn.17:24, **Rom.11:29** What is a gift? Who is a gift dependent upon, the giver or the recipient? Does the Father take back what **He** has given? What was the desire of the Lord Jesus in this prayer? **Will** it be answered?

Jn.6:37, 39 Do all that the Father has given the Son come to Him? Will the Lord Jesus **refuse** or expel any who do? Why? Whose responsibility does this gift become? What is true of all that have been given to the Lord Jesus?

Jn.10:28, 29 What will never happen to those having eternal life? Why?

Eph.1:11 Can God's predetermined purpose fail?

1 Cor.1:8. Phil.1:6 What is God doing in these verses? Upon whom is this dependent?

2 Cor. 1:22 What is a seal? A pledge? What does this assure us of?

Gal.3:14-22 Upon whom is a promise dependent, the giver or recipient? What is the promise spoken of?

Eph.1:3, Col.2:10 What do believers lack?

Isa.43:11-13 Who is the Savior? Can we undo His saving work?

Heb.7:24, 25 How long will the Lord Jesus intercede for believers? What is He thus able to do? What is our salvation dependent upon?

BASIC DOCTRINE

SALVATION

SECURITY

Romans 8:30-39

v.30 What is seen as an already accomplished fact?

v.31 What does it mean for God to **be** for us?

v.32 What are the "all things" that God is **giving**?

v.33, 34 If God justifies, who can condemn? Explain.

v.34, 35 If Christ died, arose, and intercedes for us, who can separate us **from** His love? Explain

v.35-39 Can anything finite thwart the **infinite** God? Explain.

Can a genuine believer lose his salvation? Explain.

ASSURANCE

I Jn.5:11-13 Can a person know if he has eternal life? If you have the Son of God, what do you have? What is eternal life?

2 Cor.13:5 What should we do?

What are the things that indicate whether we have eternal life or not (see I Jn.2:3-6, 15-17, 29, 3:10, 14, 18, 19, 24, 4:13, 20, Rom.8:16, 2 Cor.5:9, I Pet.2:2, Jn.8:31, 32, 10:4, 5, 14, 27-29, Mt.7:13, 14, 24-27, 10:22, Lk.21:19, Heb.10:36-39)?

What two complementary truths are seen in these passages (see Phil.2:12, 13, Jas.2:17, 20)?

SALVATION (Session 25)

JUSTIFICATION / SANCTIFICATION

Romans 5:12 - 8:17

Trace the following words through this section. Mark each with a different color, shape. or symbol.

GOD CHRIST SPIRIT GRACE SIN LIFE DEATH FLESH LAW

SLAVE / SLAVERY / BONDAGE FREE / FREEDOM

What broad contrasts are seen in this section? For example, either we are:

in Adam or in Christ dead or alive (continue)

Romans 5 (Words in *italics* are not in the Gk. text but are supplied to complete the sense in English)

12 Therefore, just as through one *man* sin entered into the world, and **death** through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned ---

13 for until the Law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam. *who* is a type of Him who was to come.

SALVATION

JUSTIFICATION / SANCTIFICATION

Romans 5

15 But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one **Man**, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.

16 And the gift is not like *that* which came through the one who **sinned**; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the **free gift arose** from many transgressions resulting in justification.

17 For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

18 So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to **all** men, even **so** through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.

19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even **so** through the **obedience** of the One the many will be made righteous.

20 And the Law came in that the transgression might increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,

21 that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6

1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might **increase**?

2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?

3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the **glory** of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have become united with **Him** in the likeness of His death, certainly we **shall** be also **in the likeness** of His resurrection,

6 knowing this, that our old **man** was crucified with **Him**, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that we should no longer be slaves to sin;

7 for the one who has died is freed from sin.

8 For if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is no longer to die **again**; death no longer has dominion over Him.

10 For in that He died, He died once unto sin; but in that He lives, He lives unto God.

11 Thus also consider yourselves to be dead unto sin but living unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body with the result that you should obey its lusts,

13 neither present your members to sin as weapons of unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as living out from the dead, and your members as weapons of righteousness unto God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!

16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves as slaves unto obedience, you are slaves of the one to whom you obey, either of sin unto death or obedience unto righteousness?

17 But thanks be to God that through you were slaves of sin, you obeyed from the heart that type of teaching into which you were committed,

18 and having been set **free** from **sin**, you became enslaved to righteousness.

19 I speak as a man **would because** of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to **uncleanness** and to lawlessness unto **further** lawlessness, thus now present your members as slaves to righteousness unto sanctification.

20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free unto righteousness.

21 Therefore, what fruit did you then have **from** which things you are now ashamed? For the end of such things is death!

22 But now, having been set free from sin and being enslaved to God, you have your **fruit** unto sanctification, and the end, eternal life.

23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is **eternal** life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

SALVATION

JUSTIFICATION / SANCTIFICATION

Romans 7

- 1 Or do you not know, brethren, (I speak to those knowing law) that the law rules over a man as long as he **lives**?
- 2 For the married woman is bound by law to her husband so long as he is living. But if the husband should die, she is released / free from the law of the husband.
- 3 So then, the husband being alive, she shall be called an adulteress if she be *joined* to another man.
- 4 So that, my brethren, you also have been made dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you might be *joined* to another, to the One who has been raised out of *the* dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God.
- 5 For when we were in the flesh, the passions of sins, the ones through the law, worked in our members to bring forth fruit to death.
- 6 But now we are released / free from the law, having died in that which we were held, so that we should serve *as a slave* in newness of *the* spirit, and not in oldness of *the* letter.
- 7 What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! But I had not known sin except through law; for I would not have known lust except the Law said, "You shall not lust."
- 8 And the sin, taking occasion through the commandment, released in me all *manner* of lust. For *apart* from law, sin is dead.
- 9 And I was living apart from law once; but the commandment having come, the sin revived and I died;
- 10 and the commandment which *was* to *be* unto life, was found *to be* to me, to death.
- 11 For sin, *taking* occasion through the commandment, deceived me, and through it, killed *me*.
- 12 So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous, and good.
- 13 Therefore did that which is good become death to me? May it never be! But the sin, in order that it might be manifest *to be* sin, working death to me through that *which* is good in order that through the commandment sin might become exceedingly sinful.
- 14 For we know that the Law is spiritual. But I am fleshly, sold under the sin.
- 15 For that which I am working, I do not know; for not what I wish, this I practice; but what I hate, this I do.
- 16 But if what I do not wish, this I do, I consent *with* the Law that it is good.
- 17 But now, *it is* no longer I *that am* doing it, but the sin which is dwelling in me.
- 18 For I know that good does not dwell in me, that is, in my flesh; for to wish is present with me but to do the good *is* not.
- 19 For I do not do the good that I wish, but the evil I do not wish, this I practice.
- 20 But if what I do not wish, this I do, I am no longer doing it but the sin which dwells in me.
- 21 I find then the law to me, the one wishing to the good, that to me, the evil is present.
- 22 For I delight *in* the Law of God according to the inner *man*,
- 23 but I *see* another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.
- 24 O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me out of this body of death?
- 25 I give thanks to God through our Lord Jesus Christ. For, on the one hand, I myself with my mind serve *as a slave the* Law of God, but on the other hand, *with the* flesh, I *serve as a slave* the law of sin.

Romans 8

- 1 *There is* therefore now no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus.
- 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and of death.
- 3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God; having sent His own Son in likeness of flesh of sin, condemned sin in the flesh,
- 4 in order *that* the righteous requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to *the* Spirit.
- 5 For those who are according to the flesh, *set their mind on* the things of the flesh. But those who are *according* to the Spirit, *set their mind on* the things of the Spirit.
- 6 For the mind-set of the flesh is death, but the mind-set of the Spirit *is* Life and *peace*.
- 7 *Because* the mind-set of *the flesh is enmity* unto *God*, for it *is* not subject *to the Law of God*, for neither is it able *to do so*;

BASIC DOCTRINE

SALVATION

JUSTIFICATION / SANCTIFICATION

Romans 8

8 and they who are in *the* flesh are not able to please God.

9 But you are not in *the* flesh but in *the* Spirit, if indeed *the* Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, that one is not of Him.

10 But if Christ *is* in you, on the one hand the body is dead because of sin, but on the other hand, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.

11 But if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the One who raised Jesus from the dead will give life also to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

12 So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh;

13 for if you live according to *the* flesh, you are about to die; but if by *the* Spirit you put to death the practices of the body, you shall live:

14 for as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery again unto fear, but you received a Spirit of adoption, by which we cry, *Abba*, Father.

16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

17 and if children, heirs also; heirs of God, and fellowheirs of Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we might also be glorified with Him.

SALVATION (Session 26)

SANCTIFICATION

What is the goal of our salvation (see Rom.8:29, 2 Thess.2:14, I Thess.3:13, 4:7, 8, 5:23, 24, Jude 24, Eph.5:26, 27, Eph.3:16-21)?

What needs to take place for this to be accomplished (see Rom.12:1, 2, 2 Cor.4:16-18, 10:3-5, Eph.4:20-24, Col.3:1-10, Tit.3:5, 6, 2 Cor.3:17, 18)?

How does God **effect** this transformation (see 2 Thess. 2:13, I Pet.1:2, I Thess.2:13, Ps.119:11, Jn.6:63, 2 Pet.1:3, 4, 3:18)?

What is the normal Christian experience (see 2 Cor.5:7, Gal.5:1, 5, 13, 16-18, 24, 25, Rom.8:12-16, Col.3:5, I Cor.9:24-27, I Pet.2:11)?

SALVATION (Session 27)

SANCTIFICATION

What role does the Word of God play in our salvation (see I Pet.1:22-25, Jas.1:18, Rom.6:17, I Thess.2:13, I Tim.4:16, Gal.2:5, Col.1:5, 6, I Tim.2:4, Ps.119:41, 2 Tim.3:15-17)?

Of what significance is the truth (see Jn.6:63, Deut.32:47, 30:11-20, Prov.30:6, Jn.3:19-21, 4:23, 24, 8:31, 32, 43-47, 16:13-15, 18:37, Rom.1:18, 25, 2:8, 2 Cor.2:17, 4:2, Gal.2:14, 4:16, 5:7, Eph.4:21, 6:14, 2 Thess.2:10-12, I Tim.4:6, 7, 3:15, 6:3-5, 20, 21, 2 Tim.2:14-18, 23, 3:7, 8, 4:2-4, Jas.5:19, 20, 2 Pet.1:12, 13, I Jn.1:8, 10, 2:4, 5, 4:5, 6)?

List the specific roles that the Word of God plays in sanctification: Ps.119:9, 11, 24, 25, 28, 29, 37, 38, 42, 45, 50, 59, 66, 76, 77, 87, 92, 93, 94, 98, 99, 100, 104, 105, 111, 114, 116, 120, 128, 130, 133, 141, 144, 147, 152, 153, 154, 163, 165, 169, 171, 173, 175, 176; and also the following,

Ps.19:7-11, 2 Thess.2:13, I Thess.2:13, Jn.17:17, 19, Heb.4:12, Jer.23:22, 2 Pet.3:18, I Jn.2:24, 27, 2 Tim.3:14-17.

BASIC DOCTRINE

SALVATION (Session 28)

DISCIPLESHIP

A disciple, by definition, is a learner.

Mt. 10:24, 25. For one to be a learner, what does this imply about oneself? Who is the teacher(see **Mt. 23:8, 10**)? Why is the Lord Jesus qualified above all others to teach (see **Col. 2:2, 3, Job 36:22**)? What is a slave (see **I Cor. 6:19, 20, Rom. 6:16-23**)? Describe the relationship between a **slave** and his master. What **type** of slaves are we(see **Lk. 17:10**)?

Mt. 11:29. How is it that the disciple is to learn? What does it mean to take His yoke upon you?

Lk. 6:40. What is the goal of discipleship? When does **this** occur? The word translated "perfect / **fully** trained" is used in **Mt. 4:21** of the "mending" of nets. In **Gal. 6:1**, it is translated "restore". What additional elements does this add to the idea of being "perfect / **fully** trained"?

Isa. 50:4-7 Who is the Disciple above all others? (The word "learned" is the same as "**disciple**"). What was it that the Lord Jesus heard? How **often** did He listen and learn? On the basis of what He heard, what did He do?

Mk. 3:13, 14 For what two reasons did the Lord appoint disciples? Which **comes** first? Why?

Mk. 10:28-31 What does **being** a disciple of the Lord Jesus involve? What **does** v.31 mean?

Lk. 11:1 Is it possible for one man to disciple another? What did John teach his disciples(see **Jn. 1:35-37, Jn. 3:25-30**)?

Lk. 14:25-35 What is required of every disciple in **v.26**? What does "your own soul" have in **common** with the rest of this list? **v.27** What is the purpose of a cross? Where must it be carried before one was crucified upon it? **v.28-32** Why would someone build a tower (see **Isa. 5:1, 2**)? Why would a king go to battle? What happens to your vineyard without a tower? What happens if you do not fight the **enemy**? When we look at the resources we have to contribute to **fruitfulness** and victory, what **must** we conclude? What is the conclusion of the Lord's teaching on discipleship in **v.33**? What are the possessions / resources the Lord is speaking of here (see **Phil. 3:4-11**)? What is the essence of salt? What is the essence of a disciple?

Mt. 28:16-20 What is the central command of this passage? What two things which are true of the **Lord** Jesus enable us to do this? What three things are associated with making disciples? What is the significance of baptism? What are men to be taught?

TIMOTHY - A Disciple *Indeed*

Acts 16:1-3 Describe Timothy **from** this passage. What attracted Paul to him?

I Cor. 4:14-17 What relationship is a **child** to have with his father? In what sense are we to imitate our spiritual leaders? What qualities were necessary for Timothy to have this written about him?

Phil. 2:19-22 What does it mean to be **like-minded** / of a kindred spirit? What was Timothy concerned about? How does one obtain proof / proven worth? What does the word "serve" **mean**? How does a child **serve** his father?

I Tim. 4:6-16 What was Timothy to be devoted to? **v.12** What was he to be above all else? **v.13, 15, 16** What was he to give himself wholly to? What two things was he to take heed to?

I Tim. 6:10-14, 20 What was he to flee **from**? What was he to pursue? What two things was he to keep? What was he to avoid?

2 Tim. 1:8, 13, 14 What can any disciple expect? What was he to hold fast? How can a disciple keep these things? What is the "good thing / deposit" which was **entrusted** to him (see **I Tim. 1:11, 6:20, 2 Tim. 1:12-14, 2:2**)?

BASIC DOCTRINE

SALVATION

DISCIPLESHIP

2 Tim.2:1-7 What are the main points of being a **son**, a soldier, and athlete, and a **farmer**? v.2 How does this verse describe the essence and process of discipleship? v.15 What **will cause** a disciple to be unashamed before the **Lord**? What type of work is required to meet with this approval? Why is it called work? What is the "word of truth"?

2 Tim.3:14-17 What role do the Scriptures play in the life of a disciple? What is the purpose of the Scriptures? What will **furnish** / equip a disciple for every good work?

2 Tim.4:1-5 What was Timothy to do? How did he know what to preach and teach? What did those with itching ears and their teachers not do?

SALVATION (Session 29)

PRIESTHOOD

For what **reason(s)** was the Lord Jesus anointed (see Lk.4:18)?

Who else has been anointed (**see** 1 Jn.2:20, 27, 2 Cor.1:21)? What class of people were anointed in the OT (see Ex.30:30, 1 Sam.15:1)?

In the NT, who are priests (**see** 1 Pet.2:5-9, Rev.1:6)?

With what 1 whom is the believer anointed (**see** 1 Jn.2:20, 27, Jn.16:13, Prov.1:23)? Is there any special class of anointed men among the NT priests of which all believers are a part? Explain.

What should a priest do with the **truth** he has been taught (see **Mal.2:7**)?

As priests, what sacrifices do NT believers bring (see Rom.12:1, Heb.13:15, 16, Rom.15:16, Heb.4:15, 16, 10:19)? What is a sacrifice?

Summarize what it means to be an anointed priest

How does the NT priest differ from the **Levitical** priesthood? Who is the **High Priest** in the NT (see Heb.4:14-16, 8:1, 10:21-25)? What is our relationship to the High Priest to be?

SALVATION (Session 30)

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL ?

There are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. - Gal.1:7, 8

There are 4 aspects that comprise the gospel message, apart from which, the gospel has not been preached. They are:

The Problem The Solution The Response The Result

The disciple should memorize at least one reference in each descriptive category following each of the above 4 subdivisions.

THE GOSPEL: THE PROBLEM

The basic problem confronting man is that God is holy, man is **sinful**, and hell is eternal.

BASIC DOCTRINE

SALVATION

THE GOSPEL : THE PROBLEM

SIN - For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God - Rom.3:23

All are GUILTY - Ps.32:5, Jas.2:9,10, Jas.4:11, 12, Prov.20:9

All are CORRUPT - Rom.3:9-18, Ps.14:13, Gen.6:11, 12, Eph.4:17-19, 22, Mk.7:20-23, Job 15:14-16, Gal.6:7, 8, Rom.1:24, Eph.2:3

All are in BONDAGE - Jn.8:34, Rom.6:16-23, 2 Pet.2:19, Rom.7:7-24, Eph.2:3

All are POWERLESS - Rom.5:6, Rom.8:7, 8, Ps.16:2, Isa.64:6, Jer.13:23, Job 14:4, Ps.49:7, 8, Jn.6:44, 65

All are CAPTIVES - Jn.8:44, Acts 26:18, 2 Cor.4:4, I Jn.3:8-10, I Jn.5:19

Sin brings MISERY - Mt.11:28, Isa.57:20, 21, Ps.16:4, Ps.32:3, 4, 10

All are in DEATH - Rom.5:17, Rom.6:23, Eph.2:1, 5, 4:18, Rev.20:13-15

All are ENEMIES - Rom.5:10, Col.1:21, Jas.4:4

All are in DARKNESS - Rom.1:21, Jn.12:35, 36, Eph.4:18, I Jn.2:11, 2 Cor.4:4

GOD - *I am* holy - I Pet.1:16 *Thine eyes are too pure to approve evil, and Thou canst not look on wickedness with favor* - Hab.1:13

The very NATURE OF GOD prevents sinful men from being accepted in His presence - Ps.11:7, Rom.2:5, 8, Heb.10:31, Heb.12:29, Heb.9:27, Ezk.7:8, 9, Ps.90:11, Nah.1:6, Rom.1:18, 2 Thess.1:8, 9

HELL - *The wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations who forget God* - Ps.9:17

CONSCIOUS ETERNAL TORMENT awaits every man - Mt.3:7-12, Mt.25:41, 46, Lk.16:19-31, Jn.5:28, 29, 2 Thess.1:8, 9, Rev.14:10, 11, Rev.20:11-15

SALVATION (Session 31)

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

THE GOSPEL : THE SOLUTION

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life - Jn.3:16

PROPITIATION - The Lord Jesus satisfied every righteous demand of the holy God against sinful men - Rom.3:25, 26, I Jn.2:2, 4:10, Heb.2:17.

SUBSTITUTION - The Lord Jesus suffered in our place the judgment deserved by all - 2 Cor.5:21, I Pet.3:18, I Pet.2:24, Rom.8:3, Heb.2:14, 15.

BASIC DOCTRINE

SALVATION

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

THE GOSPEL : THE SOLUTION

REDEMPTION - The death of the Lord Jesus has **fully** paid the price to purchase us for God and to pay for our sins against God - **I Pet.1:18, 19, I Cor.6:19, 20, Jn.19:30, Rev.5:9, Col.1:14.**

INTERCESSION - Christ Jesus Himself now represents us forever before **the** throne of God - **Heb.7:24, 25, 9:24, I Jn.2:1.**

RECONCILIATION - God has made His enemies into servants and **friends** through the death of Christ - **2 Cor.5:18-21, Rom.5:10, 11, Col.1:20-22.**

JUSTIFICATION - God declares righteous all who put their **trust** in Christ and His righteousness - **Rom.3:20-30, Rom.4:1-9, 16, Rom.5:1, 9, Gal.2:16, 21, Gal.3:8-14, Phil.3:8, 9.**

REGENERATION - God imparts His life through being spiritually born **again** - **Jn.3:3-7, Tit.3:4-7, I Pet.1:23.**

RESURRECTION - The bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus proves His teaching, provides us with His life, and is the reason we are accepted before God - **I Cor. 15:12-20, 45, Rom.1:4, Rom.4:24, 25, Rom.5:10, Rom.8:11, Eph.1:19-23, Eph.2:5, 6, Col.3:1-4, Jn.15:4, 5, Mt.28:18-20.**

SALVATION (Session 32)

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

THE GOSPEL : THE RESPONSE

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved - Acts 16:31

REPENT - Repentance is a change of mind and direction of life **so** that the old is forsaken and the new pursued - **Mt.3:1-12, Mt.4:17, Lk.13:3, 5, Acts 2:38, Acts 3:19, Acts 17:30, Acts 26:20, 2 Cor.7:9, 10, Rev.2:5.**

BELIEVE - **Jn.1:12, Jn.3:16, 36, Jn.5:24, Jn.8:24, Jn.20:31, Acts 10:43, Acts 16:31, Rom.4:4, 5, Rom.10:4, 9-11, Eph.2:8, 9, 2 Thess.2:11, 12, Heb.11:6, 1 Jn.5:11-13.**

RECEIVE - **Jn.1:12, Acts 26:18, Rom.5:17, 2 Thess.2:10, Rev.3:20.**

CONFESS - **Mt.10:32, Rom.10:9, 10, I Jn.2:23, I Jn.4:15**

COME - **Mt.11:28, Jn.5:40, Jn.6:35, Jn.7:37, I Pet.2:4, 5.**

FOLLOW - **Mt.4:19, Mt.8:22, Mt.16:24, Lk.9:23, Jn.10:4, 5, 27.**

LOVE - **Mt.22:37, 38, Jn.14:23, 24, I Cor.16:22, I Jn.4:8, 20.**

ABIDE - **Jn.15:4, 5**

Be BAPTIZED - The outward testimony of an inward reality - **Mt.28:18-20, Mk.16:16, Acts 2:38, 41,42, Acts 8:12, 13, 35-38, Acts 9:17, 18, Acts 10:43-48, Acts 16:14, 15, 31-34, Acts 18:8, Acts 19:4, 5, Acts 22:16, Rom.6:3-6, I Cor.1:14-17, I Pet.3:21.**
Does baptism save? Who are to be baptized, believers or unbelievers?

BASIC DOCTRINE

SALVATION

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

THE GOSPEL : THE RESULTS

But by His doing you are in **Christ** Jesus, **who** became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption - I Cor.1:30

SALVATION - Acts 4:12, **Rom.1:16**, Rom.10:9, 10, 2 **Cor.6:2**, I **Thess.5:9**, 2 **Tim.3:15**, **Tit.2:11-14**, I **Pet.1:5**, 7-9.

FORGIVENESS - Acts 26:18, Eph.1:7, Col.1:13, 14.

ETERNAL LIFE - Jn.3:16, 36, Jn.4:14, **Jn.5:24**, Jn.17:3, **Rom.6:23**, I **Jn.5:11-13**.

CLEANSING - Isa.1:18, **Ezk.36:25-27**, Jn.15:3, **Eph.5:26**, I **Jn.1:7, 9**.

NO CONDEMNATION - Jn.3:18, **Jn.5:24**, **Rom.8:1**, 34.

POWER - Acts 1:8, **Rom.1:16**, I **Cor.1:18**, 2 **Cor.4:7**, 2 **Cor.12:9**, **Eph.1:19**, **Eph.3:20**, Col.1:11, I **Thess.1:5**, 2 **Tim.1:7**.

HOLY SPIRIT (Session 33)

Review Basic Doctrine, Session 3, sections i. and j. On what bases would you conclude that the Holy Spirit is God?

What do these verses tell us about the Holy Spirit(see Gen.1:1, 2, Heb.9:14, Ps.139:7, I Cor.2:10, 11, Lk.1:35, **Neh.9:20**, **Jn.16:13**, **Eph.4:30**, I **Cor.12:4-6**, 11, 2 **Cor.13:14**, 2 **Cor.3:17**, **Jn.6:63**, I **Pet.1:10-12**)?

What specific things are said about the Holy Spirit's work in people in the OT (see **Num.27:18**, Jud.3:10, Ex.31:3, I **Sam.16:14**, **Ps.51:11**, **Prov.1:23**)?

Are these verses **speaking** about the same Spirit (see **Lk.4:18**, I **Cor.3:16**, **Rom.8:9**, **Lk.3:22**, **Eph.4:4**)?

HOLY SPIRIT (Session 34)

What is the indisputable evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit (all NT **references** to being "filled" with the Spirit follow: **Lk.1:15-17**, 41-45, **67f**, 4:1f, 14-15, Acts **2:4**, 49-52, 31, **9:15-20**, **13:9-11**, **Eph.5:18**, 19, Acts **6:3-7**, **7:55**, 56, **11:23**, **24**)?

What do these verses tell us about the nature of baptism (see **Mt.20:22**, **23**, **Lk.12:50**, **Rom.6:3**, 4, I **Cor.1:13-18**, 10:2, 12:13, **Gal.3:27**, **Eph.4:5**, Col.2:12, **Heb.6:2**, I **Pet.3:21**)?

What is the baptism in / with / by / of the Holy Spirit (all NT references to being "**baptized**" in the Holy Spirit follow: **Mt.3:11**, **Jn.1:33**, Acts 1:5, 11:15, 16, I **Cor.12:13**)?

Is the filling of the Holy Spirit and the baptism of the Holy Spirit the same? Explain.

What is the power of God / Holy Spirit (see **Mt.22:29**, **Mk.9:1-8**, **Lk.1:17**, 35, 4:14, 5:17, 9:1, 10:19, **24:49**, Acts 1:8, 4:7-12, 33, 10:38, **Rom.1:4**, 15:13, 18, 19, I **Cor.1:18**, 24, 2:4, 5, 4:19, 20, 5:4, 5, 6:14, 2 **Cor.4:7**, 6:7, 12:9, 13:4, **Eph.3:20**, Col.1:11, I **Thess.1:5**, 2 **Thess.1:11**, 2 **Tim.1:7**, 8, 3:5, Heb.1:3, I **Pet.1:5**, 2 **Pet.1:3**)?

BASIC DOCTRINE

HOLY SPIRIT (Session 35)

What do the following **illustrations** / symbols tell us about the Holy Spirit **and** His work?

Dove (Lk.3:22) **Water (Jn.7:38, 39)** **Wind (Jn.3:8)** **Oil / anointing (Lk.4:18)**

Zechariah 4

v.1-3 What does God want us to become awakened to **see**?

v.4, 5 To whom does **God** show the truth and significance of His Word?

v.2 What is a **lampstand** for? What does it picture (**see Rev.1:20, 2:1**)? **Why** is this one entirely of gold?

v.3, 12 What is the relationship between the olive trees and the lampstand? **Why** are they living **trees** rather than baskets of olives?

v.6 What do the trees and the **lampstand** represent for **Zerubbabel**?

v.7 What does a mountain picture here (**see Mt.17:20, I Cor.13:2**)?

v.7-9 What **will** be the means of Zerubbabel completing the work God **gave** him to do?

v.10 **Man** looks on the outward appearance, God looks on the heart (**I Sam.16:7**). Who thought this was a day of "small things" (see **Neh.4:2-4, Hag.2:3-9**)? Who are "these seven" (**see Rev.5:6**)? What is the purpose of a **plumbline**? How does a **plumbline** work? What is the spiritual **significance** of a **plumbline** (**see Amos 7:7, 8**)? What brings joy to the Spirit of God from this verse?

v.14 Who are the 2 anointed ones in the OT (see **Ex.30:30, I Sam.15:1**)? Who are they **ultimately** representing (see **Zech.6:12, 13**)? Who then supplies the oil to the **lampstand**? Who **then builds the** house of God (see **Zech.6:12, 13, Mt.16:16-18**. The Heb. word "Messiah and the Gk. word "Christ" both mean "Anointed One")?

Summarize this chapter and how it illustrates the truth "*not by might nor by power but by My Spirit, says the Lord of Hosts.*"

WORD OF GOD (Session 36)

How is the Word of God described in each of the following? Explain the significance of each.

1. **Jas.1:23-25, 2 Cor.3:18.**
2. **Eph.5:26, Ex.30:17-21, Ex.38:8**
3. **Ps.119:14, 105, 130, Prov.6:23, Ps.43:3.**
4. **Mt.13:52, Prov.2:3-5, Ps.119:11, 162, Ps.19:9, 10.**
5. **I Pet.2:2, Mt.4:4, Heb.5:14, Ezk.3:1-3, Jer.15:16, Rev.10:8-11.**
6. **Eph.6:17, 2 Sam.23:10, Hos.6:5**
7. **Jer.23:29, Jer.5:14**

How is **understanding** of God's Word and ways obtained (**see I Cor.2:9-16, I Jn.2:20-27, Jn.16:13-15, Ps.119:10, 12, 18, 19, 27, 29, 34, 66, 73, 102, 130, 135, 147, 171, 2 Tim.2:15, Job 36:22, Prov.1:23, Jer.33:3**)?

BASIC DOCTRINE

WORD OF GOD (Session 37)

2 Tim.3:16 What is inspired, men of the Scriptures? Explain. Inspire means God's supernatural supervising of the human authors of the Scriptures so that His truth was recorded without error in the 66 books of the Bible. Inspiration extends to what only? What is each Scripture profitable for?

2 Pet.1:2-4 Describe the role of the Word of God for the believer

2 Pet.1:19-21 How did the Scriptures come to be?

Lk.24:25-27, 44-49 How do we know that the Scriptures are the Word of God?

There are ever 2 appeals to the heart of man. We are persuaded by and yield to one or the other only (see 2 Cor.5:7).

How do the 2 women of Proverbs 1 - 9 illustrate these 2 perspectives?

WISDOM - Prov.1:20-33, 3:13-18, 4:4-9, 13, 8:1-36.

THE HARLOT / ADULTERESS / STRANGE WOMAN - Prov.2:16-19, 5:1-23, 6:20-29, 7:1-27, 9:13-18.

WORD OF GOD (Session 38)

TYPES

A type is any divinely adopted historical person, place, event, or thing which also prefigures, foreshadows, illustrates, or amplifies spiritual reality later to be revealed.

Familiarize yourself with the following list of some of the leading types in the Scriptures.

Light - God / holiness / truth - I Jn.1:5, 2 Cor.4:4

Darkness - Moral corruption / error - Jn.12:35, Acts 26:18

Sun - Christ - Mal.4:2

Moon - God's people (as reflecting the glory of the sun)

Stars - Saints - Phil.2:15

Sabbath - Spiritual rest - Heb.4:1-10

River/Water - life from the Holy Spirit - Jn.4:14, 7:37-39

Adam - Christ as the head of the race - Rom.5:12f and the Bridegroom - Eph.5:31, 32

Eye - Church or bride - Eph.5:31, 32

Coats/Garments - Imputed righteousness - Gen.3:21, Isa.61:10

Cain and Abel - Works and Faith - I Jn.3:10-12

Noah - Remnant - Gen.6:5, 8

Flood - Judgment on the world - Heb.11:7

Ark - Deliverance from the curse, through judgment, into newness of life in Christ - Heb.11:7

BASIC DOCTRINE

WORD OF GOD

TYPES

Rainbow - Finished work of Christ - **Rev.4:3**

Altar - Worship / Dependence / Obedience

Abraham - Life of **faith** - **Rom.4:16, 23, 24**

Famine - Test **from** the Lord

Isaac - Death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus - **Gen.22**, Heb.11:17-19

Bethel - House of God. God dwelling with His people - **Gen.28:10-17**, I **Tim.3:15**

Melchizedek - Mediator based on accomplished sacrifice - Heb.7

Oaks - Strength

Ishmael and Isaac - Flesh and the Spirit - **Gal.4:21-31**

Tent - Stranger and **pilgrim** on earth / citizen of heaven - Heb.11:9, 13, 16 **or** the body - 2 **Cor.5:1, 2**

Hagar and Sarah - Law and Grace - Gal 4:21-31

Genesis 24 - Abraham corresponding to God the Father, **Isaac** to Christ, servant to the **Holy Spirit seeking** a bride for the Son, Rebecca as the church

Hebron - Fellowship

Lot - Believer walking by sight rather than by faith

Moab - Pride as the enemy of God - **Jer.48:29**

Sodom fire - Final judgment - 2 **Pet.2:6**

Ammon - Idolatry as detestable - I Kings 11:7, **Lev.20:2-5**

Ram - Christ as substitutionary sacrifice - **Gen.22:13, 14**

Joseph - Christ as Beloved of His Father, hated and rejected by His brethren, through suffering is raised to the throne as Lord of all

Asenath - Church as the bride **from** among the Gentiles

Bread - Christ as the food of His people - **Jn.6**

Groom and Bride - God and His people - **S. of S.**

Moses - Christ as Savior and **Prophet** - Acts 7:25, 35-37

Israel - Redeemed from bondage and led into **fullness** through conflict - **Deut.6:23**

Egypt - World -system - **Rev.11:8**

Pharaoh - Satan as prince of this world -system

Magicians - Satan's servants / demons - 2 **Cor.11:15**, 2 **Tim.3:8**

WORD OF GOD

TYPES

Leaven - Corrupting influence - I Cor.5:6-8

Lamb - Redemption in the Lord Jesus - I Cor.5:7, Jn.1:29

Blood - Life poured out in death - Lev.17:11

Pillar of Fire and Cloud - God's leading of His people - Ex.13:21, 22

Red Sea - Death to power of sin - I Cor.10:1, 2

Tree - Cross - I Pet.2:24

Manna - Christ as the bread of Heaven - Jn.6:49-51 or God's Word - Deut.8:3

Rock - Christ (smitten provides gift of the Holy Spirit) - I Cor.10:4, Jn.7:37-39

Edom / Amalek / Agag - The flesh - Heb.12:16

Tabernacle - The Lord Jesus - Jn.1:14, Heb.9:11, 12

High Priest - Christ as mediator / intercessor - Heb.7

Priests - Spiritual consecration, access, and ministry of believers - I Pet.2:5

Priest's Garments - Glory and beauty of Christ - Ex.28:2

Precious Stones - God's people - Ex.28:9, 21

Girdle - Preparedness - I Pet.1:13

Linen Breeches - Absence of fleshly effort

Laver - Confession / cleansing of the Word - Eph.5:26

Horns - Power - 2 Chron.18:10

Table - Fellowship - Rev.3:20

Lampstand - Christ as the Light or God's testimony upon earth - Rev.1:20

Incense - Prayer - Ps.141:2, Rev.8:3f

Veil - The earthly body of the Lord Jesus - Heb.10:20, Mt.27:51

Ark of the Covenant / Mercy Seat - Christ as the satisfaction for our sins - Rom.3:25

Tables of the Law - Christ as the perfect standard

Aaron's Rod that - Christ in resurrection life - Num.17, Eph.1:19, 20

Curtains of the Tabernacle - Various aspects of Christ's glory

Badger / Porpoise Skins - Resistance to corruption / undesirable outward appearance - Isa.53:2

am's Skins dyed red - Sacrificial devotedness - Jn.1:29, Isa.1:18

BASIC DOCTRINE

WORD, OF GOD

TYPES

Acacia Wood - Incorruptible humanity of **Crist** - *Jn.8:29, Heb.7:26*

Gold - God's glory - *Job 22:25, Rev.21:11, 18*

Silver - Redemption price- *Ex.30:11-16*

Brass - Judgment - *Lev.26:18-20*

Blue - Heavenly

Purple - The Lord Jesus as the **God-Man** **or** Royalty - *Esth.8:15*

Scarlet - True glory of **man** **or** redemption **or** guilt of sin - *Ex.12:13, Isa.1:18*

White - Purity - *Rev.19:8*

Fine Linen - Righteousness - *Rev.19:8*

Fire - God's holiness and judgment or presence - *Ex.3:2* **or** God's acceptance - *Lev.9:22-24*

Spices - Christ as a **fragrance** to God - *2 Cor.2:14-16*

Oil - The Holy Spirit - *I Jn.2:20, 28, Zech.4*

Salt - Retards corruption / brings out what is naturally there / creates thirst / heals - *Mt.5:13, Mk.9:50, Col.4:6*

Honey - Natural sweetness or goodness - *Lev.2:11*

Wine - Joy - *Jud.9:13*

Vessel - The individual - *2 Cor.4:7*

Offerings - The Lord Jesus as our sacrifice. **Goat** - atonement - *Lev.16:5-22* **Burnt** - total voluntary self-giving - *Lev.1* **Meal** - perfect consistency of life / righteousness - *Lev.2* **Peace** - Christ as the basis of fellowship - *Lev.3* **Sin** - complete removal of sin - *Lev.4* **Trespass** - restoration - *Lev.5*

Shoulder - Strength

Breast - Love and affection

First Fruits - Resurrection - *I Cor.15:20*

Trumpet - Spiritual alertness

Leprosy - Sin's inner workings shown by outbreaks of the flesh - *Lev.13, 14*

Hair - Old natural life - *Lev.14:8, 9*

Sword / Razor / Knife - God's Word - *Heb.4:12, Eph.6:17, Josh.5:2*

Nazarite - Separation unto God - *Num.6*

Long Hair - Shame - *I Cor.11:14*

BASIC DOCTRINE

WORD OF GOD

TYPES

Ashes of Red Heifer - Finished work of Christ - Num.19:9, Jn.19:30

Cedars - Glory / pride - I Kings 4:33

Hyssop - Humility / lowliness - I Kings 4:33

Brazen Serpent - Christ crucified as remedy for the poison of sin's inner workings - Jn.3 14

Cities of Refuge - Christ as safety from vengeance on sin - Num.35

Joshua - Spiritual leadership

Caleb - Walking by faith - Josh.14:6f

Canaan - Spiritual blessings in the heavenlies - Eph.1:3

Jordan River - Death to self

Circumcision / Gilgal - Self-judgment / the flesh cut off - Col.2:11

Produce of Canaan - Christ as food for His people

7 Nations of Canaan - Complete spiritual powers of wickedness - Deut.7:1 / Idolatry - Deut.12:31

Jericho - Power of the world-system

Walk - Life-style

Hands - Works

Right Hand - Power / Honor

Midian - Oppression and sensual bondage of the world - Isa.9:4, Num.25

Samson - Power of a separated Life - 2 Tim.3:5

Philistines - Organized ritualistic religion whose source is in Egypt (the world) and Casluhim (as forgiven) and Caphtorim (as if to interpret) - Gen.10:13, 14

Delilah - Sensual appeal of the Philistine leading to compromise of separation unto God

Boaz - Christ as our kinsman-redeemer

Nearer of Kin - The Law

Ruth - The church

David - Christ as shepherd and victorious king

Solomon - Christ as king of glory and of peace

Mountain - Kingdom / obstacle - Zech.4:7

Sea - Restless unbelieving multitudes - Isa.57:20

Assyria - Violent opposition to God - Hab.1:6, 7, 9

BASIC DOCTRINE

WORD OF GOD

TYPES

Babylon - Moral corruption / man's glory / idolatrous religious system: the great whore - Rev.17, 18

Vine - Christ as life unto the fruitfulness of His people - Jn.15:5

NUMERALS

- 1 - Primary, unity, source
- 2 - Testimony, confirmation
- 3 - Reality, resurrection, spiritual activity
- 4 - Earth, weakness, experience
- 5 - Grace
- 6 - Number of Man
- 7 - Completeness, perfection, rest
- 8 - New Beginning
- 10 - Human Responsibility
- 12 - God in Government
- 40 - Testing

TYPES are anything from the Scriptures that validly illustrate Biblical teaching. Whether it is spoken of as a "type" in the New Testament or not does not determine whether it legitimately functions as such.

The key is whether a parallel or correspondence exists between the illustration and its fulfillment. It ceases to be a type at the point in which the parallel no longer exists and the correspondence no longer is clearly evident.

For example. Adam is a type of Christ as in Rom 5:12-21. The type ceases to be so at the points of Adam's being created, his sin, etc. The fact that there are not 100% parallels in every detail does not negate the legitimate ones.

Any type, example, illustration, foreshadowing, or picturing *in the very nature of the case*, is partial and incomplete. Otherwise, it would cease to be a type at all.

The New Testament writers' usage of the Old Testament shows how the Holy Spirit used the Old Testament to set forth the doctrine and principles of the New Testament.

Bless the Lord for any genuine glimpse of the Lord Jesus afforded to our hearts from His most excellent Word! Says the Lord Jesus, "*The Scriptures testify of Me*" - Jn.5:39.

WORD OF GOD (Session 39)

How do the NT writers under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit use and interpret the OT in the following passages? Mt 1:23 and Isa.7:14 Mt 2:15 and Hos.11:1 with Ex 4:22, 23 Mt.2:23 (no direct OT passage but see Isa 53:3 and Jn.1:46) Mt 3:3 and Isa 40:3 with 1 Cor.9:8-10 and Deut 25:4

BASIC DOCTRINE

WORD OF GOD

How is the OT **used** in the NT in these passages (see **Gal.4:21-31** and **Gen.21:8-10**)?

What **does** the OT tell us (see **Lk.24:25-27**, 44-47, **Jn.5:39**, 46, **I Pet.1:10-12**, **Rev.19:10**)?

What is the **purpose of the OT** (see **Gal.3:24**, **2 Tim.3:15-17**, **I Cor.10:1-11**, **Rom.15:4**)?

PRAYER (Session 40)

Ps.62:8 What **are** we to **be** doing?

Mt.6:9-13 What categories comprise prayer? Is this passage telling us what to pray **or** how to pray? What is the difference?

With what are we to be occupied in **Worship** (see **Ps.145:5**, **150:2**, **I Chron.16:29**, **Phil.3:3**)?

What is **Confession** (see **Prov.28:13**, **Ez.9:3 - 10:1**, **Dan.9:3-19**, **I Jn.1:9**)?

What **Personal Requests** do we make (see **Mt.6:11**, **13**, **Col.4:2-4**)?

What is **Intercession** (see **Mt.6:10**, **Col.4:12**, **Rom.10:1**, **1 Tim.2:1, 2**, **3 Jn.2**, **Jas.5:17, 18**)?

Jas.5:16 can be translated "the fervent / **working effectually** / **inworking** supplication of a righteous **man** has much power." What does this tell us **about** the nature of **prayer**?

What conditions are there in prayer (see **Jn.15:7**, **I Jn.3:22, 23**, **5:14, 15**, **Ps.37:4**, **Heb.11:6**)?

What hinders prayer (see **Prov.28:9, 13**, **Jas.1:5-8, 4:3**, **Ps.66:18**, **Mt.23:14**, **2 Cor.12:8, 9**, **Ps.106:13-15**, **I Pet.3:7**, **Isa.59:2**, **Mk.11:25, 26**)? Summarize what these specifics tell us about prayer.

Why should we pray (see **I Thess.5:17**, **Eph.6:18-20**, **Mk.1:35**, **Lk.5:16, 6:12, 18:1-8**, **2 Cor.3:5**, **Jn.15:5**)?

What does it mean to pray "in Jesus' name" (see NT Key Passages, Session 12 - **Jn.14:13, 14, 16:24**)? Is it possible to say the words yet **actually** be taking His name in vain (see **Mt.7:22, 23**)? Explain.

Is prayer asking **or decreeing / commanding** / positively **confessing** (see **Lk.11:1-4, 18:1, 7, Mt.7:7-11, 21:22**, **Acts 1:14, Rom.15:30-32, Eph.6:18, 19, Col.1:9**)?

What does **Acts 12:5, 11-17** tell us about the relationship between our faith and the will of God? Does fervency (v.5) and numbers of people in agreement (v.12) indicate that we are believing God? Were these prayers answered because they believed **or** because of the will and mercy of **God**? Explain

PRAYER (Session 41)

Mt.6:9-13 What elements are to comprise our prayers?

Jn.17:1-26 What elements comprised the Lord Jesus' prayer?

Acts 4:23-31 What elements **comprised** the prayer of the church? Were they all praying different things **outloud** at the same time? Explain.

What elements **comprised** the prayers of Paul? Are the words of these prayers those of Paul **or** of the Holy Spirit? Explain. What basis do they give us for the content of our prayers?

Eph.1:15-19, 3:14-21

BASIC DOCTRINE

PRAYER

(What are the elements comprising Paul's prayers?)

Phil.1:9-11

Col.1:9-12

1 Thess.1:2, 3, 3:9-13,

2 Thess.1:11, 12

1 Tim.2:1, 2

Philemon 4-6

What elements comprised the prayers of Epaphras (see Col.4:12, 13)?

What elements comprised the prayers of John (see 3 Jn.2)?

ANGELS (Session 42)

The word "angel", both in Heb. and Gk., means "messenger" or "angel".

Describe The Angel of the Lord (see Gen.16:7-14, 22:11-18, 31:11-13, 48:16, Ex.3:2-6, 13:21, 22, 14:19, 23:20-23, Jud.2:1-3, 5:23, 6:11-24, 13:3, 6, 8-23, 2 Sam.14:20, 24:16, 17, 2 Kings 19:35, 1 Chron.21:12, 15-20, 26, 27, 30, Ps.34:7, 35:5, 6, Isa.63:9, Zech.1:12, 3:1, 6:7, 12:8). Who is The Angel of the Lord (see Basic Doctrine, Session 3, section "g")?

Whu works / services / activities do angels perform (see Heb.1:14, Gen.24:40, Dan.3:28, 6:22, Mt.1:20, 28:2-7, Lk.1:11, 19, 20, 26, 2:9-14, 21, 22:43, Jn.5:4, Acts 5:19, 8:26, 10:3-7, 22, 12:7-11, 22, 23, 27:23, 24, Rev.1:20, 5:2, 11, 7:1-3, 8:1-9:4, 9:13-17, 10:1-11, 11:15, 12:7, 14:6-10, 14-20, 15:1, 6-8, 16:1-21, 17:1, 7, 18:1, 21, 19:17, 20:1-3, 21:9, 10, 12, 17, 22:6, 8, 9, 16, Gen.28:12, Ps.8:5, 68:17, 91:11, 103:20, 104:4, 148:2, Mt.4:11, 13:39-41, 49, 16:27, 18:10, 22:30, 24:31, 36, 25:31, 26:53, Lk.12:8, 9, 15:10, Jn.1:51, 1 Cor.6:3, 11:10, 1 Tim.3:16, Heb.1:6, 7, 2:16, 12:22, 13:2, 1 Pet.1:12, 2 Pet.2:11)?

SATAN (Session 43)

Ezk.28:12-19 Describe this Cherub Wore his corruption. What caused his profaning?

Read Isa.14 4-15. What happened to Lucifer, the anointed Cherub of Ezk.28(set v.12)? What did he do to the inhabitants of the earth? What is associated with him in v 11? What was / is his ambition(see v.13, 14)? What repeated phrase is attributed to him? What does 1 Tim.3:6 say about this section in Isaiah?

Where is Satan now (see Job 1.7, Eph.2:2, 1 Pet.5:8)?

How does he appear to men (see Gen.3:1, 2 Cor.11:14)?

What will happen to Satan (see Rev.12:7-12)?

What events are yet to take place with him (see Mt.25:41, Rev 20:2, 3, 7-10)?

What is Satan called in the following: Jn.8:44 Eph.2:2 Rev.12:9 Rev.9:11 Mt.12:24, 26, 29 2 Cor.11:14 Jn.12:31 1 Jn.5:19 Rev.12:10 Mt.4:3 1 Thess.3:5 Mt.13:28 1 Pet.5:8 ?

BASIC DOCTRINE

SATAN (Session 44)

"...in order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan. ~~for~~ we are not ignorant of his schemes" -
2 Cor.2:11

Review OT Key Passages, Session 2.

Genesis 3:1-7

v.1 What 6 things do we **learn** about Satan **from** this verse?

v.2 What was the woman's first error and one of the greatest snares of the enemy? How does this verse show the effectiveness of his schemes? A scheme is a **well** thought out plan.

v.3 What perspectives of the devil had the woman already adopted? Where did the idea of not touching the tree come from (see Gen.2:17)? Who both have access to our minds (see Mt.16:16, 17, 21-23)? Whom &/or what did the woman not consult in this interchange?

v.4-5 On what basis was she to believe that she **would** not die? How did she know that "God knows"? What type of knowledge does the serpent impart? What lies are contained in these verses?

v.6 What does the serpent urge us to focus upon? What was motivating the woman at this point? On what type of input did she determine that the tree was desirable to make her wise? Why did this appeal to her? What happened when she touched the fruit? What did this convince her of? What happened when she ate? What did this convince her of? Why did Adam eat of it? Did he know what it was that he was doing (see 1 Tim.2:14)?

v.7 Why did they sew fig leaves together? Where did they get this idea?

Summarize the main schemes of the evil one.

SATAN (Session 45)

Who is the ruler of the world (see Eph.2:1-3, 1 Jn.5:19, Lk.4:5, 6, 2 Cor.4:4, Jn.12:31)? How does he rule it? What is the world (see 1 Jn.2:15-17)?

What characterizes the world (see 1 Jn.2:15-17, 2 Pet.1:4, Jn.15:19)?

What is Satan's desire with respect to believers (see 1 Pet.5:8, 1 Thess.3:5, 2 Cor.11:3, Rev.12:9, 10, 17, 13:8)?

Job 1:5-12 What is Satan's basic accusation against man? What charge could he have against God if this were true?

What do we learn about the extent of Satan's authority (see Rom.13:1, Job 1:12, Lk.22:31, 2 Thess.2:7)?

What authority does he possess (see Heb.2:14, Acts 10:38, 2 Cor.12:7, Lk.4:5, 6, Jn.13:2)?

Whom else is associated with him (see Mt.25:41, Mk.3:22, 23, Rev.12:3, 4, 7-9)?

What characteristics and abilities do unclean spirits have (see Acts 19:15, Mt.12:45, Mk.5:9, Mt.8:29, 2 Cor.11:14, 15, 1 Tim.4:1)?

Eph.6:10-18 What defense do believers have against the schemes of the devil?

2 Cor.10:3-5 Where does this war take place? What is it that is **lifted** up against the knowledge of God (see Jas.3:15)? What are we to do with our thoughts? How can evil thoughts be "put to death / destroyed"?

BASIC DOCTRINE

SATAN

Mt.4:1-11 How did the Lord **Jesus** resist the **temptation** of the devil? Compare v.6 with **Ps.91:11-13**. How does the devil use the Scriptures? Why did he not quote v.13 to the Lord Jesus?

CHURCH (Session 46)

THE FOUNDATION - Matthew 16:16-19

This is the first mention of the church in the Scriptures. Where did Peter obtain this **understanding** about the Lord **Jesus**? Where does such knowledge originate for anyone (see Mt.11:27, 13:11, Jn.6:44, 65, 12:37-40, 17:6, Acts 5:31, 13:48, 16:14, Rom.9:14-18, I Cor.2:9-14, Eph.1:17, 18, 2:8-10)? What will the church be built upon? Who **will build** the church? Whose church is it? **Why** will the gates of **hell** not prevail against the church? What is the relationship of Peter (a "stone / **rock**") to the rock (a "large rock / bedrock")? **v.19** The NASB translates: "*whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in Heaven.*" The NIV margin translates: "*whatever you bind on earth will have & en bound in Heaven.*" Does this verse indicate that Heaven bows to the will of **man** *or* that **man** bows to the will of Heaven? Explain.

Summarize what this passage tells us about: 1) The **headship** of the church 2) Responsibility in the church 3) Lordship of **Christ** 4) The **permanency** of the church 5) The **authority** of the church 6) The ownership of the church 7) **The** foundation of the church 8) **Our relationship** to Christ in the church.

THE DESCRIPTION - *The Church is not defined in the Word of God: it is described by 8 illustrations*

1) **FATHER & SONS** - Gal.3:26 / **CHILDREN** - Mt.18:3,4 who, then, **are BROTHERS** - Mt.23:8, 18:21

How does having God as our Father define our relationship to Him? How does it **define** our relationship to one another (see I Jn.5:1)? Which brother is exalted over the others? Who is "**firstborn**" in the church of the Lord Jesus (see Heb.12:23)? What are the **characteristics** of children?

2) **MASTER / LORD & SLAVES** - Lk.17:7-10, Rom.6:15-23

How many masters can a person serve (see Lk.16:13)? What kind of **servants** are we according to the Lk.17 passage? What are the basic aspects of being a slave (see I Cor.6:19, 20, Rom.6:15-23)? What are **all** servants to **submit** to and obey (see I Cor.7:23, Gal.1:10)?

3) **SHEPHERD & SHEEP** - Jn.10

How many shepherds does the church have (see v.16)? What does the Lord **Jesus** do as the Good **Shepherd** (see v.3, 4, 10, 11, 28)? What do His sheep do (see v.3, 4, 27)? What do they not do (see v.5)? What do we learn about sheep from Ps.119:176, Isa.53:6, & I Pet.2:25? What reason does this give us for not following **men**?

4) **FOUNDATION / CORNERSTONE & HOUSE / BUILDING / TEMPLE** - I Cor.3:10, 11, 16, Eph.2:19-22

Who is the church built upon? How does this relate to the Mt.16 **passage**? Are the apostles themselves the foundation *or* are they the ones who laid the foundation of Christ Jesus through their preaching? Explain. What is the purpose of a house? Name at least 5 characteristics of a temple. What relationship does the cornerstone sustain to the rest of the **building**? With what is this house / temple being built (see I Pet.2:4, 5)? Is the church a physical building (see Acts 7:48-50, 2 Cor.6:16)? Explain.

5) **HIGH PRIEST & PRIESTS** - Heb.4:14-16, I Pet.2:5, 9

What does every priest have equal access to? Are there priests who have a higher rank **and** privilege than others? Explain.

CHURCH

5) HIGH PRIEST & PRIESTS

What sacrifices do priests in the church bring (see Rom.12:1, 2, 15:16, Heb.13:15, 16, 1 Pet.2:5, 9)? What ministry does the Lord Jesus perform in Heaven in our behalf (see Heb.7:22 - 8:1, 2)?

6) VINE & BRANCHES - Jn.15

Why is **v.5** the key to this section? Define **fruit**. Where does **fruit** come from? What is spiritual fruit (see Gal.5:22, 23, Eph.5:9)?

7) HEAD & BODY - Col.1:18

How many heads does a body have? Why? How should the members of a body relate to one another (see I Cor.12:25)? What is the contribution that the head makes to the body? How do the members of the body know what to do? How is unity and orderliness maintained in a body? Does the foot dictate to the hand? Explain. If the foot has a need or is distressed, how does it make this known? Is the leg superior to the arm? Explain. On what basis will one member of the body submit to another?

8) BRIDEGROOM & BRIDE - 2 Cor. 11:2, 3, Rev.19:7-9

What characterizes this relationship? What qualities are expected from a bride-to-be (see 2 Cor.11:2, Eph.5:26, 27)? What is expected from the bride who is now a wife (Eph.5:22-33)?

He is the head of the body, the church...so that He **Himself** might come to have **FIRST PLACE** (pre-eminence / supremacy) in everything - Col.1:18

In **all** of the above 8 illustrations, who has the first place and prominence? Who guides, controls, directs, commands, and gives life? Are men ever to occupy the place that the Lord Jesus has in His church? Explain.

CHURCH (Session 47)

LEADERSHIP *Let him who is the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as the servant* - Lk.22:26

Lk.22:24-27 Why would a dispute arise as to who is the greatest (see I Cor.4:6, 7, 10)? To what does the Lord compare this consideration of "greatness" (see Mt.20:25)? Describe leadership among the Gentiles. What specific things are not to be found among the people of God, especially their leaders? How can one lead without exercising authority or lording it over others (see 2 Cor.1:24, I Pet.5:3)? How does the youngest behave towards others? What pattern does this set for leaders? What is the difference between a servant / slave and a lord? Which would a leader in the world choose? Which would a leader in the church choose? Can one be both a slave and a lord in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ? Explain. Did the Lord Jesus leave us an example of "lording" or of "serving"? Summarize what this passage teaches us about true leadership in the church.

I Pet.5:1-6 v.1 Are the elders "among" the flock **or** "over" them (see also v.2)? What is the **difference**? How does Peter describe himself in this verse? Is he a "lord" or a servant? v.2 What is the two-fold work an elder performs for the flock of God? What is the primary work of a shepherd? What is "oversight / overseer" (all NT references to these words are: Lk.19:44, Acts 1:20, 20:28, Phil.1:1, I Tim.3:1, 2, Tit.1:7, Heb.12:15, I Pet.2:12, 25, 5:2)? How should this work be done according to **v.2**? What things should not be present in an elder / overseer? v.3 Above all else, what is an elder to be?

BASIC DOCTRINE

CHURCH

LEADERSHIP

I Pet. 5:1-6 What is he not to be? How does this relate to the Lord's instruction in **Lk. 22:24-27**? **v.4** Who is the Chief / Ruling Shepherd? What reason does this provide for elders not lording it over the flock? Who is our Shepherd (see **I Pet. 2:25**)? Who is our Bishop / Overseer (see **I Pet. 2:25**)? How many shepherds does the church have (see **Jn. 10:16**)? **v.5** Why should the younger men be subject to their elders; because they are "lords" *or* for other reasons? Explain. Why should **all** be clothed with **humility**?

I Tim. 3:1-7 v.1 Oversight is described as a work. What is the work of an overseer? Summarize the qualities of life that would make him an example to the flock. **v.4, 5** The word "rule" means, literally, "to stand before". It is translated as "lead, attend to (with care and diligence), manage, maintain, direct" (all NT references are **Rom. 12:8**, **I Thess. 5:12**, **I Tim. 3:4, 5, 12, 5:17**, **Tit. 3:8, 14**). **What** is the overseer to do with respect to his own family? What he does in his own home will **qualify** him to "take care of" the church of God. See **Lk. 10:34, 35** for the only other times that this word "take care of" is used in the NT. What specific things did the Samaritan do to "take care of" the **man** who was robbed? How does this relate to the work of **an** overseer? Is the work of an overseer best described as "ruling" over the church *or* as "leading, attending to with care, and standing before (as an example)"? **v.6** Why should he not be a novice / new convert?

Tit. 1:5-9 Is there a difference between an elder and an overseer? Explain. Is being an elder a matter of reaching an older age physically? Explain. Why were elders to be appointed (see **Acts 14:23**)? Who were they appointed by? Why? What is the cultural concept of being an elder? What is the Biblical concept? Are they the same? Explain. **v.9** In addition to being able to teach as in **I Timothy 3**, what must the overseer be able to do? If he is unable to do this, in what sense is he overseeing?

CHURCH (Session 48)

LEADERSHIP

Acts 20:28-32 v.28 What is the **first** thing that the overseer must be on **guard** / take heed to? Why is this of first importance (see **Rom. 2:1-3, 17-24**)? Why are you unqualified to oversee others if you do not first take heed to yourself? What makes an elder / overseer; length of years, the appointment of men, position and status in the community, wealth, education, and /or the Holy Spirit? Is **it** a work for which one is carnally / naturally qualified or spiritually equipped? Explain. Is it possible for a **man** to be an elder in the **community** but not in the church? Explain. Is it possible for a younger man to do the work of an overseer **even** among his physical elders in age who are to submit to him (see **Job 32:12-10**)? **What** is the work of an overseer (see **Jer. 3:15**)? Whose church is it and how **was** it acquired? How **will** this affect the manner in which one oversees the church? **v.29** How will these wolves come in among them (see **Mt. 7:15**)? From **Mt. 7:15**, in what **sense** will they not spare the flock? **v.30** From where else **will** danger and evil **arise** for the flock? What added significance does this provide for the exhortation of **Tit. 1:9**? **v.31** What **was** it that **Paul** had done while among them that **prevented** the evils mentioned in vs. 29, 30? **v.32** What are the "resources" that the **overseer** has for the work? **v.33** **Why** does Paul remind them of this (see **2 Cor. 2:17**)?

Heb. 13:7, 17 The phrase "*them that have the rule over you*" (KJV) is a **translation** of the **exact same** word that is found in **Lk. 22:26**, "the leader / chief". In **Lk. 22:26**, according to the word of the Lord Jesus, His leaders are servants / slaves. Based on this, is the translation "ruler" or "leader" more suited in **Heb. 13:7, 17**? Explain. Is it possible to lead without ruling over? Explain. **v.7** What are the believers to remember about their leaders? Are they to imitate them *or* their faith? What is the difference (see **Gal. 2:11-14**)? In **Gal. 2**, should the Christians have imitated Peter? Explain.. What about their lives is persuasive to the believers who are observing them? **v.17** The word "obey" in this verse is not the usual word used in the NT of obedience of an inferior to a superior such as in a servant to his lord, a citizen to a king, or a child to his father. The word used here is **from** the verb "to persuade". The appeal to obey is based upon persuasion **from** that which is observed in the leaders (as in v.7) rather than an **appeal** to authority as such. Why should believers submit to their leaders? In what sense will they give account?

CHURCH

LEADERSHIP

Ezk.34:1-16 What characterized these false shepherds? What did they not do? v.4 How did they behave toward the flock? v.10 What shall the Lord do for His flock here? v.11-16 In what specific ways does the Lord shepherd His own flock? What pattern or example does this provide for those who would oversee the flock of God? How was Diotrephes like these false shepherds (see 3 Jn.9, 10)?

In the Epistles addressed to churches or assemblies of believers, were these letters addressed to the “rulers” in these assemblies or to the believers themselves (see Rom.1:7, I Cor.1:2, 2 Cor.1:1, Gal.1:2, Eph.1:1, Col.1:2, I Thess.1:1, 2 Thess.1:1, I Pet.1:1)?

Are the believers addressed as inferiors or underlings or as spiritual equals in the NT Scriptures (see Rom.15:14, I Cor.5:12, 13, 10:15, 12:7, 18-27, 14:26, 29-35, 2 Cor.1:24, I Pet.5:1, Rev.1:9)?

Is there one man who leads or rules in a given local assembly or is leadership a plurality in the NT church (see Acts 6:1-6, Acts 13:1-3, 13, 14:23, 15:2, 4, 6, 7, 12, 13, 22, 32, 35, 20:17, 28, Phil.1:1, I Tim.1:3, 6, 7, 3:1, 8, 4:14, 5:17-20, 2 Tim.2:2, Tit.1:5, Philemon 1-3, Heb.13:7, 17, I Pet.5:1-5)?

In the NT Scriptures there is no priest, bishop, reverend, pastor, “set-man”, general overseer, vicar, or “man of God” who is the leader in a local assembly of believers or group of churches. To Christ Jesus alone belongs such a right and position.

CHURCH (Session 49)

THE NT PATTERN *I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God - I Tim.3:15*

Is there a pattern for the house of God throughout the Scriptures (see Heb.8:5, I Chron.28:19, Ezk.40:4, Ezk.43:10-12, Zech.4:9, 10)?

Is there a pattern for the church (see I Cor.3:9-17, 4:17, 7:17, 11:16, 14:33, 37, 38, 2 Thess.2:15, I Tim.3:15, 2 Tim.1:13, 14)?

The NT pattern that transcends all cultures, whether British, Nigerian, American, Chinese, Indian, or any other local beliefs and practices, is illustrated on the following page.

In the NT church, everything revolves around the Lord Jesus Christ. He truly has “*first place in everything*” - Col.1:18. Illustrated following is that throne of grace to which every believer is urged to draw near to with confidence in order to “*receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need*” - Heb.4:16.

Upon the throne is found a great **HIGH PRIEST** who “*always lives to make intercession for [us]*” - Heb.7:25 represented by the Lamb. There is no other “*mediator between God and men*” - I Tim.2:5.

Christ Jesus is the **LORD** and **KING** as shown by the Lion. None other is to command and rule his people for “*you were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men*” - I Cor.7:23.

“*No man can lay a FOUNDATION other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ*” - I Cor.3:11. He Himself is the “**CORNERSTONE**, in whom the whole building...is growing into a holy temple in the Lord” - Eph.2:20, 21. Nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else is the church of the Lord Jesus built upon.

There exists no other source of life and fruitfulness for the church except the Lord Jesus Christ, the **TRUE VINE**. He says, “*Apart from Me, you can do nothing*” - Jn.15:5.

He guides and feeds His flock as the **GOOD SHEPHERD** as pictured by the Shepherd’s crook. There is but one true Shepherd in His church (Jn.10:16) and His “*sheep follow Him because they know His*

BASIC DOCTRINE

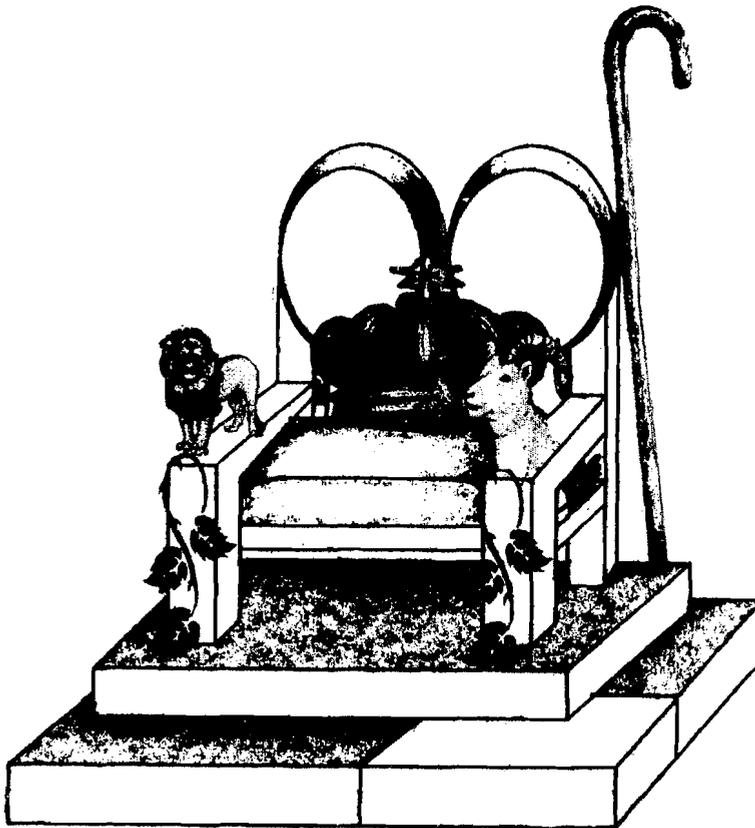
CHURCH

THE NT PATTERN

voice. And a stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.” - Jn.10:4, 5.

As the **BRIDEGROOM**, seen in the heart shaped back of the throne, He has exclusive right to the love and devotion of His bride. *“I betrothed you to one husband...to Christ...” - 2 Cor.11:2.*

No body has more than one **HEAD**. All life, direction, coordination of, and rule over the body comes from the Head, symbolized by the crown. Christ Jesus the Lord is *“Head of the body, the church” - Col.1:18.*



THE NT PATTERN

The next diagram portrays the teaching of the NT regarding the relationship of each believer to the Lord Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. It also shows the relationship which exists in the church between believers through *“the one and the same Spirit [who] works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills” - I Cor.12:11.* In the diagram, **B** means “believer”, **L** means “leader”, and the throne represents the Lord Jesus.

Every believer / **PRIEST** has direct access to the Lord Jesus Christ as his **HIGH PRIEST** (Heb.4:16) apart from human intermediaries. The Father is worshipped in Spirit and truth (Jn.4:24) with spiritual sacrifices (I Pet.2:5) which are offered up continually through the Lord Jesus Christ (Heb.13:15, 16). All are priests.

Each member of the **BODY** receives life (Col.3:4), direction (I Cor.2:16), enabling (I Cor.1:24), and spiritual gift (Eph.4:7, 8) directly from the Lord Jesus as **HEAD** of the church. No member is exalted over any other.

CHURCH

THE NT PATTERN

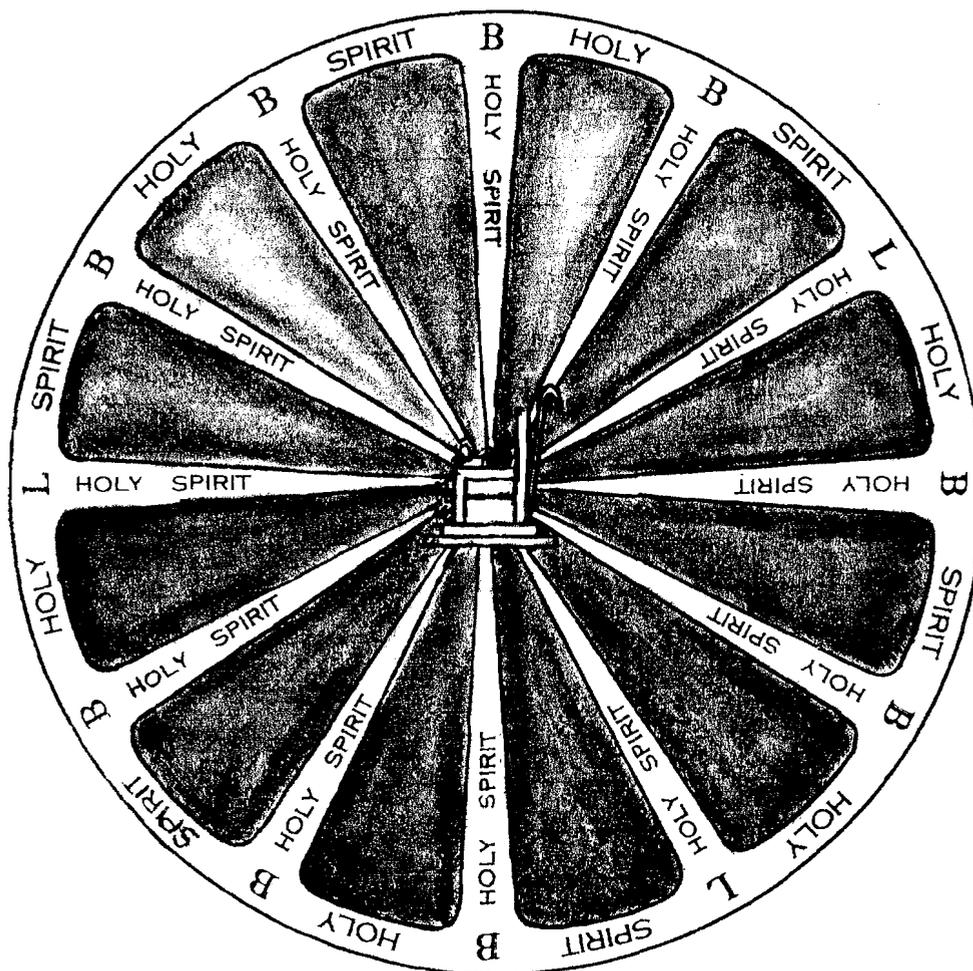
All the **SHEEP** of His flock follow their one **SHEPHERD** (Jn.10:16). He is fully capable of leading His own (Jn.10:3, 4) and feeding them in the pastures of His Word (Ezk.34:23). Sheep are not dependent upon man's rule.

Fruitfulness in every **BRANCH** is totally dependent upon the life of the **VINE** transmitted to all abiding in Him (Jn.15:1-8). "*Apart from Me you can do nothing*" - Jn.15:5. No man can make us fruitful.

SLAVES obey and serve their one and only **LORD** (Rom.6:15-23, 1 Cor 7:23). No man can serve 2 masters (Lk. 16:13).

The **TEMPLE** of God (Eph.2:21, 22), built of individual "*living stones*" - 1 Pet 2:5, has no other **FOUNDATION** upon which it is built (1 Cor.3:11) nor any other reference point besides its **CORNERSTONE** (Eph.2:20) which is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The church is not a literal building and is not built upon any man or ministry.

A **BRIDE** (2 Cor.11:2, 3, Eph.5:24-27) needs no artificial or external incentive to love her **BRIDEGROOM** (Jn.3:28, 29) with purity of devotion. No "worship leader" can or need direct the church to express her love when in the presence of her Beloved.



CHURCH (Session 50)

THE NT PATTERN

IN THE N.T. CHURCH:

No man governs and rules. It is the prerogative of the Lord Jesus alone to have such place among His people.

The Lord actually has First Place. Only among false shepherds / rulers, who love to have first place themselves as in 3 Jn.9, 10, will this be contradicted.

Christ Jesus dwells in the midst as the focus of every obedient, worshipful, and loving heart (Rev.2:1).

Our Lord leads, commands, directs, and draws out a response of love from those belonging to Him (Rev.19:7, 8).

He is truly honored as Lord as there are no competing "lords" among His people (2 Cor.1:24, 1 Pet.5:1-3).

Leaders are among the flock not over them.

Overseers watch over as servants but do not lord over as rulers.

Each time His flock gathers unto Himself, the One Great Shepherd guides into the pastures of His choosing.

All is done "*decently and in order*" - I Cor.14:40 because He is not a God "*of confusion but of peace*" - I Cor.14:33.

No pre-arranged program is needed. The Spirit of God, whose work it is to glorify Christ (Jn.16:13, 14), will lead the people of God (Rom.8:14) to "*worship the Father in Spirit and truth*" - Jn.4:23.

True unity is evident as the Holy Spirit unites all believers to glorify Jesus as Lord (Eph.4:3, 4).

The believers are "*sanctified in truth*" - Jn.17:17. Any man who is led "*speaks the truth in love*" - Eph.4:15.

Truth prevails, not the thoughts of man. "*I speak as to wise men; you judge what I say*" - I Cor.10:15.

Each one contributes to the edification of all (I Cor.14:26) and all judge what is spoken by any (I Cor.14:29).

Every one submits to each other in the fear of Christ, whether believer or leader, young or old alike (Eph.5:21).

No hierarchy exists as all are one in Christ Jesus (Jn.17:20, 21, I Cor.12:12-14).

No comparison to the business world's corporate organizational structure can be made. The church is wholly other than that. No pattern can be drawn for the church's practice from the OT priesthood of Levi as the church is a wholly new thing unknown to previous generations (Eph.3:3-6).

BREAKING OF BREAD *Do this in remembrance of Me* - Lk.22:19, I Cor.11:24

In this simple request is contained the only command from our Lord regarding the meeting of Christians. All other meetings, however beneficial, are optional. This one is not. Several profound truths are contained in this text.

1) The Lord Jesus is the central object and reason for the gathering. The focus is upward, upon Him. It is primarily a meeting unto and for the Lord. Benefit and blessing to others, though present, is secondary.

2) One cannot remember someone that has never been known. It is a meeting for believers.

CHURCH

BREAKING OF BREAD

3) "Do this" refers to something. It is not a new routine, a proscribed ritual. The Lord said these words after He had done something. He had given thanks. We are to do as He did. We are to give thanks for all that He is to us represented by the bread - His body. We are to give thanks for all that He has done in our behalf represented by the cup - His blood. Who He is and His work of salvation is the focus of and cause for our thanks.

4) The command is plural. It is not a ceremony performed by others to be passively and ritualistically received by the majority as onlookers. We, believers, are to give thanks for so great a Lord and for so great a salvation.

In that first meeting, the Lord Jesus was the central focus in their midst (Lk.22:15-20). Prayers of thanks were offered (Lk.22:19, 20), teaching occurred (Mk.14:22-25), exhortation was given (Lk.22:31-23), and hymns were sung (Mt.26:30). No formula is dictated to show our love to Him at this gathering. Do we really need one? We do not.

Though not specifically commanded to do so, what other purposes of meeting do we see in the NT (see Lk.22:14-20, Acts 1:14, 15, 2:44-46, 4:23-32, 5:42, 8:25, 9:31, 11:26, 12:12, 13:1-3, 42, 43, 14:1, 2, 21-23, 26-28, 15:1-3, 4-6, 22, 30-35, 16:13-15, 30-34, 40, 19:9, 10, 20:7-11, 17-37, 21:4, 5, 17-19, I Cor.10:14-22, 11:1-34, 14:1-40, Heb.10:23-25)?

CHURCH (Session 51)

DISCIPLINE

Mt.5:13-16 In what sense is the church salt? In what sense is the church light (see Eph.5:11-14)?

What is the individual believer responsible to do in relation to others (see Gal.6:1, 2)? Is this something for church leaders only? What does it mean "you who are spiritual"? If he will not be restored, what further ought the believers to do (see 2 Thess.3:6, 14)?

How is purity to be maintained among believers (see Rom.15:14, I Thess.5:14, Jude 3, 22, 23)? Who is responsible for this? Who has the Lord equipped to do this?

Mt.18:15-20

What ought to be done if someone sins against you? What is the purpose for going to the brother? Is this a matter of personal offense ~~or~~ of sin committed? Explain. What should be done if the brother does not repent? Why is this necessary? Why does it say "even" the church? What is the "final court of appeal"? What role do the pastor, reverend, priest, or leaders have in this process? What does it mean to be as a "Gentile or publican / tax-gatherer"? In this context, what is it that the 2 or 3 are agreed upon? As discipline is administered by the church, where is the Lord Jesus in this process?

I Cor.5

v.1, 2 How widely known was this sin among the Corinthian church? What was their response to it?

v.3-6 What did Paul do that they were unwilling to do? How do "being removed from your midst" and "delivered over to Satan" relate to being as a "Gentile and tax-gatherer" in the Mt.18 passage?

v.6-8 What effect does leaven have upon what it is in contact with? In the context of this chapter, what was the leavening influence in the Corinthian church? When the Passover lamb was sacrificed, what was to be removed from every home? Since Christ has been sacrificed, what is to be removed from every church?

BASIC DOCTRINE

CHURCH

DISCIPLINE

1 Cor. 5

v.9-13 What are we to always be morally and spiritually separate from in our personal behavior? What ought to be done with a professed Christian who continues in sin after reproof? In what sense are believers to act as judges? How does this chapter relate to Mt.18:15-20?

LAST THINGS (Session 52)

CONDITIONS

Mt.13:31-33 What influences are present in the kingdom of Heaven (see NT Key Passages, Session 5)? Are these good things? To what extent will these elements abide and increase?

From the beginning, what should we expect to find within the church (see Mt.7:15, Acts 20:28-30, 2 Cor.11:13-15, 2 Pet.2:1-3, 1 Jn.4:1-3, 2 Jn.7, Jude 4, Rev.2:2)?

Mt.24:3-5, 9-14, 23-28

What is the first thing the Lord Jesus warns us about in the last days? How many will be misled (see v.5, 11, 24)? What can genuine believers expect from those who are misled (see v.9, 10)? v.10 says, "*and then shall many be offended*" (KJV), "*many will fall away*" (NASB), "*many will turn away from the faith*" (NIV). What will occur on a widespread basis in the last days (see 1 Tim.4:1, 2 Thess.2:3, 2 Tim.3:1, 5, 4:3, 4)?

What will this falling away from the true faith ultimately result in (see 2 Tim.3:13, 2 Thess.2:3-10, Rev.13:1-18, 17:1-18)?

1 Tim.4:1-3

In the last days what will men fall away from? What will they turn to? Who will be teaching such things? Why is trying to regulate spirituality by insisting on external rules destined to fail (see Col.2:20-23)?

2 Tim.3

What 3 things will men love in the last days (see v.1, 2, 4)? What will they not love (see v.4)? Rather than the genuine faith which they have fallen away from, what will be the substance of their religion (see v.5-7)? Jannes and Jambres were Pharaoh's magicians who opposed Moses with satanic signs and wonders (see Ex.8:16-19). What will also be true of these men in the last days (see v.8, 9)? Will their folly be obvious to every single individual or to all the elect genuine believers (see Mt.24:23-26)?

2 Tim.4:3, 4

What is the relationship between "sound doctrine" and "the faith" in 1 Tim.4:1? What is the motivation for them in turning to doctrines of demons? How many men will these people find to teach them error according to their own lusts?

2 Pet.2:3

What will be the motivation of these false teachers? What will be their method? How will they be paid for their "services"? What does it mean to "make merchandise" of someone?

Summarize the conditions that will be prevalent in the last days.

What aspects of these can be observed in our generation?

BASIC DOCTRINE

LAST THINGS (Session 53)

RAPTURE

The word “rapture” originally meant the act of transporting. It became a term to describe the carrying away of living believers upon earth into the presence of the Lord apart from normal physical death.

I Thess. 4:13-18

What does “asleep” mean in this context (see I Kings 2:10, Jn. 11:11-14, Acts 7:59 - 8:1, I Cor. 15:6)? Where are the souls of those believers who have already died at the time of the Lord’s coming (see v. 14, 2 Cor. 5:6-8, Rev. 6:9-11)?

v. 15 The word “prevent” (KJV) is translated “precede” (NASB, NIV). Is the “coming of the Lord” in this context referring to the physical return of the Lord Jesus to the earth or to His coming with clouds in the air (see v. 17)?

v. 16 Are the “dead in Christ” referring to believers’ souls being raised or to their bodies being resurrected (see Jn. 5:28, 29)?

v. 17 What will then happen after the bodies of the dead saints have been raised? Will the living saints (genuine believers) at the time of the Lord’s coming experience physical death? What will be the final result of the rapture?

I Cor. 15:50-58

Who shall not inherit the kingdom of God (see v. 50)? What must take place before anyone can do so (see v. 51, 52)? Who is the “we” that shall be changed in these verses? Will everyone experience physical death? When will this happen (see v. 52, I Thess. 4:16, 17)? What is the perishable that must be changed (see v. 52-54, 2 Cor. 5:1-8)? What is the imperishable that is put on?

When ought we to expect the rapture to take place (see Mt. 24:42-44, 25:10-13, Lk. 12:35-40, 21:34-36)?

TRIBULATION

Daniel describes this final 7-year period of man’s history (see Dan. 9:26, 27, OT Key Passages, Session 34). What will happen in the middle of this 7-year period (see Mt. 24:15-22, Dan. 9:27, 11:31, 36-39, 12:11)? Who is this man who will exalt himself above all gods (see Dan. 7:23-25, 8:23-25, 2 Thess. 2:3-10, Rev. 13)? What will those who dwell upon the earth wholly and willingly give themselves over to during the tribulation (see Rev. 9:20, 21, 11:7-10, 13:3, 4, 8, 11-17, 16:8-11, 21, 17:1, 2, 18:2, 3, 9, 19:17-21)? From your general reading through Revelation, what judgments will the Lord God bring upon the earth at this time?

SECOND COMING & REIGN

What will happen immediately after the tribulation (see Mt. 24:29-31, Rev. 19:11-21)? How will the Lord Jesus return to earth (see Acts 1:9-11, Mt. 16:27, 26:64, Dan. 7:13, 14, 2 Thess. 1:5-10, Rev. 1:7, Zech. 14:3-9)? What begins upon this return of the Lord Jesus to earth (see Rev. 11:15-18, 19:15, 20:1-6, Ps. 2:1-9, Dan. 2:44, 45, 7:27)? What part will believers have in this reign (see I Cor. 6:2, 3, Rev. 2:26, 27, Lk. 19:11-27)?

LAST THINGS (Session 54)

RESURRECTION

Is physical death the final event of one’s life (see Heb. 9:27)? What will surely take place for all men who have ever lived upon the earth (see Acts 24:15, Isa. 26:19, Dan. 12:2, Jn. 5:28, 29)? After being raised, where will they appear (see Mt. 25:31, 32, Rev. 20:11-15)?

BASIC DOCTRINE

LAST THINGS

JUDGMENT

The Scriptures warn that men will be judged on several accounts. Specifically identify these from the following passages.

- (1) Eccl.12:14, Rom.2:6, 2 Cor.5:10, Rev.20:12, Hos.7:2, Rev.22:12
- (2) Mt.12:36, Prov.18:7, 21
- (3) I Cor.4:5 "counsels" (KJV), "motives" (NASB, NIV)
- (4) Ezek.7:3, 4, 8, 9, 22:31
- (5) Rom.2:8, 16, 2 Thess.1:8, 9, 2:10-12, Jn.3:36 "believeth not the Son" (KJV), "does not obey the Son" (NASB), "rejects the Son" (NIV)
- (6) Rev.20:15
- (7) Rom.1:18, 2:5
- (8) Mt.12:41, 42

Besides men, who else will be judged (see 2 Pet.2:4, Jude 6, Rev.20:10)? Will the devil be the ruler in hell or will he suffer torment like all else who are there (see Rev.20:10)?

HEAVEN & HELL

One of two possible destinies await every man. What are they (see Mt.25:34, 41, 46, Mt.13:30, 37-43, 47-50, 2 Thess.1:5-10)?

HELL "The wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God" - Ps.9:17

How is hell described in each of the following:

- (1) Mt.3:10-12, 13:42, 50, 25:41, 46, Rev.14:9-11, 20:15
- (2) Mt.8:12, 13:42, 50, 22:11-13, 24:51, 25:30, Lk.13:27, 28
- (3) Jude 13, 2 Pet.2:17, Mt.22:13, 25:30
- (4) Mk.9:43-48, Isa.66:24

(5) Lk.16:19-31 It is not stated whether this is a parable or a literal description of the 2 individuals mentioned. It is irrelevant to debate it, as, either way, the point of the narrative remains the same.

v.22, 23 Where was the poor man immediately upon death? Where was the rich man's body, his soul?

v.23-25 Did the rich man continue in conscious existence after physical death? How is his experience in hell described?

v.26 How does this description agree with Mt.25:46? What is the duration of hell (see Rev.14:9-11, 20:10, Mt.25:41)? Roman Catholics have invented the concept of Purgatory - a temporary place of suffering for one's own sins. It is claimed that after sufficient torment, which can be lessened by the living paying money to the Roman Catholic Church, one can be cleansed or "purged" from sin and thereby released from Purgatory into Heaven. Is this idea supported by v.26 (or any other passages either)? Explain.

v.27-31 According to the judgment of Heaven, what is sufficient to keep one from being cast into hell? According to the man in hell, what else is needed? Why is this not so?

LAST THINGS

HELL

How can one escape the judgment of hell (see Jn.3:16-18, 5:24, Rom.8:1, I Thess.1:9, 10, 2 Thess.1:7-10, Rev.12:11)?

HEAVEN

What will not be found in Heaven (see Rev.7:16, 17, 21:1, 4, 8, 22, 23, 25, 27, 22:3, 5, 15)?

What will be there (see Heb.12:22-24, Ps.16:11, Mt.25:21, Rev.4:1-11, 5:5-14, 7:9-12, 15, 17, 19:7, 8, 21:2, 3, 5-7, 10, 11, 18-26, 22:1-5, 14)?

READINESS

How ought we to be ready for the Lord's coming (see Rev.16:15, 3:4, 22:14)? How can this be done (see Rom.13:11-14, I Thess.5:1-9, 2 Pet.3:10-14, Rev.7:13-15, I Jn.1:7-9)? What does this necessitate on our part (see 2 Tim.4:7, 8, 2 Pet.1:2-11)?

"Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who is thirsty come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely. He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming quickly.' Amen. Even so, Come Lord Jesus."

Rev.22:12, 17, 20

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TO THE PEOPLE
OF WEST AFRICA
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NOT FOR SALE

FREELY YOU HAVE RECEIVED, FREELY GIVE
[MT.10:8]

THE
BELIEVER
AT
WORK

OVERCOMING

LAZINESS,

DISHONESTY,

&

GREED

Written by Steve Phillips, Missionary to West Africa
PO Box 1370 Freetown Sierra Leone

THE
BELIEVER
AT
WORK

The Lord God put the man in the garden of Eden
to care for it and work it [Gen.2:15]

**Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life,
to mind your own business and to work with your hands,
just as we commanded you [I Thess.4:11]**

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. “Yes,” says the Spirit,
“so that they may rest from their labors,
for their deeds will follow with them” [Rev.14:13]

IMPORTANCE OF WORK

From the beginning of creation, the Lord God has given man work to do. The Lord saw all that He had done and said that it was very good.

Giving work to man was very good. It is good to work. What we do in this life will follow us into eternity, whether good or bad.

Most of our waking hours are occupied with work. It is therefore of great importance that the main occupation of our lives be done to the glory of God.

All of life is to be for the honor and praise of God. Even the very simple activities of daily living are to be for His glory. Hear what the Word of God says about this:

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God [I Cor.10:31].

This certainly includes our work. All work, whether at home,

office, factory, or farm, is to be done for the glory of God. Both what we do and how we do it is to be for the Lord's glory.

What we do, why we do it, and how we work is all the concern of the living God. All of our works will be brought into judgment. The Word of God warns us of this:

More than anything else, we want to please Him, whether in our home here or there. For all of us must appear before Christ, to be judged by Him, so that each one may receive what he deserves for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad [2 Cor.5:9,10].

We want to please the Lord Jesus in our work. He will judge us for all we have done in this life. The key principle of our work according to the Word of God is this:

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men. It is the Lord Christ you are serving [Col.3:23,24].

Whatever we do, we do for the Lord and not for men. He is the One we serve and the One who will judge all our works. He is the One we are to please, whose approval we seek. He sees everything we do and knows why we do it.

This makes the Christian worker different than other workers. The believer has another motivation than his unbelieving co-workers. He works in a manner other than the rest.

The Christian who is glorifying God in his work ought to be the finest worker to be found. He should be the most honest, trustworthy, and diligent worker among them all.

THE 3 TEMPTATIONS

There are three main temptations facing the believer in doing his work for the glory of God. They are Laziness, Dishonesty, and Greed.

LAZINESS

Since it is the Lord Christ whom we serve, diligent hard work ought to characterize every Christian. Will we lazily sleep in His presence? Will we carelessly sit idle when He is waiting for us to do the work He has given us? No, not at all. Listen to the Word of God:

Go watch the ants, you lazy person. Watch what they do and be wise. Ants have no commander, and no leader or ruler, but they store up food in the summer and gather their supplies at harvest.

How long will you lie there, you lazy persons? When will you get up from sleeping? You sleep a little; you take a nap. You fold your hands and lie down to rest. So you will be as poor as if you had been robbed [Prov.6:6-11].

The ants work hard without direct supervision. They know what must be done and go about doing it without waiting to be told. They faithfully work for the benefit of others besides themselves.

Ants do not stop working because no ruler is watching them. The ant does not put off until later what could be and should be done now. They make the most of the present opportunity to work well for the good of all. This is how the true believer is to work.

Laziness is a great sin. The Bible has nothing good to say about a lazy man. **A lazy man does not roast his prey, but the precious possession of a man is diligence [Prov.12:27].**

The lazy man does not finish what he begins. He grows weary of the effort of doing good and quits before the good result is obtained [Gal.6:9]. He does not bring to completion what he starts.

This is not godly. The Lord always finishes what He begins. **God finished the work He had been doing, so He rested from all His work [Gen.2:2].** God rested when His work was done.

The lazy man rests often during his work and it does not get done. If we are to be godly, to be like our God, we must work in the same manner that He does.

Those who work hard make a profit. But those who only talk will be poor [Prov.14:23]. The Lord commands that we love **not**

only with words and talk, but by our actions and true caring [I Jn.3:18]. Many people talk much and do little. They are lazy. God is not happy with this waste of time.

A person who doesn't work hard is just like someone who destroys things [Prov.18:9]. If the work is not done well and on time, others will have to make up for our laziness. They will have to "repair" what we failed to do. It is unloving to others and unfaithful to God to be lazy. To be this way is to destroy opportunities, lose profits, and ruin our own testimony as a Christian.

Trustworthy messengers refresh those who send them. Trusting unfaithful people is like eating with a broken tooth or walking with a crippled foot [Prov.25:13,19]. Laziness is a great hindrance in the workplace. Being diligent and faithful is a great blessing.

The true believer, at work, is not lazy. He will serve the Lord Jesus diligently, wholeheartedly, and consistently. He finishes what he begins. He works hard and well whether anyone else is watching him or not.

He does what he knows needs to be done without regard for his own ease. He is full of action at work and not merely empty words that accomplish nothing.

Those who lead the church, who serve the Lord by serving the believers, ought to be the best example to the others. The Apostle Paul was great because he was this type of lowly servant. Here is what we learn about him in the Word of God:

You should live as we live. We were not lazy when we were with you. We worked very hard night and day so we would not be an expense to any of you. We worked to take care of ourselves so we would be an example for you to follow [2 Thess.3:7-9].

Amos, the prophet of the true God, did the same thing. **Then Amos answered Amaziah, "I do not make my living as a prophet. I make my living as a shepherd and I take care of sycamore trees. But the Lord took me away from tending the flock and said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel'" [Amos 7:14,15].**

Even the Lord Jesus Christ spent most of His life working

hard as a carpenter before He began His other work of teaching, healing, and dying for our sins. Some people did not think that a simple carpenter could actually be the Son of God. The Bible tells us that men said, **He is but the carpenter, the son of Mary** [Mk.6:3].

All true believers should follow these godly examples of hard work. Laziness is never to be found among Christians, especially not among their leaders.

DISHONESTY

Uprightness in All Things

Truth, uprightiness, and honesty are to always be present in every work of the true believer. The Lord Jesus said, **I tell you the truth, anything you did for even the least of My people here, you also did for Me** [Mt.25:40].

Here we discover again that our every dealing with men and all of our work is for the Lord Jesus. It is as if our every action is directly a service to the Lord Jesus Himself.

If we lie to someone, we are lying to Him. If another is cheated, we cheat our God. The person we are bribing is like bribing the Lord Jesus. The thing we steal is as if we took it from the hand of Christ Himself.

Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God [Cor.10:31].

Honesty and uprightiness is to be in every genuine believer at all times and in every work he does. The Word of God tells us: **Better is the poor who walks in his integrity than he who is crooked though he be rich** [Prov.28:6].

Nothing is worth being dishonest; no gain, no post, or promotion. Better to give them all up rather than disobey the Lord God. **Wealth gotten by fraud disappears quickly, but the one who gathers by labor increases it** [Prov.13:11].

Lying

Fraud is deception and lying. It is misrepresenting facts in order to take from others and gain for self. The living God does not approve of this at all. **A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who tells lies will perish** [Prov.19:9].

Many times in our work we are tempted to lie; to our boss, thinking to keep ourselves out of trouble, or to customers, trying to keep their business. But, at the end of the day, we have lied to God.

Any momentary gain we imagine that we have obtained thereby will only ruin us. **Wealth that comes from telling lies vanishes like a mist and leads to death** [Prov.21:6].

Cheating

Cheating is another form of dishonesty which the Lord greatly hates. It is a wicked practice described by the Word of God:

Listen to Me, you who walk on helpless people, you who are trying to destroy the poor people of this country, saying, "When will the Sabbath be over so we can bring out wheat to sell?

"We can charge them more and give them less, and we can change the scales to cheat people. We will even sell the wheat that was swept up from the floor" [Amos 8:4-6].

The Lord hates this deceitful taking advantage of people. We must not charge one person more than another for the same thing. The Bible condemns this practice.

The Lord hates both these things: Dishonest weights and dishonest measures [Prov.20:10]. The God of heaven sees every time we take more money than is right to do. He watches every cup of beans sold which is not full.

Bribery

The living God knows all that we do. He knows every arrangement we make with others. He sees what passes from our

hands to others. What we receive in secret is no secret to Him. We must be upright in all our dealings at work. Bribery is an evil that the God of Truth will never bless or approve of. Bribery corrupts the heart of man. The Word of God says this:

A wicked man accepts a bribe in secret to pervert the course of justice [Prov.17:23]. It is wickedness for a believer in the Lord Jesus to accept a bribe. It is wickedness to give a bribe. **Do not take away my soul along with sinners...in whose hands are wicked schemes, whose right hands are full of bribes** [Ps.26:9,10].

Bribery destroys all sense of justice. Nothing can be right when bribery is practiced. It corrupts the one who gives it, the one who receives it, and the people who tolerate it. It was a cause for the judgment of God to come upon His people. The Word of God warns us about this evil:

Your rulers are rebels, companions of thieves; they all love bribes and chase after gifts. Therefore the Lord Almighty declares, "I will avenge Myself on My enemies. I will turn My hand against you" [Isa.1:23-25].

Those people said that they were believers. But no true believer can give or take bribes. Their rulers loved bribes and were judged by the Lord who hates such things.

The godly man is blessed because he hates bribes. **He who hates bribes will live** [Prov.15:27]. In our place of work, as well as in every area of life, bribery must not be practiced by the believer in any form.

Stealing

Neither shall the believer steal anything, in any amount, at any time. The Word of God is very clear about this: **You must not steal** [Ex.20:15].

This is a great temptation for the believer at his place of work. Small items such as pens, fruit, or cloth seem to be unimportant. They are not unimportant. If you steal even small things, you are stealing, not from men, but from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thinking that it is only a small matter spoils our character and corrupts us entirely. The Word of God is clear. **Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much** [Lk.16:10].

He is the One we serve in our work. He will reward or punish us. We must not take anything that does not belong to us without the permission of the owner.

The essence of true belief is in giving, not in the selfishness of getting; and certainly not in getting by stealing. Hear the Bible:

Those who are stealing must stop stealing and start working. They should earn an honest living for themselves. Then they will have something to share with those who are poor [Eph.4:28].

Earning an honest living is the will of God for all His workers. There is to be no deceit, injustice, corruption, or theft among believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. He will reward you if you honor Him in your work.

GREED

Coveting

Coveting wealth and promotion do not make the Lord happy at all. The Scriptures command us to keep our hearts free from these things. **Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be satisfied with what you have. God has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you"** [Heb.13:5].

Work is not for the purpose of making us rich. It is not to provide many comfortable things for our enjoyment. Work is what God has given for us to glorify Himself by doing His will on earth as it is in heaven. By working, provision for the basic needs of life is obtained. Through honest labor we will have **something to share with those in need** [Eph.4:28].

Greed has no place in the heart of a true Christian. The Word of God strongly warns us against this:

Those who have evil minds and have lost the truth think that serving God is a way to get rich. But godliness with contentment is great gain. If we have food and clothes, we will be satisfied with that.

But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.

For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.

But you, man of God, run away from all those things [I Tim.6:5-11].

Coveting leads to dishonesty in order to obtain what the heart is set upon. Wanting to be rich and longing for money have been the destruction of many men. The Lord God commands us to be content with having food and covering.

Coveting turns the focus of the heart from God and spiritual things to self and the things of this world. The Word of God warns us: **You cannot serve God and Mammon [Riches] [Lk.16:13].**

Coveting makes us serve riches rather than the Lord. And when we do, we become idolaters. This is what the Word of God calls this longing after prosperity. **Put all evil things out of your life; wanting things that are evil, and greed, which is idolatry [Col.3:5].**

For of this you can be sure: **No immoral, impure or greedy person – such a man is an idolater – has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God [Eph.5:5].**

Debt

This evil desire for wealth has led many to the foolish practice of borrowing money when they have no means to repay it. We are not to allow greed to lead us into the evil of indebtedness.

The Word of God forbids this. **Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another [Rom.13:8].** Our God has promised to **supply all our needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus**

[Phil.4:19]. He has not promised to supply for our greedy desires; and if He has not supplied, it is not a need.

The one who borrows out of his desire for immediate gain rather than patiently waiting upon the Lord to supply his needs will not be blessed. He will find what the Word of God warns us of: **The borrower becomes the lender's slave [Prov.22:7].**

Believers are not to work with a greedy heart. We are to seek to please the Lord Jesus in all our efforts. It is Him we are serving. And this we do diligently, honestly, and free from the love of money. This brings glory to Him as well as blessing from Him.

A good name is more desirable than great riches, loving favor is better than silver or gold [Prov.22:1].

May we seek the Lord's grace to be genuine believers in our homes and at our work, for His name's sake. Amen.

A FINAL WORD TO MINISTERS

The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you [Rom.2:24]

A leader among God's people **must be above reproach as God's steward [Tit.1:7].** He is to prove **to be an example to the flock [I Pet.5:3].**

Yet your homes are in shambles and your works corrupt. Hear then this word, O foolish men who are leading the saints of the Most High astray.

Woe to you, Ministers and Pastors, hypocrites, **having eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, seducing unstable souls; they are experts in greed – an accursed brood! [2 Pet.2:14].**

Woe to you, Ministers and Pastors, hypocrites, who half-heartedly perform your clerical tasks without zeal or burden for the souls of men. **Cursed is he who does the Lord's work negligently/deceitfully [Jer.48:10].**

Woe to you, blind guides, liars, who deceitfully promise

prosperity for planting seeds of “faith,” breakthrough for tithes, and gain for giving. How like Simon the Sorcerer you are! The gift of God cannot be obtained with money! [Acts 8:18-24]. You are yet in the gall of bitterness and the bondage of iniquity!

You fools and blind men! Peddling the Word of God [2 Cor.2:17], making merchandise of men by your false words and greed [2 Pet.2:3], and devouring widows’ purses to fatten your own bellies [Mt.23:14]. You will receive greater condemnation!

**You serpents, you brood of vipers!
How shall you escape the damnation of hell?**
[Mt.23:33]

May you repent of your wickedness:

O, turn back from the traditions of men and your own sloth
which are scattering homes, destroying souls,
and plunging men into ruin and destruction!

May you yourselves overturn your own money tables
and stop making the house of God a place of merchandise!
[Jn.2:14-17]

If you will not repent, zeal still consumes the Son of God
who has not forgotten how to make a scourge of cords
and drive corrupt men out of His Father’s house!

**Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers,
because you know that we who teach
will be judged more strictly**
[Jas.3:1]

HE WHO HAS EARS TO HEAR, LET HIM HEAR

People did not think it was important to have a true knowledge of God. So God left them and allowed them to have their own worthless thinking. And so those people do the things that they should not do. They are filled with every kind of sin, evil, selfishness, and hatred. They are full of jealousy, murder, fighting, lying, and thinking the worst about each other. They gossip and say evil things about each other. They hate God. They are rude and conceited and brag about themselves. They invent ways of doing evil. They do not obey their parents. They are foolish, they do not keep their promises, and they show no kindness or mercy to other people. They know God’s law says that those who live like this should die. But they continue to do these evil things and approve those who do them [Romans 1:28-32].

The wrong things the sinful self does are clear: taking part in sexual sins, worshiping false gods, doing witchcraft, making trouble, being angry, being drunk, and doing other things like this. I warn you: Those who do these things will not be in God’s kingdom [Galatians 5:19-21].

The Lord Jesus said, “I tell you, if you don’t repent [change your hearts and lives], then you will all likewise perish!” [be destroyed too] [Luke 13:5].

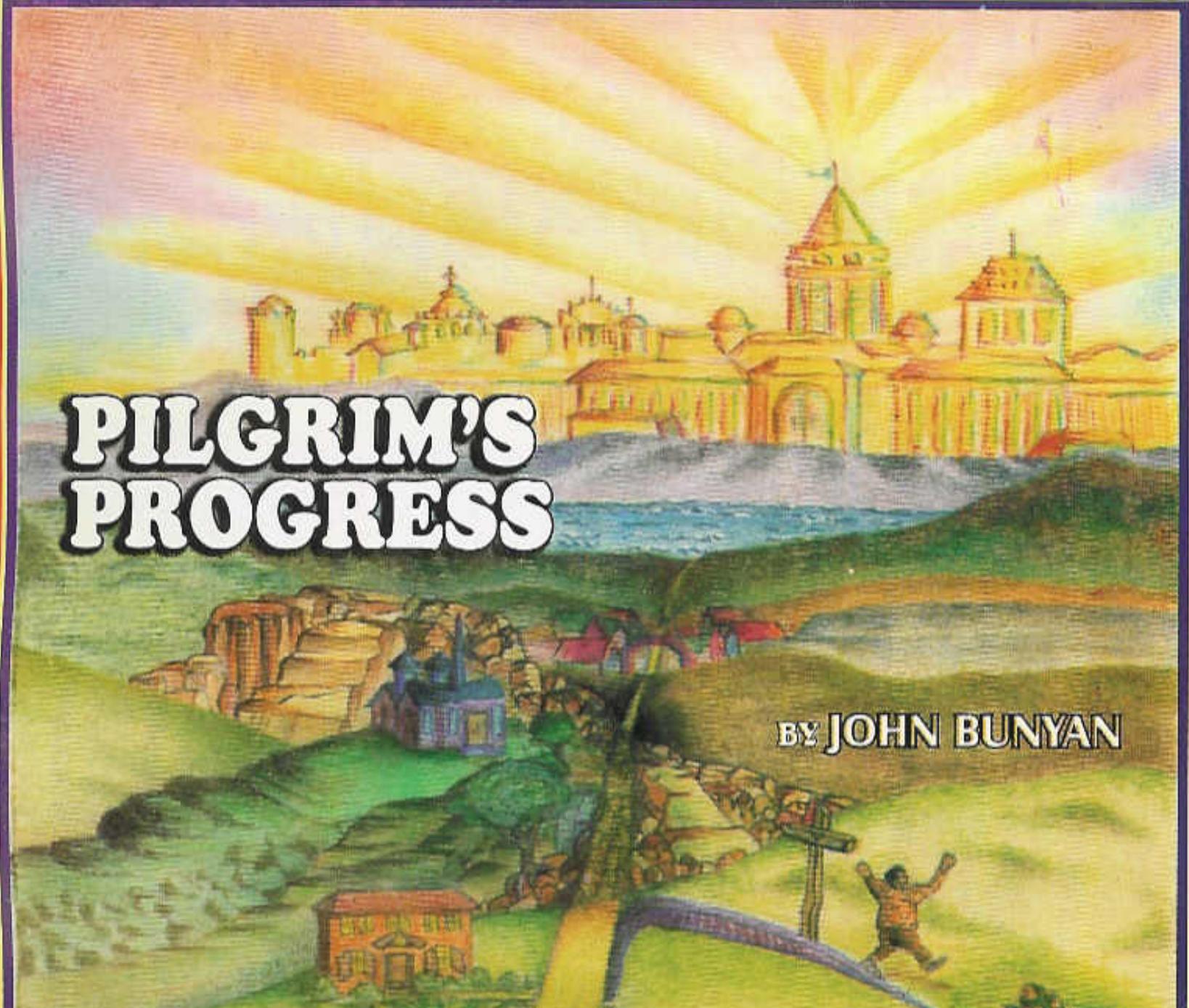
Jesus is the only One who can save people. His name is the only power in the world that has been given to save people. And we must be saved through Him! [Acts 4:12].

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son. God gave His Son so that whoever believes in Him may not be lost, but have eternal life. He who believes in Him is not judged guilty. But he who does not obey the Son will never have that life. God’s anger stays with him [John 3:16,18,36].

Christ Himself died for you. And that one death paid for your sins. He was not guilty, but He died for those who are guilty. He did this to bring you all to God. His body was killed, but He was made alive in the Spirit [I Peter 3:18].

Christ died for all so that those who live would no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf [2 Corinthians 5:15].

If you use your mouth to say, "Jesus is Lord," and if you believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from death, then you will be saved. We believe with our hearts, and so we are made right with God. And we use our mouths to say that we believe, and so we are saved. As the Bible says, "Anyone who trusts in Him will never be disappointed" [Romans 10:9-11].

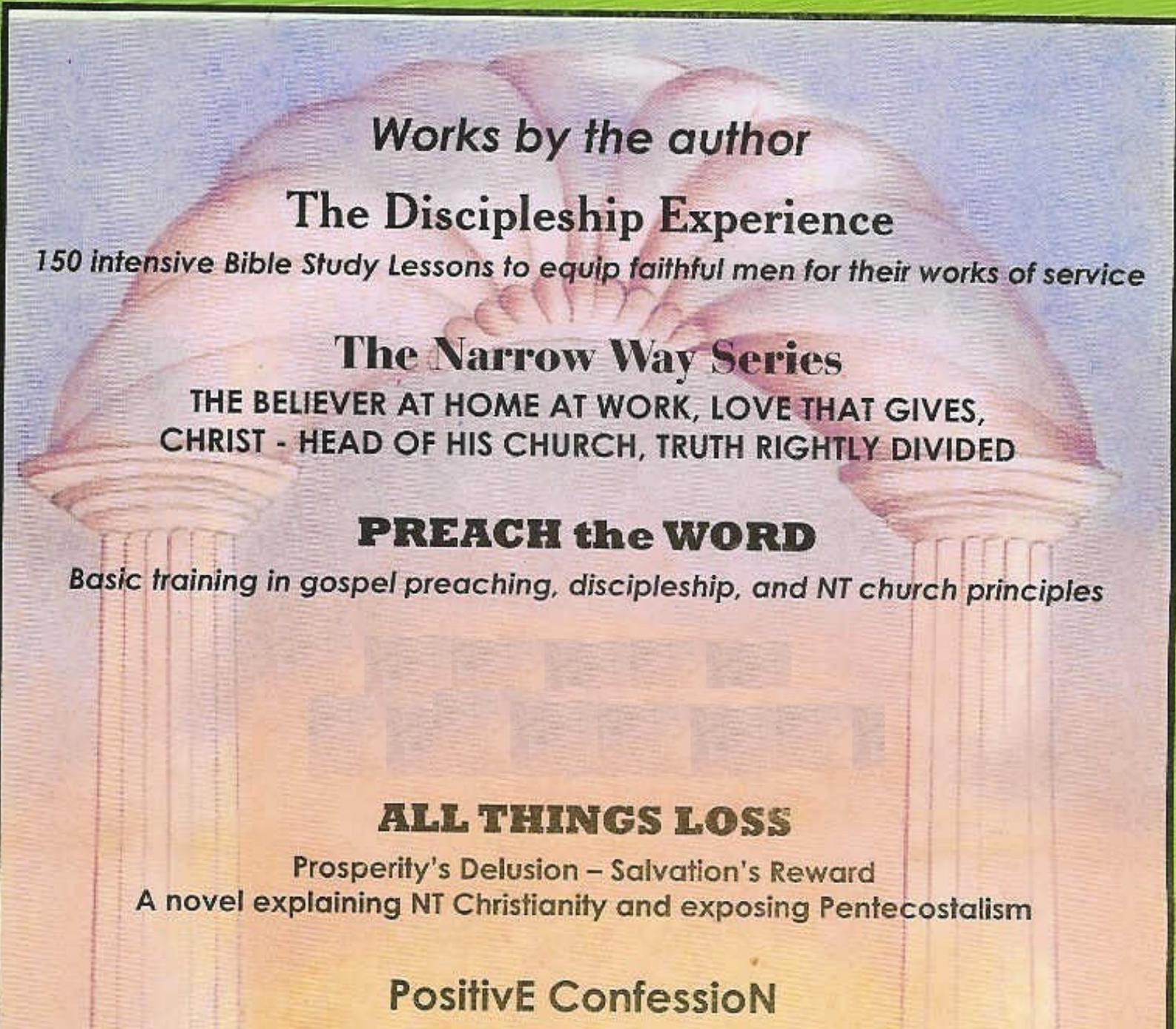


PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

BY JOHN BUNYAN



Revised and Edited by
Steve Phillips



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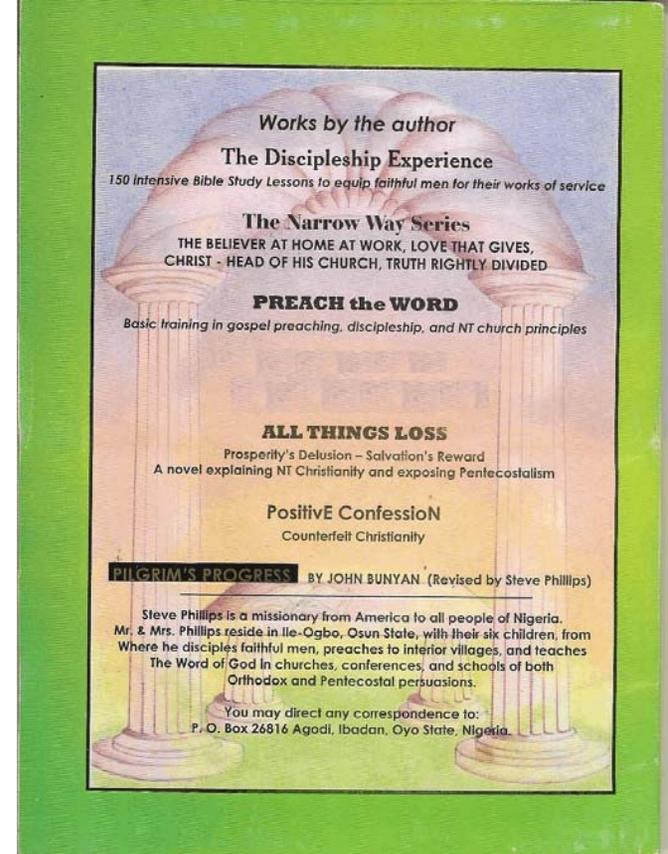
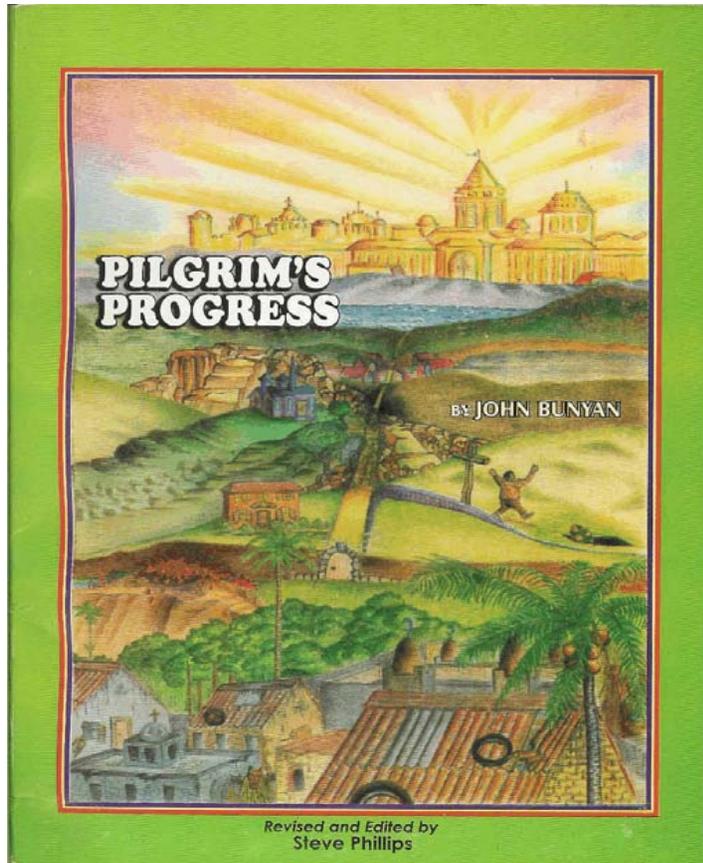
Counterfeit Christianity

Counterfeit Christianity

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS BY JOHN BUNYAN (Revised by Steve Phillips)

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Pilgrim's Progress
FROM THIS WORLD TO
THAT WHICH IS TO COME

JOHN BUNYAN

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PILGRIM'S
PROGRESS

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Freely you have received, freely give [Mt.10:8]

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INTRODUCTION

Apart from the Bible itself, *PILGRIM'S PROGRESS* has been read, printed, and translated more often than any other book in the world. It was written by John Bunyan in the mid 1600's from his prison cell in Bedford, England. He had been arrested and confined there by the rulers of the Anglican Church.

His crime? Preaching the Gospel without a license and teaching the Word of God in homes instead of as an official clergyman in the cathedral. When offered to be released if he would promise to cease preaching, he replied, "If you release me today, I will resume preaching tomorrow."

He therefore remained imprisoned for twelve years. The kindly jailer, though, knowing that he had been delivered up out of envy as had his Lord, would often secretly release him at night to be with his family with the promise that Bunyan would return before dawn, which he always did.

This revision is an attempt to employ simple English while maintaining the feel of the original, without degenerating to the casual irreverence of contemporary expression.

The original was written in two parts, the story of Christian followed by that of his wife, Christianna. This version merges the two parts into one continuous narrative so as not to reinforce the prevalent evil in West Africa of the husband minding his own pursuits while leaving the wife and children to fend for themselves.

It is hoped that those familiar with the original will graciously excuse any clumsiness and improprieties encountered in the interest of making this classic contribution to Christian instruction available to peoples of another culture whose second language is English.

*And now little Book, take your Wing,
Fly with Light and Life to bring
Into hearts as the Spirit's Arrow,
And set their feet on the Way that's Narrow.*

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1

THE BOOK, A BURDEN, & EVANGELIST

As I walked through the wilderness of this world, becoming weary, I laid down and slept. And as I slept, I dreamed a dream. I saw a man clothed in filthy rags [Isa.64:6], with his face turned away from his house [Lk.14:33]. In his hand he held a Book [Hab.2:2; Josh.8:34] and a great Burden was upon his back [Ps.38:4].

As he read, he wept and trembled [Isa.66:2], and being in deep distress he cried out most sorrowfully, "What shall I do?" [Acts 2:37; 16:29,30].

Being in this sad state, he went home and tried to hide his distress as long as he could. Finally, unable to contain himself further, he spoke earnestly to his wife and children.

"O my dear Wife, and you, my lovely Children, I am ruined because of this great Burden which is upon me. Beyond that, I am informed that our City will certainly be burned with fire from Heaven [2 Pet.3:10-12] and we shall all miserably perish. But I know of no Way [Jn.14:6] by which we may be delivered."

Upon hearing this, his Wife and Children were greatly alarmed, not because they believed him, but they thought some sickness had entered his mind. So, quickly he was sent to bed in the hopes that some rest might settle his mind.

Through a restless night, his distress grew worse and worse. Again in the morning he began to relate to them the sure Judgment

awaiting them all. But they began to be hardened in their hearts and spoke harshly against him. Sometimes they mocked him, other times they ignored him.

The poor man would withdraw from them and earnestly pray for and pity them. He also walked alone in the fields, praying and sighing while reading his Book which caused him to cry out again, "What must I do to be saved?"

As he was thus engaged and not knowing which way to flee, I saw a man named *Evangelist* approach him and ask, "Why do you cry so?"

Said he, "Why, good Sir, I see by the Book in my hand that I am condemned to die and after that to come to Judgment [Heb.9:27]. I am full of fear [Prov.1:7] but do not know what to do to be rid of this Burden or how to escape Eternal Burning" [Mk.9:43, 44].

Upon hearing this, *Evangelist* gave him a portion of the Book which read, "Flee from the wrath to come" [Mt.3:7].

But the man said in great confusion, "But where must I flee?"

Evangelist pointed across a wide field saying, "Do you see that Narrow Gate afar off?" [Mt.7:13, 14]. But he could not see that far and told him so. "Well, then, do you see that Shining Light?" [Ps.119:105]. At that he replied, "I think I do."

"Good. Keep that Light in your eye and go directly to the Narrow Gate, knock, and it shall be told you what you must do."

With that the man began to run and had not gone far from his own house when his Wife and Children began to cry out after him to return [Lk.14:26]. But the man put his fingers in his ears and ran on still, crying, "Life! Life! Eternal Life!" So he did not look back [Gen.19:17] but ran straight for Life and safety with the Light guiding his feet along the Path.

2

OBSTINATE, PLIABLE, HELP, & WORLDLY WISEMAN

Obstinate, himself being a stubborn and unreasonable man, and his neighbor, *Pliable*, who could easily be persuaded to follow nearly anything, rushed together to bring *Christian* back by force. They easily caught up with him since they had no burden upon their backs as did he.

Chr. "Neighbors, why do you come after me in haste?"

They said, "To persuade you to go back with us."

Chr. "O, that could never be. You dwell in the City of Destruction, a place that will surely sink lower than the Grave and carry all within it to a place that burns with Fire and Brimstone. Please, join with me and flee the Wrath to come."

Obs. "What! And leave our friends and comforts behind?"

Chr. "Certainly! Because all that you forsake is not worthy to be compared with even a little of that which is to be found in the place where I am going [2 Cor.4:18; Rom.8:18]. There is more than enough for all who will come and more besides" [Lk.15:17].

Obs. "What are the things you seek, since you are leaving all the World to find them?"

Chr. "I seek an Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and which does not fade away reserved in Heaven for all who diligently seek it [1 Pet.1:4, Heb.11:16]. Here, you can read about it in my Book."

Obs. "Ha! Away with your useless Book! Will you go back with us, or not?"

Chr. "No, not I. I've set my hand to the plough and I cannot look back" [Lk.9:62].

Obs. "Come, neighbor *Pliable*, Let us leave this crazy-headed fool to wander where he doesn't even know where he is going. There are many like him who are wiser in their own eyes than seven men who can render a Reason."

Pli. "Don't insult him. What if what the good *Christian* says is true? The things he speaks of sound far better than our own. My heart moves me to go with him."

Obs. "What! More fools still? Listen to me and go back! Who knows where such a brain-sick fellow will lead you? Go back and be wise."

Chr. "Don't listen to him, neighbor *Pliable*, come with me to share in the things I've mentioned and many more Glories besides. If you do not believe me, read them for yourself in my Book. The truth of all that is spoken therein is confirmed by the Blood of Him that made it" [Heb.9:17-21].

Pli. "Well, I think this sounds like a more pleasant offer than what I have at home. I think I will go with *Christian*."

Obs. "Nonsense! I, for one, will not proceed on such a fantastical journey! Be gone, both of you. I'm going back to a normal and sensible life." And, saying so, he turned on his heel and strode rapidly back to the City of Destruction grumbling to himself all the way.

So *Christian* and *Pliable* fell into step together and proceeded across the plain towards the Narrow Gate. And, as they walked, they began to discuss with one another.

Pli. "Tell me more, good neighbor, about what things we shall meet there, and what enjoyments we will have when we arrive."

Chr. "It has not entered into the heart of man all that God has prepared for those who love Him [1 Cor.2:9], but let me read of them to you from my Book. It was written by Him who cannot lie" [Tit.1:2].

Pli. "Yes, yes! Do go on!"

Chr. "An endless Kingdom is prepared for us to inhabit along with Everlasting Life [Isa.45:17; Jn.10:27-29]. There are Crowns of glory to be given to us [2 Tim.4:8] and Garments that will make us shine like the sun in the heavens [Rev.22:5; Mt.13:43]. No crying or sorrow shall

be there for the Owner of the place will wipe all tears from our eyes” [Isa.15:8; Rev.7:16, 17; 21:4].

Pli. “And whom shall we dwell with there?”

Chr. “We shall be with Seraphim and Cherubim, creatures that will dazzle your eyes to look on them. There you shall meet with thousands, and tens of thousands that have gone before us to that place. All of them are holy, everyone walking in the sight of God and standing in His presence with acceptance forever [Isa.6:2; Rev.5:8-14; 7:9-17]. There we shall see men, that by the World were cut in pieces, burnt in flames, eaten of beasts, and drowned in the seas because of the love that they had to the Lord of the place [Heb.11:35-38, Jn.12:25, Rev.14:1-5]. All of these are safe forevermore and clothed with Immortality as with a garment” [2 Cor.5:2-5; 1 Cor.15:53-57].

Pli. “Oh, the hearing of this is enough to thrill my soul! But how can we become sharers in such things? How can we possess them?”

Chr. “The Lord Governor of the Country has recorded in His Book that any who are truly willing, may have it bestowed upon them freely by Him whose it is.”

Pli. “Come on then, good companion, let us hasten our steps to this Good Place!”

Chr. “I cannot go as fast as I would like because of this Burden upon my back which I hope to be rid of by reason of entering in by the Narrow Gate.”

Being so involved in their discussion as they were, neither noticed that they had come near to a very marshy bog called the Slough of Despond. And a slippery treacherous land it is. Many have fallen into despair and hopelessness therein.

Before they knew it, both had heedlessly missed their step and tumbled into its mire. There they wallowed for a time, becoming grievously covered with its dirt; and *Christian* began to sink due to the weight of his Burden.

Pli. “Ah, neighbor *Christian*, where are you now?”

Chr. “Truly, I do not know!”

Pliable, upon hearing this answer, began to be greatly offended and angrily and mockingly said to his fellow, “Is this the Happiness you

have promised me? If we meet with such difficulties at the beginning of our course, what might we meet between this and the Journey’s end? If I get out of this alive, you can possess your imagined Promised Land alone!”

And with that he gave a desperate struggle or two and got himself out of the mire on the side closest to his house and went away leaving *Christian*.

Christian was left to tumble about in the Slough of Despond alone though he struggled to reach the side nearest the Narrow Gate, crying, “Save me O God; for I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing” [Ps.69:1, 2]. At his lowest point a voice standing above him on the bank said, “What are you doing here? Did you not look for the Steps?”

Gazing hopefully up, he beheld a kindly looking man named *Help*.

Chr. “Good Sir, Fear followed so closely upon me that I fled the other way and fell in.”

Help “Give me your hand.” And so he lifted him out and set him upon solid ground and established his going once again [Ps.40:2].

Christian, after recovering his breath said, “Sir, why is this place not repaired so that Travelers do not fall therein?”

Help “It is not possible to mend this place. It is where all the filth that attends Conviction of sin continually drains. This is why it is named the Slough of Despond; for as a sinner is awakened about his lost condition, at the same time, there arises all manner of fears, doubts, and discouragement in his soul of ever reaching the Heavenly Country.

“It is not the good pleasure of the King that this place should remain as bad as it is [Isa.35:3, 4]. Indeed, His Majesty’s laborers have earnestly tried to patch the place where up to twenty thousand cart loads, yes, millions of wholesome instructions, have been swallowed up here and it remains what it is up to today. True, there are good and solid Steps placed through the midst of the Slough, but few find them due to the fears and uncertainties swirling in their heads. But the ground is good when they once have entered in at the Gate” [1 Sam.12:23].

With hearty thanks to *Help*, *Christian* once again took to his Journey and soon saw someone crossing over the field as if to meet him.

The gentleman's name was *Worldly Wiseman*, who dwelt in the town of Carnal Policy which was not far from the City of Destruction.

WW "How now, why are you laboring in such a burdened manner?"

Chr. "Burdened indeed! I am heading for the Narrow Gate where I have been promised to be put into a Way which will relieve me of this load."

WW "Who instructed you to go this Way to be rid of your Burden?"

Chr. "A very good and noble man by name, *Evangelist*."

WW "Ha! I thought so. Cursed be his counsel! There is not a more dangerous and troublesome Way than the one he has set you in. I see that you have already met with such by reason of the dirt that is upon you.

"Listen to me, my friend, in this Way you will likely meet with pain, hunger, lack of all good things, sword, lions, dragons, darkness, and death. There are many testimonies to prove my words. So why should you so carelessly cast yourself away into such perils upon the advice of a stranger such as this *Evangelist*?"

Chr. "Why, Sir, this Burden is more terrible to me than all of the things you've mentioned. I will gladly risk them all if only I can be rid of it."

WW "How did come to obtain this Burden in the first place?"

Chr. "By reading this Book in my hand."

WW "Humph! I thought so. Many other weak men have been distracted and confused by trying to grasp things too high for their simple minds. If you would be wise, listen to my advice. There is a Remedy at hand which will not expose you to such dangers as mentioned which you have already begun to experience. I should know, being as I am, *Worldly Wiseman*."

Chr. "Please, Sir, open this secret to me so I may be free of my Burden."

WW "Gladly. Why, in yonder village of Morality you will find a gentleman by name, *Legality*. He has skill to remove such Burdens as you have and will even gladly accommodate you to settle there with your

Wife and Children. It is a very pleasant place to dwell with the most civil and agreeable neighbors."

At this *Christian* was hesitant and disturbed in his mind since the advice was contrary to what he had received [Isa.8:20]. But nevertheless, he presently asked of the way to his place.

WW "Do you see that high Hill over yonder? That is the way you must go.

3

MT. SINAI & LEGALITY

So *Christian* turned out of his Way to go to Mr. *Legality's* house for help. But as he approached the Hill (being named Mt. Sinai), he stood terrified. Its height hung threateningly far above his head and flashes of fire burst from the hillside. Here he trembled under his Burden which grew heavier by the moment while fearfully sweating, expecting to be burnt at any instant [Ex.19:16, 18; Heb.12:21; Gal.3:10, 21, 22].

While thus situated in shame, sorrows, and terror, he saw *Evangelist* striding rapidly towards him with a stern and dreadful look upon his face.

Evang. "Are you not *Christian*, the one whom I found crying outside the walls of the City of Destruction? What are you doing here?"

Christian hardly knew what to say but managed a weak, "Yes, Sir, I am the one."

Evang. "Did I not point you to the Narrow Gate, how are you now so quickly turned out of the Way?" [Gal.1:6-9].

Christian shamefully related his encounter and his foolish decision to turn into the way of *Legality*.

Evang. "Stand still and I will show you the Words of God. See that you do not refuse Him who is speaking, for if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, how shall we escape if we refuse Him who spoke from Heaven? [Heb.2:2, 3; 12:25]. Now, the Just shall live by faith, but if any man draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him [Heb.10:38]. You are the man who is running into this misery. You have begun to reject the counsel of the Most High and to draw back your foot from the Way of Peace, even almost to the risking of your Destruction."

Then *Christian* fell down at his feet as if dead, crying, "Woe is me! For I am ruined!"

At the sight of this *Evangelist* caught him by the right hand saying, "All manner of sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven men [Mt.12:31]. Be not faithless, but believing."

At this, *Christian* revived a little and stood up trembling before *Evangelist*.

Evang. "Pay much closer attention to what I have told you lest you drift away from it [Heb.2:1]. Now, let me tell you who it was that tried to turn you out of the way and to whom he directed you. The man who met you was rightly named *Worldly Wiseman* for he only holds to the teaching of this World [I Jn.4:5]. This is why he always attends church in the town of Morality and why he so hates the cross [Gal.6:12].

"There are three things in this man's counsel that you must utterly hate: (1) He has turned you out of the Way by worldly counsel from that Narrow Gate which you must strive to enter, for few are they that find it [Lk.13:24; Mt.7:13, 14]. (2) You must hate his making the Cross a thing despised in your eyes. You are to prefer the Cross of Christ above all the treasures of this life [Heb.11:25, 26]. The King of Glory has plainly told you that he who will save his life shall lose it [Mk.8:35]. (3) You must hate his setting your feet in the way of Destruction as I shall now expound unto you.

"*Legality* is that son of the Bondwoman who is in bondage with her children [Gal.4:21-27], and that Hill is none other than Mt. Sinai with its thunderous Law about to break upon your head with wrath from Heaven. Now if these be in bondage, how can you expect to be set free by them? Therefore, following *Legality* and the Law can never free you from your Burden for no man was ever yet rid of his burden by him because you cannot be Justified by works of the Law" [Rom.3:20-22].

After saying this, *Evangelist* called aloud to Heaven to confirm his words; and out of the Mountain under which poor *Christian* stood came Words and Fire and the earth did quake with the sound of the Words, "As many as are the works of the Law are under the curse; for it is written, 'Cursed is every one who does not perform all things written in the book of the Law to do them'" [Gal.3:10].

Now *Christian* looked for nothing but death [Ps.119:120] and began to cry out miserably, even cursing the time he met with *Worldly*

Wiseman and calling himself a thousand fools for listening to his counsel.

Chr. “Sir, what do you think? Is there yet hope? May I now go back upon the Way to the Narrow Gate? Shall I be abandoned for this? I am grievously sorry I listened to this man’s counsel; but may my sin be forgiven?”

Evang. “Your sin is very great and by it you have committed two evils; you have forsaken the Way that is good to tread upon forbidden paths [Jer.2:13]. Yet the man at the Gate will receive you for He is full of Goodwill towards men [Lk..2:14]. Only, take heed that you do not turn aside again lest you perish from the Way when His wrath is kindled but a little” [Ps.2:12].

Then did *Christian* bow low with a thousand thanks for this severe but gracious Word, at which *Evangelist* kissed him, gave him one smile, and bid him God speed. Thus went *Christian* like one treading upon forbidden ground straight to the Gate, neither looking to the right nor to the left [Ps.107:7].

4

THE GATE & INTERPRETER

With no further delay, I saw that *Christian* made his way at last to that Narrow Gate which had so much occupied his longing thoughts. Above it was written in plain letters, “Knock, and it shall be opened unto you” [Mt.7:8]. He knocked therefore more than once or twice, saying,

*May I now enter here? Will He who is within
Open to sorry me, though I have been
An undeserving rebel? Then shall I
Not fail to sing His lasting praise on high.*

After some time there came a sober-minded person to the Gate named *Goodwill* who asked, “Who goes there? From where have you come and what do you seek?”

Chr. “Here is a poor burdened sinner. I come from the City of Destruction, but am going to Mount Zion, that I may be delivered from the wrath to come. I pray, Sir, if you will be willing to let me in by this Narrow Way?”

Good. “I am willing with all my heart. Enter, Beloved of the Lord” [Deut.33:12]. And, with that, he opened unto him, grasping him by the hand and swiftly pulled him inside.

Christian was surprised at this sudden seizing of his person by *Goodwill* and ventured to say so.

Good. “A little distance from this Gate, there is erected a strong castle, of which *Beelzebub* is the captain [Mt.12:24]. He and his servants lie in wait in order to shoot fiery arrows at Pilgrims entering at the Gate so as to kill them before they are safe inside.”

Christian did at once both rejoice and tremble and sang this song,

*He that will enter in must first without
Stand knocking at the Gate, nor need he doubt,
That he who knocks, will surely enter in,
For God can love him, and forgive his sin.*

So did *Christian* relate his story to the Gatekeeper who had asked him of his Journey thus far to which *Goodwill* did warmly reply, “An open Door is set before you, and no man can shut it [Rev.3:7]. No matter what you may have done contrary to the King before coming here, you will in no way be cast out, for He is kind and merciful to ungrateful and evil men [Jn.6:37; Lk.6:35].

“Now, see to it that you do not turn to the right or the left from the Way which is ever Straight and Narrow before you [Isa.30:21; 35:8]. Many paths will branch off of this one, all of them crooked and wide [Mt.7:13, 14]. By this you will know the right Way from the byways that lead to Destruction. Know, therefore, good *Christian*, that the Lord of the City to where you are going has Himself built this Way and will guide your feet in it if you will but walk therein” [Ps.85:13].

With many thanks *Christian* did gird up his loins, eager to proceed on his Journey once again. And this he did, after a parting word of encouragement from *Goodwill*. “As to your Burden, be content to bear it until you come to the place of Deliverance; for there it will fall from your back by itself. But before you reach there you will shortly come to the house of the *Interpreter*. Do turn in there and benefit from the things he will show you from his storehouse of Wisdom.”

With that, *Christian* bid his friend farewell and went on his Way with gladness of heart, though not without difficulty due to the load he bore. By and by he arrived at the dwelling of the *Interpreter*, at whose door he knocked and requested to see the Master of the house after explaining who he was and what he desired. So, when he came, he did address *Christian* thus, “Come in! Come in! You are highly welcome. I will show you many things that will be profitable to you.” And he bid his servant to light the Candle [Eph.1:17, 18] and for *Christian* to follow in its Light.

He brought him first into a private room where there was a

picture of a most wonderful Person which hung upon the wall. He was both sober and noble, with eyes lifted to Heaven, the best of Books in His hand, and the Law of Truth written upon His lips. The World was behind His back and he stood as if He pleaded with men while a Crown of Gold hung over His head. Then said *Christian*, “What does this mean?”

Interp. “This is your invisible Guide, the only One authorized by the Lord to unfold the things above to sinners upon the Way” [Jn.16:7-15].

Next he led him to a very large parlor, full of dust because of never having been swept. Presently he called for a man to come and cleanse the place. Now when he began to sweep, the dust did so fly about that *Christian* gasped and nearly was choked. Then *Interpreter* called for a young Maiden to bring Water and sprinkle the room which was then cleansed with ease.

Noting the questioning look upon *Christian*’s face, the Master of the house offered the explanation. “This parlor is the heart of man that was never sanctified by the Grace of the Gospel. The Dust is that original sin and inward corruption that have defiled the whole man. He that began to sweep is the Law, and she who sprinkled the water, is the Gospel. This is to show you that the Law, through its workings, can never cleanse the heart of a man but only serves to stir up and increase the defilement within.

“It reveals the condition but provides no power to rid of its presence and influence [Rom.5:20; 7:6; I Cor.15:56]. Now, when the Gospel comes with the washing of Water with the Word, the soul is cleansed with ease and sin is overcome by Faith in its power” [Eph.5:26; Rom.1:16; Jn.15:3; Acts 15:9].

Moving on from there (for the house was very large), he took him next to another room in which sat two little children. The senior of the two, *Passion* by name, seemed very discontent while his junior, *Patience*, was calmly and quietly waiting. *Christian* desired to know why they sat as they did.

Interp. “The Master of the boys requires them to wait until next year to receive their best things. *Patience* is content with his Master’s will

and wisdom, but *Passion* would have everything now.”

Then a man appeared and poured out a bag of treasure at the feet of *Passion* who immediately took it up and began to mock his companion. But I saw that shortly, he had wasted all away and sat with nothing left to him but rags.

Interpreter smiled upon his guest and explained the matter unto him. “*Passion* shows to us the men of this World who will have all of their comforts now while despising to wait for the Best which shall be hereafter. *Patience* is like those who contentedly deny themselves the passing pleasures of sin for a season that they might inherit that which fades not away [Heb.11:25, 26; I Pet.1:4]. As the first did laugh and mock at the second, so at the end of it all, the first did weep and mourn while the last did rejoice in that which can never be taken away. And so the true saying came to pass that the First shall be Last, and the Last, First [Lk.13:24-30]. And again, as is shown by Lazarus and the Rich man, he suffered in this life and was comforted in the Next, while the Rich man enjoyed here and was in torment There” [Lk.16:19-31].

Chr. “Then I see that it is not best to covet the things that are now, but to wait for the true Reward to come.”

Interp. “You have spoken the truth. For the things that are seen are Temporal, but the things which are not seen are Eternal” [2 Cor.4:18].

Another room was entered where a fire burned within the fireplace along the wall. In front of it stood one who did constantly throw water upon it to quench its flame. But the more he cast his water, the higher and hotter the fire did burn. When *Christian* beheld this, he was greatly perplexed.

Interp. “Come, let me show you the reason for this. The Fire is the work of Grace within the heart of man and he who tries to put it out is the devil. But look behind this wall and see why it yet burns and does not go out.”

As he did so, he beheld a Man with a vessel of Oil in His hand which He did continuously (but secretly) pour upon the Fire.

Interp. “This is Christ, who continually with the Oil of His Grace maintains the work He has already begun in the heart despite the schemes of the devil [2 Cor.12:7-9, Phil.1:6]. The work goes on unseen and is

difficult at times to perceive how Grace continues its influence in the soul. But it does.”

Taking him by the hand, his Host led him to a pleasant place where a magnificent Palace stood majestically before them with certain persons walking upon its walls, all clothed in Gold. At the sight of this, *Christian* greatly desired with all his heart to enter in.

He then noticed that at the Door of the Palace stood a great company of men, all also desiring to enter within. But in the Doorway stood many fierce and armed men to do what they could to prevent any from passing into the Palace. When the men saw their Opponents and their weapons, they all shrank back in fear and proceeded no further.

It was then that a very bold and stout man came to him who sat at the table to record the names of those who would enter in and said, “Sir, set down my name in your Book, for I shall surely enter in” [Acts 14:22]. That having been done, he immediately put on his helmet, drew his sword, and rushed upon those hindering his way.

They fought him with deadly force, but the man, being not in the least discouraged, fought on bravely, both giving and receiving many wounds. At last, he cut his way through them all and found his entrance into the Palace at which those upon the wall did raise the chorus:

Come in! Come in!

Eternal Glory you shall win!

So he went in and was received among them with a robe of Gold. When *Christian* had taken note of all these things, he smiled and said, “I think that truly I’ve known the meaning of this.”

There remained yet lessons to be learned, so the *Interpreter* brought him to another room, very dark, in which was a man in an Iron Cage who groaned and sighed as if his heart would break.

He cried out most miserably, “O, Despair grips my soul! Once I thought myself upon the Way to the Heavenly City, but now I am shut up in this Iron Cage. I cannot get out. O, I cannot!”

Chr. “But how did you get into this condition?”

Man “I left off to Watch and Pray. I allowed my Lusts to lead me about. I sinned against the Light of the Word, and the Goodness of God:

I have grieved away the Spirit and He is gone; I tempted the devil, and he has come to me; I have provoked God to anger, and He has left me; I have so hardened my heart that I cannot repent” [Lk.8:13; Heb.12:16, 17].

Chr. “But, is there no Hope for you? The Son of the Blessed One is most Merciful.”

Man “No. There is no Hope. I have crucified to myself the Son of God and put Him to open Shame. I have counted His Blood an unholy thing. I have insulted the Spirit of Grace [Heb.6:6; Lk.19:14]. Therefore, I have shut myself out of all the Promises, and nothing remains for me but dreadful, fearful Threatening of certain Judgment and fiery indignation which will consume me as an Adversary” [Heb.10:26-31].

Chr. “And for what did you bring yourself into this condition?”

Man “For the Lusts, Pleasures, and Profits of this World which I thought would bring me much delight but do now bite and eat at me like a burning worm. O Eternity! Eternity! How shall I meet with the misery awaiting me in Eternity!”

Interp. “Let this man’s misery be remembered as an everlasting caution to you.”

Chr. “This is most Fearful. May God help me to Watch and be Sober, and to pray that I may shun the Cause of this man’s misery.”

Interp. “Before you go, I wish to show you yet one more thing for your profit. Come.” So he took him by the hand and brought him into a bed-chamber where a man arose shaking and trembling while crying out, “The Heavens grow exceedingly black with fearful Thundering amid a raging storm. I hear the great sound of the final Trumpet and see Him who sits upon a Cloud with the Thousands of Heaven at His right and His left.

“They are all in flaming fire, and the Heavens in a burning flame and a Voice cries out, ‘Arise, and come to Judgment!’ [I Cor.15:52; I Thess.4:15, 16; Jude 14, 15; Rev.20:11-15]. The Rocks did split, the Graves did open and the Dead came forth and some sought to hide themselves under the mountains [Jn.5:28; 2 Thess.1:7-10; Isa.26:21; Mic.7:16, 17; Ps.5:1-3; Dan.10:7].

“The Man on the Cloud said with a loud voice, ‘Gather My

Wheat into My barn, but burn up the Chaff with unquenchable Fire!’ [Mal.3:2, 3; 4:1; Dan.7:9, 10, 13; Mt.3:12; 13:30]. I see the Bottomless Pit open its mouth at my feet and the Eye of Him upon the Cloud gazes at me with Indignation and Fury.” And the man did continuously shake and quiver uncontrollably.

And *Christian* was made to Fear with Hope by the things he had seen and went on from there grateful and wiser singing:

*Here I have seen Things rare and profitable,
Things pleasant, dreadful, Things to make me stable,
In what I have begun to take in hand;
Then let me think on them, and understand
Therefore good they were, and let me be
Thankful, O good Interpreter, to thee.*

5

CHRIST'S CROSS, A HILL OF DIFFICULTY, & THE LIONS

The Highway up which *Christian* was to go was fenced on either side with a wall named Salvation [Isa.26:1]. At the sight of this, it did make him run though with great difficulty due to the Load upon his back.

He ran on as best as he could until he ascended a small hill called Calvary at the top of which stood a Cross, and a little below, at the bottom, was a Tomb. So I saw in my dream, that just as *Christian* came up to the Cross and gazed upon it, his Burden simply loosed from off his shoulders, fell off his back, and began to tumble down the slope where it entered the Tomb and was seen no more [Jn.3:14, 15; Ps.103:12; Isa.38:17].

Then was *Christian* glad and lightened and said with a merry heart, "He has given me Rest by His Sorrow, and Life by His Death." For some time he stood still to look and wonder; for it was a thing amazing that the sight of the Cross should thus ease him of his Burden. He looked, therefore, and looked again, until the tears did flow down his cheeks [Zech.12:10].

Now as he stood marveling and weeping for joy, three Shining Ones came unto him and saluted him with, "Peace be to you"; and the first said, "Your Sins are forgiven you" [Mk.2:5]; the second stripped him of his rags and clothed him with a Change of Garment [Zech.3:4]; while the third set a Mark on his forehead [Eph.1:13] and gave him a Testament which he was directed to read from as he ran his course to the Heavenly City.

Then *Christian* gave three leaps for Joy [2 Cor.5:17] and went on his way singing:

*Thus far did I come loaded with my Sin;
Nor could any ease the grief that I was in,
Until I came here: What a place is this!
Must here be the beginning of my bliss?
Must here the Burden fall from off my back?
Must here the strings that bound it to me crack?
Blessed Cross! Blessed Tomb! Blessed rather be
The Man that there was put to Shame for me!*

In my dream I saw him descend Calvary's hill at the bottom of which lay three men fast asleep with their feet bound with chains and irons. *Christian*, being alarmed at their condition tried to arouse them and help them off with their Irons. "If he who goes about as a roaring Lion comes by [1 Pet.5:8], you will certainly be devoured in his jaws!" To this the three raised but one sleepy eyelid and answered him one by one.

Simple "I see no danger. Leave us alone."

Sloth "Yet a little more sleep."

Presumption "Every bucket must stand on its own bottom. We are fine."

And with that, they all rolled over and slept again. *Christian* was troubled and somewhat amazed to meet such men in real danger who so lightly esteemed sound counsel and sincere help. But his thoughts were suddenly interrupted by two men who came tumbling over the wall on the Left Hand of the Narrow Way. They proceeded to join *Christian* as he walked and entered into conversation with one another.

Chr. "Gentlemen, from where do you come and to where are you going?"

The two confidently replied as with one voice (for they were really nearly one and the same, their names being, *Formalist* and *Hypocrisy*), "We were born in the land of Vain-Glory, and are on our way to Mount Zion!"

Chr. "But why did you not come in at the Gate? Do you not know that he who does not come in by the Door, but climbs up some other way is a thief and a robber?" [Jn.10:1].

Form./Hyp. "Well, everyone from our town always takes a short-cut!"

Chr. "Will this not be counted as a trespass by the Lord of the City?"

Form./Hyp. "Don't worry your head about it! We have more than a thousand years of Tradition to justify our entrance by this means which any impartial judge will agree that its legal. Besides, if we get into the Way, what difference does it make how we got here? If we're in, we're in! You came in by the Gate, we tumbled over the wall. How is your condition any better than ours?"

Chr. "I walk by the Rule of my Master, you walk by your own worthless Tradition which is contrary to the Book given to me by Him who made it. You are already counted as Thieves by the Lord of the Way. You came in by yourselves without His Direction and you shall go out by yourselves without His Mercy."

Form./Hyp. "Ha! Will you be judging us? Mind your own business. We keep the Laws and Ordinances as well as you or anyone else."

Chr. "By Laws and Ordinances you will not be saved, since you did not come in by the Door [Col.2:20-23]. I have been given a white Coat by Him who bought it with His own Blood to cover the shame of my nakedness [Isa.61:10]. You have but the native dress of your own Vain-Glory which will never be admitted into His presence. Besides all this, I have a Mark on my forehead [Ezk.9:4] and a Testament in my hand to guide and comfort me along the Way [Ps.119:105, 165] which I see you both are lacking."

*Who's this? The Pilgrim. How! 'Tis very true.
Old things are passed away; all's become New!
Strange! He's another Man, upon my word;
They be fine Feathers, that make a fine Bird.*

To this they made no reply but laughed and separated themselves from him to walk in their own conceits. *Christian* went on alone with his Testament to refresh and comfort him which he gladly read from time to time. Presently he came to the foot of the Hill of Difficulty where the Way ran straight up its steep slope. Below was a Spring placed there by

the Lord of the Way for the refreshment of weary Pilgrims. *Christian* did gladly drink thereof and did say,

*This Hill, though high, I desire to ascend,
The Difficulty will not me offend.
For I Perceive the Way to Life lies here:
Come, take courage, let's neither faint nor fear;
Better, though Difficult, the Right Way to go,
Than Wrong, though easy, where the End is Woe.*

Now I saw that *Formalist* and *Hypocrisy* also came to the bottom of the Hill where two other ways branched around its base. Seeing that the Hill was Difficult, though it was the Straight Way, they decided each to take one of the byways, thinking it would surely meet up with the Way of *Christian*. *Formalist* chose the path called Danger which led him into a great Forest where he wandered and was lost, never to be seen again. His companion, *Hypocrisy*, trekked on the road of Destruction which proceeded into a wide field full of Dark Mountains, where he stumbled and fell, and rose no more.

*Shall they who Wrong begin yet Rightly end?
Shall they at all have Safety for their friend?
No! No! In head-strong manner they set out,
And head-long will they fall at last no doubt.*

But now we must return to the Pilgrim's Progress. He had left off running to walking, and from walking to crawling upon his hands and knees because of the steepness of the place. Now about mid-way up the Hill was a pleasant Arbor made by the Lord of the Hill for the refreshment of weary Travelers. There did *Christian* sit down for awhile and comforted his heart from his Testament and admired his Garment that was given him near the Cross.

Presently, his head began to nod and finally he fell into a deep Sleep during which his Testament slipped from his hand. The sun had nearly run its course across the sky when one came to him and awakened

him with a loud voice, "Go to the ant, you Sluggard; consider her ways and be wise!" [Prov.6:6]. Suddenly he sat up, startled and ashamed, and sped on his Way to the top of the Hill.

Here he was met by two who ran with all their might in the direction of the bottom of the Hill. The one was named *Timorous* (for he was ever fearful and cowardly) and the other was called *Mistrust* (this one believed nothing but his own understanding).

Chr. "Sirs, what's the matter? You're running the wrong way!"

Tim. "The farther we go towards the Heavenly City, the more Danger we meet with. We're going back!"

Mis. "That's right! For just before us lie two Lions in the Way, whether sleeping or awake we do not know. But we are not going to risk being torn to pieces by them!"

Chr. "You are making me afraid. But where shall I go to be safe? If I go back to my City, that is certain Death by Fire and Brimstone. If I go forward, there is Fear of Death but Life everlasting beyond that. I will yet go forward and entrust myself to the Lord of the Way!"

With that, the two fled on down the Hill without looking back. *Christian*, still with a feeling of dread, reached into his Garment to bring out his precious Testament to receive Comfort in his tribulation. But he felt, and did not find it!

Then he was in great distress for he had lost his Pass into the Heavenly City. Now he was fully confused and did not know what to do. At last, he remembered that he had slept at the Arbor, and falling upon his knees, asked Forgiveness of God for his foolish act. Quickly, he proceeded back down the Path he had trod only earlier that same evening. O, how he prayed and anxiously looked to this side and that if perhaps he might find his Testament all the while bewailing his sinful sleep. "O wretched Man that I am! That I should sleep in the Day-time and in the midst of Difficulty indulge the Flesh!" [I Thess.5:7, 8].

"How many steps I have taken in vain! How like Israel I am who because of Sin had to tread again steps of Sorrow by way of the Red Sea!" [Deut.1:2, 3]. By this time he had come again unto the Arbor where he sat down and wept because he had not found his Testament along the Way. But, as God would have it, he looked sorrowfully down under the

bench and there his eyes fixed upon his precious Treasure!

Who can imagine the joy that flooded his soul? For this was the Assurance of his Life and the Acceptance at the desired Haven. Therefore, he carefully placed it in his Garment with a thousand thanks to Him who dwells on High.

By the time he reached again the top of the Hill, darkness had begun to settle upon the land. Then, into his mind, came thoughts of the Lions spoken of by *Timorous* and *Mistrust*. "These Beasts roam in the night seeking their prey. How shall I escape their claws and jaws?"

It was just then that he entered a narrower passage and through the gloom ahead he saw them; two Lions on either side of the Way. (Now the Lions were chained, but he did not see the chains). He therefore came to a halt and feared to go forward lest he be torn to pieces. He even thought of turning and fleeing as did the other two.

Just then the *Porter* of a very magnificent Palace which lay just beyond the Lions called out to him, "Is your Strength so small? Fear not the Lions, for they are chained. They are placed there for the Trial of Faith for those who have it and for the Discovery of those who have none. Keep in the midst of the Path, and no harm shall come upon you."

So he went on trembling for fear of the Lions and their terrible roaring, staying, as he was directed, in the midst of the Way. Indeed, he got safely by them and clapped his hands in joy, relief, and victory over these mighty ones [Jas.1:2-4].

*Difficulty is behind, Fear is before,
Though he's left the Hill, the Lions do roar.
A Christian man is never long at Ease:
When one fright is gone, another's there to seize.*

6

PALACE BEAUTIFUL

Christian now made haste to inquire of the *Porter* if he might find lodging for the night therein. So the good man asked from where he came, where he was going, and why he arrived at such a late hour and listened while *Christian* told his tale. Then said *Watchful* (for that was his name), "I will call for one of the Virgins of the Palace who will, if she likes your Talk, bring you in to the rest of the Family."

So he rang the bell and presently there came forth a maiden, both sober of mind and beautiful to behold, whose name was *Discretion*. She listened as he related his experiences in the Way up to this point and smiled though the tears came to her eyes. After a little pause she said, "I will call two or three more of the Family to greet you." She then ran to the door and called for *Prudence*, *Piety*, and *Charity* who, after some further discussion with him, welcomed him into the Family.

Many did gather at the Threshold of the Palace saying, "Come in, Blessed of the Lord; this House was built by the Lord of the Hill to entertain such Pilgrims as you upon the Way." *Christian* did bow himself low with humility for the kindness shown and entered into their midst with joy.

Until Supper was prepared, the Family did appoint *Piety*, *Prudence*, and *Charity* to converse with him. And so *Piety* began by asking him many particulars of his Journey thus far that they might be better acquainted with him. Then did *Christian* give a full account of how he got into the Way with all the Blessings, Dangers, and Snares along with profitable Lessons he had encountered, concluding with hearty thanks for

their kind reception of him.

Then *Prudence* (being very wise) thought it good to ask him, "Do you not think sometimes of that Country from where you came?"

Chr. "Yes, but with much Shame and Detesting: Truly, if I had been mindful of that Country from where I came, I might have had opportunity to return there; but now I desire a better Country, that is, a Heavenly one" [Heb.11:15, 16].

Prud. "Did you not carry away with you some of the things that you were accustomed to in that Place?"

Chr. "Yes, but greatly against my will. Especially my inward and carnal Reasoning which I once delighted in but now is grief to me. And if I could choose my own things, I would desire to never think of those things again."

Prud. "But are there not times when Victory seems to be gained over these?"

Chr. "Yes, but not often enough. I wish it were more so."

Prud. "How is it that you find Rescue from the troubling of your own Flesh?"

Chr. "It is truly when I think of what I saw at the Cross or when I look upon the fine linen Garment provided for me there. Also, meditating upon my Testament does deliver me, as well as sincere longing to arrive at Mount Zion."

Prud. "And what is it that makes you so desirous to go there?"

Chr. "Why, I hope to see Him alive that did once hang dead upon the Cross for me. For, I tell you the truth, I love Him because by Him I was released from my Burden. And besides these things, I am weary of my inward Sickness and desire to be with that great Company who never cease to cry, 'Holy, Holy, Holy,' where Sin and Death are no more."

At this, she smiled upon him with satisfaction and gave place to *Charity* who desired to inquire further about his family.

Char. "Tell us about your family, did they not come with you?"

Chr. Then he wept and sobbed, "O, how willingly I would have brought them, but they all were utterly against my going on Pilgrimage!"

Char. "But did you not endeavor to show them the Dangers

awaiting them in that condemned Place?”

Chr. “I did, indeed, but I seemed to them as if I was joking [Gen.19:14]. Many times I would earnestly Pray that the Lord would be pleased to open their eyes. But they would not hear. You must know that my Wife and poor Children are very dear to me.”

Char. “But what reason did they give for not coming with you?”

Chr. “Why, my Wife was afraid of losing the World and my Children were given over to the foolish Delights of Youth. Though my own life has little to commend it, it was my sincere desire to see them walk in the Way of Truth.”

Char. “Indeed, *Cain* hated his brother because his deeds were Evil and those of his brother’s were Righteous [I Jn.3:12]. If they would not be persuaded by your Words, Prayers, and Manner of Life, then we can but continue to commit them into the hands of Him who does all things well. In this you have delivered your soul from their Blood” [Ezk.3:19].

Having said these things, they all fell silent for a brief space reflecting upon the mystery of the hardening of a Sinner’s heart which was only interrupted by the sighs and prayers that could be heard from *Christian’s* lips.

7

CHRISTIANNA, CHILDREN, & MERCY

Now, we must leave our story of the good *Christian* for the moment, to relate how wondrously God did accomplish His Good Pleasure in the heart of *Christian’s* Wife and dear Children. Spiritual progress on the Pilgrim Way is by starts and stages, beginning within, unseen by the eye of man. It is thus that it was in *Christianna*.

We must not suppose that good *Christian* had left his family without Husband and Father. No, indeed, he continued to care for their daily necessities while abiding with them under the same roof. Nothing less would qualify one as making a claim to Godliness [I Tim.5:8].

Truly he was in the World, but not of it, while bearing the hatred of his own Dear Ones who yet dwelt therein [Jn.17:14-16]. He did not leave them as to the things of this life, but had truly left Wife and Children for the sake of the Gospel [Lk.18:29, 30]. So, while *Christian* had gone some distance towards the Heavenly City, thinking that there were no movements in the heart of his Wife, strange and wonderful workings were occurring in her soul, though unknown to him. And this is how it came about.

When kindness is returned for reviling and goodness for evil, disturbing distress churns within the hardhearted . Guilt and Shame begin to break up the resistance which before was so strong. A Distance developed between the Man and his Wife now that they no longer walked the Broad Way together. This sorely pricked her womanly soul and stirred her natural affections. In short, all of her unkind, unnatural, and ungodly behavior towards her dear Husband came like swarms into her

mind. It tormented her Conscience hotly and loaded her soul with smoldering Guilt.

Like a Flash of Lightening to her remembrance came all of her Husband's tears, pleadings, and self-denials for her and her Sons. All these things pressed heavily upon her, especially his Words of Warning from his Book. Ringing in her ears day and night was his bitter outcry, "What must I do to be saved?"

The day therefore came when she called her Children to her side saying, "Sons, we are all undone! I have sinned against your Father, I refused to go with him, and I have hindered you from the Way of Life." With that, the Children lifted up their voices and wept, crying, "Let us arise and go, dear Mother. O, let us not delay."

Channa. "O, woe is the day! If I had only listened to the voice of my dear Husband! Now I and my Children are almost in utter ruin because of hating His Instruction [Prov.5:11-14]. I heard the Promise of entering His Rest, but now I fear because that Word did not profit me by reason of my Hardness of Heart! [Heb.4:1, 2]. O, what shall become of us now?" And with that, they all fell into weeping afresh most miserably.

That night, as God would have it, *Christianna* had a dream, and behold, a wide Scroll was opened before her in which was recorded the sum of her ways. The crimes noted therein appeared very dark and threatening upon her [Zech.5:1-4]. Then she cried aloud in her sleep, "Lord, have Mercy upon me, a Sinner" [Lk.18:13]; and the little Children heard her.

After this, two very evil looking Ones stood by her bed-side saying, "What shall we do with this Woman? For she cries out for Mercy waking and sleeping. If she is permitted to go on like this, we shall lose her as we have her Husband!"

Now she woke up in a great sweat and trembled exceedingly. She lay this way for some time in an anguish of soul until she drifted off again into a fitful sleep. It was then that she dreamed of *Christian* whom she imagined she saw in a place of Bliss among countless Souls, all Immortal, who constantly did raise a chorus of Joy to Him who sat upon the Throne with a Rainbow about His head [Rev.4:2, 3, 5:11, 12].

In the morning, the visions of the night would not give her rest

of mind so she prayed to God and related them somewhat to the Children when one knocked hard at the door.

Channa. "If you come in God's name, come in." And he who was without replied, "Amen. Peace be to this house," and then entered and continued, "*Christianna*, do you know where I am from and why I am here?" Upon hearing this, she blushed and trembled with warm desires surging through her heart to know his errand.

"My name is *Secret*, and I dwell with those on High [Ps.91:1; Ps.25:14]. The report has come to Us that you have repented of the Evil of your ways against your Husband and of Hardening your Heart against the Way of Pilgrims and of keeping your Children in their Ignorance. *Christianna*, The Merciful One has sent me to tell you that He is a God ready to Forgive, and that He takes Delight to multiply Pardon for your offences [Isa.55:7]. Moreover, He invites you into His Presence, to His Table of Abundance forevermore" [S. of S. 2:4; Isa.25:6].

Overcome with wonder, she bowed herself to the ground as he continued, "*Christianna*, here is also a Letter for you, which I have brought from your Husband's King."

It's odor was of the best Perfume [S. of S. 1:11, 12] and was inscribed with Letters of Gold whose contents were as follows; "The King desires you to do as your Husband did, for this is the Way to My City, and to dwell in My Presence with Joy forever. The Spirit and the Bride say 'Come.' And let the one who Hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who is Thirsty, Come; let the One who wishes, take the water of Life without cost" [Rev.22:17].

The Good Woman nearly fainted at the News but cried out to her Visitor, "Sir, will you carry me and my Children with you, that we also may go and worship this King?"

Secret "*Christianna*, the Bitter is before the Sweet. You must pass through Troubles, as has your Husband, before you may enter the Heavenly City [Acts 14:22]. Therefore you must also walk in the Way unto the Narrow Gate where it will be told you what you must do. Do not neglect to read the Letter in your hand, for it is one of the Songs that you must sing while you are in this House of your Pilgrimage" [Ps.119:54].

Having said all, he excused himself to return to Him who sent

him. Now did the tears of Joy gush from their eyes at the glad prospect before them of joining their Beloved in the Way. All preparations were immediately made for a hasty, though prudent, departure from their City of Destruction.

But while they were about to be gone, two of her neighbors came to visit and knocked at the door, to whom she said as she did before, "If you come in God's name, come in." Upon hearing this, the women were quite stunned as *Christianna* had never spoken so before.

Therefore their amazement increased when they entered and found them packed for the Journey. The eldest of them, *Mrs. Timorous* by name, being the wife of him who would have put fear into *Christian*, exclaimed, "Where do you think you are going?"

Channa. "To go after my Good Husband on the Way to the Heavenly City." And with that, she did begin to weep again.

Tim. "What! And endanger both yourself and these poor Children with untold terrors? No, neighbor, it shall not be. You cannot run the risk of soul and body for that which you have never seen and at which you may never arrive."

Channa. "Do not say what you do not know, Dear Neighbor, I have assurances from the Prince of the Way that He desires me to come to His Dwelling with Promise of His Welcome at the end of my Journey. He sent His Messenger here this very morning with this Letter for me," which she then pulled out and read to them.

Tim. "O, the Madness that has possessed you and your Husband! How can you be so foolish to cast away not only yourself, but these, your sweet Babes?"

Channa. "Do not tempt me, my neighbor, I have set my hand to the plow and cannot look back [Lk.9:62]. He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose [Mt.16:25, 26]. And as for the Troubles you made mention of, they are no Discouragement to me but rather Assurance that I am on the Right Way. The Bitter must come before the Sweet which will only make the Sweet that much Sweeter. So, since you did not enter my house in God's name as I said, please be gone and trouble me no further."

So she reviled her and arose looking rather offended, saying,

"Come, neighbor *Mercy*, let's leave her to her own folly since she despises our counsel."

But *Christianna's* Words had so worked within *Mercy's* soul, creating a desire to accompany the Good Woman on the Way, that she ventured to say that she would walk with her at least part way along her Path to keep her company.

Tim. "Well, I see you have a mind to be a fool too. But take heed in time and be wise; while we are out of danger, we are out; but when we are in, we are in!" And with that, she briskly left them and went to join her own companions where she and they further slandered and talked nonsense of them all.

By that time *Christianna* along with her Children and *Mercy* had gotten out of the City and were in the Way to the Gate. It was then that *Mercy*, being young and somehow shy, did say, "If I thought that I might go along with you and be accepted in the Way, I would never go near that Town again."

This brought gladness to *Christianna* and she spoke with great encouragement to her heart, "*Mercy*, dear, do come with me! I know very well what shall meet us at the end of our Pilgrimage. The King who sent for me is One who delights in *Mercy* [Mic.7:18, 19]. Come with me to the Blessed Gate, He will surely not turn away any who come unto Him there."

And so *Christianna's* words comforted her fears and she agreed to join her with Hopes of Eternal Life of which she did sing:

*Let the most Blessed be my Guide,
If it be His blessed Will,
Unto His Gate, into His Fold,
Up to his Holy Hill:*

*And let Him never allow me
To swerve or turn aside
From His Free Grace, and Holy Ways,
Whatever may come or abide.*

And let Him gather those of mine,
That I have left behind;
Lord, make them pray they may be Thine,
With all their Heart and mind.

8

THE SLOUGH, GATE, & EVIL ONES

In short time they came to the border of that miry marsh into which *Christian* did descend along with *Pliable* and there they stood, not knowing how to proceed. For the place was worse than before because many, pretending to be the King's Laborers, brought dirt and dung rather than stones and threw them therein. It was *Mercy* who encouraged the others finally by saying, "Come, let us cross over, only let us look well to our feet that we might not miss the Steps."

With great caution, therefore, did they venture to the other bank, sometimes with a slip or staggering a bit, but at last, making it safely across. Now as soon as they were safe on the other side they thought they heard a Voice saying, "Blessed is she that believes, for there shall be a Performance of the things that have been told her from the Lord" [Lk.1:45].

With no further difficulty they made their way to the Gate and, after discussion, determined that *Christianna* should be the one to approach the Gate in their behalf. So she did begin to Knock and Knock again as did her Husband before her.

Then they heard a horrible and violent barking of a great Dog come rushing up seemingly to the inside of that Gate which they wished to enter. For a while she no more Knocked for fear that the Dog might leap upon them terribly should the Gate be opened.

Then they did not know what to do. To continue to Knock seemed to be certain danger and to turn and flee would surely offend the Gatekeeper. At last, it was decided that to continue to Knock was their only Hope so that was done even more forcefully than at first. Then said the Gatekeeper, "Who is there?" And when he had said this, the Dog left off his barking and the Gate was opened unto them.

Then *Christianna* prostrated low before Him with these words, “Let not our Lord be offended with his hand-maidens that we have Knocked at His princely Gate.”

When He had heard from where they had come and what they Desired, He took her by the hand and let her in, saying, “Let the little Children come unto Me” [Lk.18:16]. He then brought them in and closed the Gate with instructions that the Trumpeter above should welcome them with Trumpeting of Joy and the air was filled with his melodious notes.

Now all this while poor *Mercy* stood without, trembling and crying, for fear that she was rejected. But when *Christianna* had gotten inside, she began to make intercession for her to the Prince. Each minute seemed like an hour to the anxious Maiden without who, being greatly fearful, began to Knock most loudly.

Then was the Gate opened to her, but she had fainted [Ps.119:81] and fallen to the earth. She was looked upon with Pity by the Lord who met her there and raised her by the hand, saying, “Maiden, fear not, but arise and enter according to the Sure Word as it is written, ‘When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord, and my Prayer came in unto Thee, into Thy Holy Temple’” [Jonah 2:7].

Mercy “My Lord, I have come, though not by Invitation as my friend, *Christianna*, has. But, I beg, if there is any Grace and Forgiveness to spare that might wash away my Sins, I do humbly ask that Your poor hand-maiden might be made a partaker.”

Gently was she then led in by the hand and kindly received by the Lord of the Way, saying, “I grant Pardon by Word and by Deed; by Word in the Promise of Forgiveness and by Deed in the Way I obtained it [Jn.20:20]. Take the first from My lips with a Kiss [S.of S.1:2] and come up here and see afar off that which you shall soon know better.”

So He had them stand atop the Gate where they could see in the distance that Cross of Calvary which did so much bless and relieve dear *Christian*. At this sight they were elated beyond measure and did Praise Him who suffered therein to purchase their souls.

When they had descended, *Mercy* fell at His feet and said, “Let my Lord accept the Sacrifice of Praise, even the fruit of my lips which give

Thanks to Your Name” [Heb.13:15]. She continued upon her face and declared, “You are Righteous, O Lord, when I plead with You, yet let me talk with You of Your Judgments” [Jer.12:1, 2].

His kindly nod encouraged her to gather courage and venture to ask (though she blushed as she did) why such a vicious Dog was kept by Him in His yard.

He answered, “That Dog has another Owner and is kept in his compound opposite this wall, though My Pilgrim’s hear his Bark and ferocious Roaring. Indeed, he who keeps him (being My Enemy) does so out of no goodwill to Me and to keep Seekers of Life from entering at the Gate. Yet I always give My own Purchased Ones timely help so they are not delivered over to the power of the Dog [Ps.22:20, 21]. And why, My Darling Maiden, should a Dog in another man’s yard, whose Barking I turn to profit for My Own, keep any from coming to Me?”

Mercy “My Lord, I confess my Ignorance of Your Ways which are ever good. I spoke what I did not understand and acknowledge that You do all things well” [Job 42:2, 3; Mk.7:37].

He appeared pleased that His Word was received to her heart and lifted her up to stand before Him. So He fed them [Jn.6:35, 51], and washed their feet [Jn.13:5, 10], and set them in the Way of His steps as He had done for *Christian* before. Then did *Christianna* begin to sing:

*Blessed be the Day that I began
A Pilgrim so to be;
And blessed also be that Man
That there unto moved me.*

*’Tis true, ’twas long before I began
To seek to live Forever:
But now I run as fast as I can;
’Tis better late, than Never.*

*Our Tears to Joy, our Fears to Faith,
Are turned as we see;
Thus our Beginning (as one says)*

Shows what our End will be.

Now I saw in my dream that as they walked along the Way they passed by a garden which grew on the side of the Wall belonging to the Owner of the Dog. Some of the boughs of his trees hung over the Wall laden with fruit which did greatly appeal to the Boys. So, as boys usually do, they began to pick the fruit and eat.

When she saw what was happening, *Christianna* did reprove them severely for their Trespass, but they continued to eat one or two more before leaving off their thoughtlessness. Had she known that they belonged to the Enemy of their souls, I dare say she would have been ready to die of Fear.

It was just then that two Evil looking Ones came down the Path in their direction. *Christianna* and *Mercy* quickly covered themselves with their veils and kept themselves to their Journey. The men, however, continued to make their approach unto the Women and came close so as to embrace them.

Channa. “Stand back, or go peaceably by as you should!” [Ps.119:115].

But the Two, as men that are deaf, began to lay hands upon them which caused a great Resistance and struggle on the part of the Women while the Men did say, “We do not want your money, it is your Person that we desire!”

Channa. “Ah, you would have us Body and Soul! We will neither hear nor yield to what you demand! We will rather die on the spot than be Spoiled by you and cast away our Well-being hereafter.” And having said this, both of the Women shrieked in alarm, crying, “Murder! Murder!” and thus put themselves under those Laws provided for the protection of Women [Deut.22:23, 26, 27]. But the Two still made their attempts upon them and they cried out the more.

Now, since they were not far from the Gate, their Cries were heard by the *Reliever* who did speedily come to their Rescue. So boldly did he assault the Two, that they hastily flung themselves over the Wall into the Castle yard of the Owner of the Dog and thus escaped.

Though shaken and frightened, they suffered no real other harm

and expressed their thanks to the Prince for hearing their Voice and sending His Relief. Having calmed down a bit after the ordeal, *Reliever* did question them, “I am amazed, since you are but weak Women, that you did not ask the Lord to provide you with a Conductor so as to avoid these troubles. He surely would have granted you one.”

Channa. “O, we were so overcome with our Present blessing, that Dangers to come did not even enter our minds. Besides, who would have thought that such Evil Ones could be found so near the Gate? [I Cor.10:12; Mt.26:41]. I wonder, that since our Lord knew that it would be good for us to have such an Escort, why He did not provide one?”

Reliever “It is not always necessary to grant things not asked for lest they be counted as of little value in your sight. He has told us, ‘You do not have because you do not ask.’ [Jas.4:2]. So you must learn by this to always request from your Lord those needs you are aware of and for that Help He knows is best due to your Weakness and Ignorance.”

Channa. “Shall we go back again to my Lord and ask from Him a Conductor for our Safety?”

Reliever “Your confession of your folly I will present to Him. Go ahead, in all places you will find no lack in the Lord’s supply against all attempts to spoil you [I Cor.10:13]. But, as I said, He will need to be requested to do it for you; and it is a poor thing that is not worth asking for” [Ezk.36:37]. Having said these parting words, he returned to his place and they went on their Way.

Mercy “We have cause to thank the Lord in this, dear friend. By this we have seen our own Imperfections and the showing of the Riches of His Grace in Delivering us from the hands of those who were stronger than we. We are of Women most Blessed.”

Thus they proceeded onward; more Humbled, increasingly Watchful, and deeply Grateful for multiplied Kindness bestowed by the Lord of the Way.

9

INTERPRETER'S HOUSE

Shortly they drew near to a fine Dwelling which stood in the Way into which *Christian* had entered and was so benefitted by what he was shown there. As they came close to the door, they thought that they heard those within mentioning *Christianna* by name, for indeed the Fame of her Pilgrimage had now become known beyond the City she had left.

They were all greatly surprised and embarrassed to hear those within commending her Journey as they did. This both encouraged and humbled them, but did strengthen them to approach the Door and knock.

A fair Maiden, *Innocent* by name, attended to them and learned who they were and from where they had come. Immediately she ran to those within exclaiming, "Can you imagine! At the Door is this very *Christianna*, her Children, and her Companion, *Mercy*!" At this news they did all leap for Joy and quickly told their Master who came and looked upon her with Gladness.

Interpreter "Are you that *Christianna* whom *Christian* the good man left behind when he began his Pilgrim's life?"

Channa. "I am indeed that hard-hearted woman who did both mock and discourage my dear Husband and persuaded my Children to neglect their Souls. But now I am come, for I am convinced that there is no Right Way but this."

Interp. "Then is that fulfilled which is written of the man who sent his son to work in the vineyard who said, 'I will not,' but later

repented and went" [Mt.21:29].

Channa. "So be it. Amen. May God make it a true saying of me and grant that I may be found at last by Him, Blameless and in Peace."

Then they were ushered in and welcomed most graciously by all the household who all rejoiced exceedingly over their Guests. After a refreshing rest and conversation with one and all, the *Interpreter* brought them into the rooms which did so much profit *Christian* and showed them the things there for their own Progress in the Way. And, since supper was not yet ready, he took them into other of his Significant Rooms to reveal further unto them.

In the first they met a Man who could look no way but downwards with a Muckrake in his hand. Above his head stood One with a Heavenly Crown in his hand which he offered in exchange for his rake. But the Man neither looked up nor regarded the Offer, but continuously raked to himself straws, muck, dung, and sticks.

Channa. "Ah! I think I know something of the meaning of this. This is to show us the mind of a man of this World: Is it not, good Sir?"

Interp. "You have rightly seen the sense. Many of this World consider the Things Above to be a mere Fable and so they set their minds on the things Below and not those of Christ" [Col.3:1-3].

Channa. "O! Deliver me from this Muckrake!"

Interp. "That Prayer has been left unused 'til it is almost rusty. 'Give me not Riches,' [Prov.30:8] is hardly the prayer of one in ten thousand." Upon hearing that, the Two Women wept and said, "It is, Alas! Too true."

Next he led them into the very best room in the house and asked them to look around to see if they could find anything profitable there. Then they looked round and round; for there was nothing but a very great Spider upon the wall which they both overlooked.

Mercy "I see nothing, good Sir."

Interp. "Look again." And so she did.

Mercy "There is not anything but an ugly spider, who hangs by her hands upon the wall."

Interp. "Is there but one spider in all this spacious room?"

Then did tears spill over from *Christianna's* eyes, for she was a

woman of quick Understanding, and replied, “Yes, Lord, there is here more than one. Yes, and Spiders, whose venom is far more destructive than her own.”

At this answer, the *Interpreter* looked pleasantly upon her and said, “You have spoken the Truth.” This made *Mercy* to blush and the Boys to cover their faces; for they all began now to understand the riddle.

Interp. “The Spider takes hold with her hands and is in King’s Palaces [Prov.30:28]. This is to show you that however full of Sin’s venom you may be, by Faith you can dwell in the best room of the King’s house above.”

Channa. “I could only imagine that we all looked like ugly creatures no matter what a fine room we might be in. I did not perceive this lesson of Faith but I do now see that God has made nothing in vain.”

Then they all seemed to be glad and looked at each other with tears in their eyes and also bowed before the *Interpreter* who smiled and led them to another room.

Interp. “See here this Hen and her chicks, how they do drink, lifting up their heads and eyes towards Heaven. Learn from them to acknowledge from where your mercies come, by receiving them with thanks, by looking up. Then again, see how she walks about and hear her voice; she has a Common Call throughout all the day, a Special Call occasionally, a Brooding note, and an Outcry.

“Now compare this Hen to your King [Mt.23:37; Ps.91:4], and these chickens to His obedient ones. By his Common call, He gives nothing; by His Special call He always has something to give; He has a Brooding voice for those who are under His Wings [Ruth 2:12]; and an Outcry to sound the alarm when the enemy approaches. I chose, my Darlings, to show you these because you are Women and they are easy for you to know their meaning.”

Since they desired to see yet more, He led them into the Slaughter-house where a Butcher was killing a sheep. And the sheep was quiet and took her death patiently. “You must learn of this sheep to suffer, and to put up with wrongs without murmuring and complaints. Behold how quietly she takes her death and allows her skin to be pulled

over her ears. Your King calls you His Sheep” [I Pet.2:19-23].

Into His Garden did they now come where a great variety of Flowers flourished under His care. As they gazed with admiration he said, “Behold, the Flowers are of differing size, color, quality, smell, and virtue; and some are better than others. And where the Gardener has placed them, there they stand and do not quarrel with one another” [S.of S. 4:12-14].

He then took them out into His Field where great portions had been carefully prepared and sowed with Good Seed, yet in the time of Harvest, no fruit was brought forth, only straw and stubble.

Channa. “There is nothing to be done with it but to deliver it over to be burned, for there is nothing of profit to Him who spent His labor on it.”

Interp. “You have rightly judged, My daughter. Fruit is that which is looked for, without which, One condemns it to the Fire. Beware that in this you do not condemn yourselves.”

As they were coming in from the Field, they beheld a lovely little bird, a Robin, whose breast feathers were a most pleasing red. He was all the more agreeable for his sociable nature and willingness to eat crumbs of bread from the Children’s hands. Just as they were about to proceed, the little bird flew quickly from them and caught a great Spider in its mouth and ate it down as easily as it had the Bread. This made them to rather dislike the little creature who once had so appealed to them.

Interp. “This Robin is show you that not all who appear to be lovely outwardly are inwardly the same. For there are many who love to associate with the Godly for the Crumbs gained from keeping their company who have an equal appetite for Spiders when apart by themselves. They are equally satisfied to change their diet, drink iniquity, and swallow down Sin like water.”

They then returned to the house and discovered that supper was not yet ready, so the Master set forth a series of Proverbs for their profit.

“The fatter the pig is, the more she desires the mire; the fatter the Ox is, the more sportive he goes to the slaughter; and the more healthy the Lusty man is, the more prone he is to Evil.

“There is a desire in Women to appear neat and fine; how much

more to be adorned with that which is precious in the sight of God [I Pet.3:3, 4].

“It is easier to Watch a night or two than to sit up an entire year; so it is easier to begin well than to endure to the end [Mt.24:13].

“One Leak will sink a Ship, and one Sin will destroy a Sinner.

“He who fondles his treasure will not build with Gold [Mt.6:19, 20].

“He who forgets his friend, is ungrateful unto him; but he who forgets his Savior is unmerciful to himself.

“He who lives in Sin, and looks for Happiness hereafter, is like him who sows Thorns and imagines to reap Wheat [Gal.6:7, 8].

“If a man would live well, let him keep his last day ever before him as his Companion.

“Whispering and change of thoughts proves that Sin is in the World.

“If the World which is despised by God as vanity is counted as a thing of worth in the eyes of men, what will be Heaven which God commends?

“The eye which gazes on the well-watered plain, will also behold it rise in smoke [Gen.13:10; 19:28].

“Salt is good if it be not a Pillar [Mk.9:50; Lk.17:32; Gen.19:26].

“If this life which is full of so many troubles is so unwillingly let go of by us, what must that Life above be?

“We seldom sit down at the table and eat with nothing remaining; so there is in Jesus Christ more Merit and Righteousness than the World has need of.”

One thing more he desired to show them before they dined, so he took them again into the Garden and showed them a Tree whose branches were full of leaves and trunk pleasant to the eye, but whose inside was rotten and eaten by insects. “This,” he explained, “represents those found in the Garden whose mouths speak finely in behalf of God but will do nothing for him; whose leaves are many, but their hearts good for nothing except to be fuel for the devil’s kindling-box” [Mk.7:6].

Supper now being ready, they all were seated and one gave thanks, after which the good things of His Table were passed one to

another. And, as was his custom, the Master had his musicians entertain them as they dined, one of whose Song sounded thus:

*The Lord is my only support,
And He that does me feed;
How can I then lack anything
Whereof I stand in Need?*

Here he asked them further of how they had set out upon Pilgrimage and what had moved their hearts to walk in the Way. So *Christianna* related her tale followed by that of *Mercy* though she blushed and trembled to tell her own.

Interp. “*Christianna*, you have arisen, a Mother in Israel [Jud.5:7]. Your beginning is Good, your latter end shall greatly increase.” And she did cast her eyes down, covering herself with her veil, and bowed before him.

Interp. “*Mercy*, dear, your setting out is Good, for you have given credit to the Truth. You are a Ruth, who left Father and Mother and the place of her birth for the love she had for Naomi and to the Lord her God [Ruth 1:14-18], to come to a Place and a People whom she did not know. ‘May the Lord reward your work, and your wages be full from the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose Wings you have some to seek refuge’ [Ruth 2:12]. The hearing of this made *Mercy* shed tears of Joy and prostrate, veiled before him.

After a refreshing night’s rest, they prepared to continue on their Journey, but the Master said that they must go forth orderly and fitted for the Way. So the Maiden, *Innocent*, took them into the Garden where was a Bath that would make them Clean from the Soil gathered during their travel. They went and washed and came out, not only sweet and clean, but also much strengthened in their joints [I Cor.6:11; Tit.3:5, 6].

Next He fixed a Seal upon their foreheads which did greatly add to their beauty and make them look more like Angels, fair as the Moon [Ex.13:9; S.of S.6:10]. The Maiden also brought forth Garments of fine Linen, white and clean [Isa.61:10; Rev.19:8], which, when they were thus adorned, made them seem awesome to each other because of the Glory

which they saw in the other (though they could not see the Glory that was upon herself). Thus they began to esteem the other as better than themselves [Phil.2:3] which added that much more beauty to their persons.

Each were then handed a Mirror which He bid them look into very well and often along the Way. "In it you will see the Glory of Him who is your Prince, as well as discovering those imperfections in yourselves which you otherwise would not see" [2 Cor.3:17, 18; Jas.1:22-25].

One last provision was made in accordance with *Christianna's* previous request. The Master called for one of His Servants, *Great-heart*, by name, who was instructed to take his Sword, Helmet, and Shield [Eph.6:16, 17] and conduct them to the house called Beautiful where they were next to rest.

So he went before them as those who belonged to the Family and the *Interpreter* wished them God speed along with many kind words at their departure. They went on their Way, and sang:

*This place has been our second stage,
Here we have heard, and seen
Those good things, that from Age to Age
To others hid have been.*

*The Dunghill-raker, Spider, Hen,
The Chicken too, to me,
Has taught a lesson, let me then
Conformed to it be.*

*The Butcher, Garden, and the Field,
The Robin, and his bait,
Also the rotten Tree does yield
Me argument of weight;*

*To move me for to Watch and Pray,
To strive to be sincere;*

*To take up my Cross day by day,
And serve the Lord with fear.*

*And let this Mirror be to me
A Glass of glorious sight,
To show my stain and set me free,
And His blessed Face in Light.*

10

THE CROSS, DIFFICULTY'S HILL, & GRIM

Upon coming to that place of the Cross where *Christian's* Burden did fall from his shoulders and disappear into the Tomb, they paused and blessed the name of the Lord. It was there that it came into *Christianna's* mind what they were told at the Gate; that their Pardon was obtained both by Word and by Deed.

Channa. "Mr. *Great-Heart*, I know something of what it means to be pardoned by Word, that is by the Promise, but what is it to be pardoned by Deed? Please, do help us to understand better."

Great. "Gladly. He who admitted you at the Gate is that same One who has Pardoned you by His one Act of Obedience upon the Cross [Rom.5:18]. There, He who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might become the Righteousness of God in Him [2 Cor.5:21]. Now He is a Great and Marvelous Person with none His equal. For He is both truly God in all His fullness [Col.2:9], and at the same time, Perfect Man, Righteous in all respects [Jn.8:29]. Therefore, He could Satisfy the righteous Judgment of God against sinful men, since He had no sin of His own and was thus qualified to be a Substitute for those He suffered for. His Blood, shed under the wrath of God against Sin, satisfied all of God's Righteous requirements so that God now is both Just and a Justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" [Rom.3:24-26].

Channa. "O, seeing this makes my heart ten times more lightened and joyous than before. It seems as if my own heart bleeds to

think that He bled for me! O, Thou Loving One! O, Thou Blessed One! You deserve to have me; You have bought me. You deserve to have me all; You have paid for me ten thousand times more than I am worth! O, *Mercy*, how I wish that your Father and Mother were here; yes, and *Mrs. Timorous* along with *Mrs. Wanton* as well. Surely their hearts would be affected! I am persuaded that neither the Fear of the one nor the Lusts of the other could prevent them from becoming Pilgrims too!"

Great. "You speak now in the warmth of your affections. Do you think that you will always feel and speak as you do now? Were there not many who stood around our Lord's Cross who rather mocked and scorned His suffering so? What you have, my Daughters, you have by reason of a Divine impression made upon your souls which not all partake of. Remember that the Hen, by her common call, gives nothing to her Chicks. This you therefore have by a Special Grace."

This Instruction and Correction they humbly received with thankfulness as they moved on from this blessed place with determination to glory in nothing else but the Cross they had seen [Gal.6:14]. Soon they came upon the spot where *Christian* met *Simple*, *Sloth*, and *Presumption* sound asleep. But since then they had been executed and their bodies left hanging as a Warning to all who would follow in their way.

Seeing the troubled questions reflected in their eyes, *Great-Heart* began to explain who they were and why they were left hanging there. "These men have been extremely wicked against the Lord of the Way and His Pilgrims. Many have they turned out of the Way by their words and deeds among whom were *No-heart*, *Linger-after-Lust*, and a young woman named *Dull*, to mention only a few. Besides, they brought an evil report against the Lord, saying that He was a Hard Task-Master [Mt.25:24-28]. They also brought an evil report against the Good Land [Num.13:31, 32] to where you are going and spoke evil against the Servants of the Most High. Furthermore, they called the Bread of God miserable food [Num.21:5], the Comforts of God's Children vain imaginations, and the Travels of Pilgrims as a Worthless Waste."

Channa. "If that is how they were, they will never be mourned by me. They have what they deserve."

Mercy "Yes, let them hang, and their names rot, and their Crimes

live forever against them. And she did turn this occasion into a song:

*Now then you three hang there, and be a Sign
To all that shall against the Truth malign.
And let him that comes after, fear this End,
If unto Pilgrims he is not a Friend.
And Thou, my Soul, of all such men beware,
That unto Holiness are such a snare.*

Next they came to the Spring at the foot of the Hill Difficulty and found it dirtied by the feet of some who do not wish Pilgrims to quench their thirst there [Ezek.34:18]. But they put some into a Vessel sweet and good, and soon the dirt did settle to the bottom and they could drink of the King's good Water.

Here they also saw that the two Byways of *Formalist* and *Hypocrisy* had been stopped up with Chains, Posts, and a Ditch. Even so, footprints could be seen along each path.

Channa. "The Way of transgressors is hard" [Prov.13:15].

Great. "Even if any of the King's Servants call to them and Warn them of their peril, they will revile and proceed, saying, 'As for the Word that you have spoken to us in the name of the King, we will not listen to you; but we will certainly do whatever proceeds out of our own mouth' [Jer.44:16, 17], and so many have passed on and have perished."

Channa. "They are Idle; they do not wish to take pains. The Uphill Way is unpleasant to them: So it is fulfilled unto them as it is Written, 'The way of the Slothful Man is a Hedge of Thorns'" [Prov.15:19].

So up the Hill they went, though not without Difficulty which made them see that those who loved Ease rather than their Souls would certainly choose another way. *Christianna* began to pant, *Mercy* wished to stop and rest, and the smallest of the Children cried aloud. But their Guide encouraged them all to endure only just awhile farther when they should reach the Prince's Arbor. So he took the child by the hand and brought them to the place.

Gladly they took their rest there and *Mercy* sighed, "How sweet is Rest to them that labor [Mt.11:28]. But let us be alert, for I have heard

that this is where *Christian* slept and lost his Testament," to which they all agreed.

Great. "So boys, what do you think of Pilgrimage now?"

James "I remember what my mother told me, that the Way to Heaven is as a ladder and the Way to Hell is as down a hill. But I'd rather go up the ladder to Life than down the hill to Hell."

Great. "It is a truth, what your mother has told you. Good boy." And the little boy blushed.

Channa. "Come, let us refresh ourselves with the provisions given us by the good *Interpreter*. He has made us partakers of His Bounty because we have willingly become His companions. Sir, will you join us?"

Great. "You are going on Pilgrimage, and presently I will return to my home where I eat such every day. Share it among yourselves and then we shall soon be going for the day is drawing to a close."

So, after being much refreshed, they got up and the little boys went ahead of the group. But before they had taken many steps, *Christianna* realized that she had forgotten to take her bottle of refreshment with her from the arbor.

Mercy "I think this is a losing place. But, Sir, what is the cause of this?"

Great. "The cause is failure to Watch and be Sober even in places of Rest. If one sleeps when he ought to be awake and forgets when he ought to remember, he becomes a loser" [Mt.26:40, 41; I Thess.5:6].

It was not long until they reached that place where the Lions did guard the Path. At the sight of them, the boys were glad to hide behind their Guide because of their fear. At this, he smiled and said, "How now, my boys, do you love to go before when no danger approaches; and love to come behind as soon as the Lions appear?" [Prov.24:10].

With sword drawn, *Great-Heart* boldly made his approach upon the Lions with the women and children coming behind. Then there appeared a Giant, a slayer of Pilgrims, whose name was *Grim* for he was a savage and merciless enemy.

Grim "Halt, you trespassers! Should you go any further, you shall all be slain by my fierceness and that of the Lions!"

Great. "Stand aside, for these are on the King's Highway and go

at His command despite you and the Lions.” Now, in fact, because of his harsh and forbidding appearance and the terror of the Lions, the Way had lately become overgrown with grass and the Path less traveled.

Channa. “Though this Way has been nearly abandoned to travel upon By-Paths, yet it shall not be so today since I have arisen, a Mother in Israel!” [Jud.5:6, 7].

At this, *Grim* swore by the Lions that they should all turn aside or perish miserably and the Lions did roar fearfully to confirm his curse.

Without a further word, *Great-Heart* charged their opponent with mighty blows from the Sword in his hand which made the Giant stumble back and rage, “Will you slay me on my own ground?”

Great. “This is the King’s Highway that you and your Lions are standing in to your own destruction. But these women and children will stand firm in the Way by the strength of the Lord and the Power of His might.” And, with that, he fell to cutting and hacking with his Sword [Eph.6:10, 12, 17].

The first blow brought the Giant to his knees. With the second, he broke his helmet and the next cut off his right arm. Then the Giant roared so hideously that the women and children shook with fear though they were glad to see him helpless upon the ground. Their Guide showed no mercy to this wicked and Grim hindrance along the Way, but killed him outright with one final blow.

Therefore, when that hideous Giant, *Grim*, who put such fears and terrors into the hearts of Pilgrims was dead, Mr. *Great-Heart* spoke with assurance to them, saying, “Come now, and follow me, and no harm shall come to you because of the Lions.”

So they proceeded on, though the women trembled as they passed by them and the boys looked as if they would die. But they suffered no harm from the beasts and met with no further assaults ‘til at last they safely arrived at the Palace Beautiful.

11

TWO ARE ONE

Now I saw that as they drew up to the Palace entrance, *Great-Heart* knocked at the door and the *Porter* replied, “Who goes there?”

Great. “It is I.”

Then the *Porter* immediately opened unto him for he knew his voice very well as he had often conducted Pilgrims to the place. “How now, Mr. *Great-Heart*, you are welcome indeed! Do come inside and stay the night with us.”

Great. “Thank you, no, my friend, I must return to my Lord tonight but these Travelers will gladly partake of the hospitality within.” And he did then present the women and children unto him and they greeted each other.

Channa. “O, Sir, must you go? I don’t know what we shall do without you on our Journey. You have been so faithful and loving to us and have rescued us from so many dangers and guided us with your wise counsel.”

Mercy “O that we might have your company until the end of the Way! We pray, be persuaded to go with us and help us!”

Great. “I am at my Lord’s command. If He shall appoint me to be your Guide all the way through, I will gladly do so. But here is where you failed at the first. You should have asked of Him to send me with you beyond what He granted and He would have willingly done so. Even so, I know that now He will be pleased to hear your request and I shall return within three days’ time. But for now, good *Christianna*, *Mercy*, and brave children, I must bid you farewell.”

The *Porter* then called for the maiden, *Humble-mind*, to inform the Family within that *Christianna*, the Wife of *Christian*, and her Children had arrived at the door on Pilgrimage. But, O, if you could have heard

the noise of Gladness there was upon hearing this news!

So they came in haste to admire their guests and receive them with a holy kiss, and said, "Welcome, you vessels of the Grace of God. We, your faithful Friends, do heartily Welcome you!" And they ushered them in with the ringing of bells and choruses of Joy so that the house was full of the Praises of Him who had led them thus far.

Now, you must remember that we left off our story of *Christian* at this very Palace in order to relate that of his Wife. Well, to return to that, it so happened by the Good Pleasure of God that this very man was seated in the parlor of this Palace at that very moment.

You can well imagine his surprise and curiosity when such a melodious celebration as this reached his ears from the other part of this great house. So, he inquired from one of the servants who passed his way what the occasion was for such rejoicing. The servant, whose name was *Say-well*, replied, "You soon shall know the reason. I will report your request to the Chief of the House."

Within moments, not only the Chief, but numerous jubilant members of the Family gathered eagerly around *Christian*; some sounding praises, others joyously weeping, all expectantly anticipating the awaiting introduction. The Chief took him by the hand and invited him within, saying, "Come, Beloved of the Lord, there is Someone here whom, I know, you will be glad to see."

Christian, now somewhat amazed at what was happening, followed his Host through the corridors with a rising Thrill within his breast as they neared the grand door of the formal sitting room. The Host swung the door open and said, "See who has come to join you on Pilgrimage."

Who can describe what transpired in the heart of that Man and his Wife at the first meeting of their eyes? The Family all held their breath in a holy hush as *Christian* stopped and simply gazed in wonder at his *Christianna* who had arisen, startled, to her feet with eyes soon brimming with tears.

For long seconds he stood speechless and looked first to his Wife and then to his dear Children and back again to his Beloved with a growing realization of what this all meant. Finally, he managed to

whisper, "Is this really you, the Darling of my bosom, my Dearest Wife, *Christianna*?"

With trembling lips of hopeful acceptance she managed to breathe out, "Yes, my Dear Husband, it is I, your very *Christianna*."

Then, as if slowly in a dream, he moved admiringly with wonderment to her side, gently caressed her cheek, and tenderly kissed her forehead, saying, "This is the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our sight. For the King has visited us with His Sunrise from on High and accomplished Redemption for this my Wife, and these my Babes [Lk.1:68, 78]. Blessed be His Holy Name! Blessed be the Most High forever and ever! Let us rejoice and be glad for this Wife of mine was dead and now she lives! And these Babes of mine were lost and now they are found! Bring out the best robe and let them be clothed! Kill the fattened lamb and let us make merry and rejoice!" [Lk.15:20-24].

And, with that, the Musicians sounded their melody and the Family burst forth in Song while *Christian* and his family embraced and danced for Joy [Zeph.3:14, 15] amid loud choruses of, "Hallelujah! Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing for He has purchased these ones for God with His own Blood!" [Rev.5:12, 9].

Thus they were entertained by the Household with glad shouting and warm embraces and led to the places of honor where Garments fitting for the occasion were lovingly placed upon them which added to the festivity. The trumpeters continued to sound golden notes mingled with the sweetness of the harps while they rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory [I Pet.1:8].

Preparations were well under way for the supper of the Lamb, for the members of the Family had heard through faithful messengers that *Christianna* and Children would soon arrive at the Palace. Soon they would partake together for the first time in that glad Memorial to feast upon the Lamb who had been slain for their Redemption [I Cor.11:23-26; Ex.12:7, 8, 11].

While the final items were being put into place, his Wife and Children prostrated before their Husband and Father, weeping over their former hardness of heart and evil treatment of him [I Cor.11:27-29]. But

the good man raised them up, saying, “My Dear Ones, do not mourn and weep, for this Day is holy to the Lord our God. Do not be grieved; arise, for the Joy of the Lord is your Strength” [Neh.8:9-12].

And so they all partook of the best of Suppers, along with *Mercy* and the Family of the House in the sweetest of Communion. O what holy joy possessed each heart with thankfulness overflowing to Him who loves His own to the uttermost [Jn.13:1].

All their talk at that Table was of the Lord of the Hill; what He had done and how He had done so. And by what they said, I perceived that He had been a great Warrior, and had fought with and slain him who had the power of Death [Heb.2:14, 15]. This He did with the Loss of much Blood which added only that much more Glory of Grace into all that He did on the Cross out of Love to poor Pilgrims.

They talked of how they had heard Him say that He would not dwell in Mount Zion alone, but would bring many Sons to Glory [Heb.2:10]. Indeed, He had made many Pilgrims into Princes, though by nature they were born as beggars from the dunghill [I Sam.2:8; Ps.113:7].

Mercy “Wonderful it is! Music in the house, music in the heart, and music in Heaven! And all for Joy to Him who sits at the right hand of the Majesty on High mingled with that Joy which descends from above over Joy at our coming thus!” [Zeph.3:17].

So they discoursed together till late at night; and after they had committed themselves to their Lord for Protection, they all retired to their rest. *Mercy* was led to the bed-chamber called Comfort while the boys were settled in the one known as Relief.

Peace was over the door of that into which *Christian* and his dear Wife entered where, undisturbed, they lay pillowed in that rest which passes all understanding [Phil.4:7]. Moments of silent bliss flowed gently one upon another as they, together, recounted in their hearts, the marvelous Grace of the Lord of the Hill. It was *Christian* who softly expressed with Wonder,

Chr. “O, how good and kind is our Lord to bless us so! I cannot take it all in. How wise are all His ways. How full of mercy and truth are all His paths [Ps.25:9, 10]. O my dear Wife, my cup surely runs over. And to think, He has led you in the Way to join me with one heart and

one soul. We are Blessed indeed!” He turned to lovingly look into her face and the warmth of a tear from her eye fell gently upon his hand.

Channa. “O, *Christian*, I am not worthy of the least of His mercies. I have sinned against Heaven and in your sight. I am not fit to be called His daughter or to be called your Wife. O, my dear Husband, can you ever forgive me for my wretched ways?”

Chr. “My Darling and Delight of my heart, do I forgive up to a thousand times? No, not a thousand only, but a thousand times a thousand; freely, fully, and with all my heart” [Gen.50:15-21]. And the good man also shed his own tears which mingled with her own. “You are altogether beautiful, my Darling, and there is no blemish in you” [S. of S. 4:7].

Relief of such a glad welcome with his loving embrace soothed the heart of this daughter of Sarah whose now gentle and quiet spirit testified of the Grace she had received more than any words could proclaim [I Pet.3:4-6]. And so they drifted off to refreshing sleep with a final prayer breathed out of full hearts.

In the morning, their window which faced the Sunrise, sent its warming beams upon the resting couple. They awakened with great contentment, singing to greet the dawn,

*Where are we now! Is this the Love and Care
Of Jesus; for them that Pilgrims are,
Thus to provide! That we should be forgiven,
And dwell already the next door to Heaven!*

All equally arose refreshed and contented in the comforting care of their heavenly King. Soon they all gathered and greeted one another with a kiss of love and spoke of the welfare of their souls.

Mercy “A very sweet dream I had last night in my sleep. I sat alone where I grieved over the hardness of my heart. In a very short while many gathered around me, laughing, mocking, and abusing me for the sorrowing over my soul. With that, I lifted up my eyes to Him who alone can fly to our help and beheld One coming with Wings towards me [Mal.4:2].

“He came directly to me and said, ‘Mercy, what saddens you?’ When He had heard my complaint, He said, ‘Peace be unto you’; and He wiped the tears from my eyes. Then He brought out the best of Garments of Silver and Gold, put a Chain about my neck, Earrings in my ears, and a beautiful Crown upon my head [Ezk.16:1-14].

“Then He took me by the hand, saying, ‘Mercy, follow Me.’ So He went up, and I followed, till we came at a Golden Gate and were admitted within. He led me up to a Throne upon which One sat who said to me, ‘Welcome, Daughter.’ The place looked bright, like the Stars, or rather, like the Sun in its brilliance and it was then that I woke up full of Joy.”

Channa. “It was a good dream; and as you have found the first part to be true already, may He who has led you fulfill the second part as well. Indeed, God speaks once, yes twice, yet man does not perceive it; in a Dream, in a Vision of the night, when deep Sleep falls upon men, in slumbering upon the bed [Job 33:14, 15]. The Lord has blessed you, dear sister, with a wonderful foretaste of what He has promised for certain in His unchangeable Word.”

So the guests were taken on a tour of the Rare and Precious things of the House. They were first shown into the Study where the Records of greatest antiquity were kept. There they read the accounts of the Lord of the Hill, how He was the Son of the Ancient of Days by eternal generation [Dan.7:13, 14]. Here also were more fully recorded the Acts that He had done and the Victories He had won.

Also they were shown some of the worthy deeds that his servants had done: how they had subdued Kingdoms, accomplished Righteousness, obtained Promises, out of Weakness were made strong, and many more, which if I related all, time would fail me [Heb. 11:32-34].

Of great interest to the Pilgrims were the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and the left [2 Cor.6:7] which were employed by His Servants to accomplish mighty deeds. They were shown Moses’ Rod [Ex.4:2-5], the Hammer and nail of Jael [Jud.5:24-27], and the Pitchers, Trumpets, and Lamps of Gideon with which he scattered the armies of Midian [Jud.7:15-22].

The Sling and Stone of David by which he slew Goliath was also

observed [I Sam.17:45-51]. But the Sword with which their Lord will kill the Man of Sin in that final Day, more than anything, was fearfully admired by all [Rev.19:15-21].

This being done, *Prudence*, the Maiden of the Household graced with insight above the others, approached the Man and his Wife if she might be permitted to question the Children on spiritual matters. They were both quite willing for this to be done for the profit of one and all. And so she began.

Pru. “Come, *James*, can you tell me who made you?”

Jas. “God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.”

Pru. “Good boy. And can you tell me who saves you?”

Jas. “Why, the answer is one and the same as that of who made me.”

Pru. “Very good. But how does God the Father save you?”

Jas. “By His grace.”

Pru. “How does God the Son save you?”

Jas. “By His Righteousness, Death, Blood, and Life.”

Pru. “And how does God the Holy Spirit save you?”

Jas. “By His Illumination, by His Regeneration, and by His Preservation.”

She then turned to the Parents, saying, “You are to be commended in how you have brought up your Children. If the youngest among them can answer this way, I suppose I do not need to ask the rest these same questions. Then she said, “Come, *Joseph*, will you let me question you?”

Jos. “With all my heart, yes, Ma’am.”

Pru. “What is supposed by this word, ‘Saved?’”

Jos. “That Man, by Sin, has brought himself into a state of Captivity and Misery, and Guilt.”

Pru. “And what is supposed by his being saved by the Trinity?”

Jos. “That Sin is so great a mighty Tyrant and that its Corruption so very complete, that the Fullness of the Godhead alone can pull us out of its clutches. It also shows the greatness of His Goodness and Love in lifting us out of this miserable state.”

Pru. “What is God’s purpose in saving poor sinful men?”

Jos. “The glorifying of His Name, of His Grace, Justice, Truth, and Love, and the bringing of sinners to partake of this Glory to their everlasting Happiness” [2 Thess.2:14].

Pru. “Who are they that will be saved?”

Jos. “Those that accept His Salvation” [Rom.10:9, 10].

Pru. “Good boy, *Joseph*, you have been taught well and you have listened well to the instruction.” Then I saw that she turned to the next eldest whose name was *Samuel*.

Pru. “Come, my boy, let me ask you this, What is Heaven?”

Sam. “A Place and Condition most blessed because God and Christ are there.”

Pru. “And what is Hell?”

Sam. “A Place and Condition most terrible, because those who dwell there are forever cast away from the Presence of God and abide in eternal torment therein.”

Pru. “Why would you desire to go to Heaven?”

Sam. “That I might see God and serve Him without weariness; that I may see Christ and love Him everlastingly; and that I might have that fullness of the Holy Spirit in me, that I cannot and do not possess and enjoy here.”

Pru. “A very good boy also who has learned well. Now, my dear *Matthew*, let me ask something of you as well. Has there ever been anything existing before God?”

Matt. “No, for God is Eternal; nor is there anything, except Himself, that existed until the beginning of the first day. For in six days the Lord made the Heavens and the Earth, the Sea, and all that is in them” [Ex.20:11].

Pru. “What do you think of the Bible?”

Matt. “It is the Holy Word of God, complete and Inspired by the Spirit of God throughout [2 Tim.3:16; 2 Pet.1:20, 21], which is forever settled in Heaven [Ps.119:89], and is our only Rule for life and godliness” [2 Pet.1:3, 4].

Pru. “But are there not things written therein that you do not understand?”

Matt. “Yes, a great many things” [2 Pet.3:15, 16].

Pru. “What do you do when you meet with things you do not understand?”

Matt. “I first of all bless the Lord that He is wiser than I. I then pray that He might open my eyes that I might behold wondrous things from His law which might be for my profit and His glory” [Ps.119:18].

Pru. “You have answered truly, my good *Matthew*. And now I say to all of you Children, that you listen diligently to that good and wholesome Doctrine which has been taught to you by your Father and Mother. They have yet many more things to reveal to you which, if you take heed to them, will set your feet in that good and Straight Way which you have begun to travel.”

Now I must make mention of a visitor to this beautiful Palace who had come more than once in the hopes of befriending *Mercy*. He was, by name, *Mr. Brisk*, who pretended to be a Pilgrim, but actually stuck closely to the World.

Her Mind was to always be busy for the good and welfare of others, never taking thought for herself as she continued in deeds of *Mercy* day and night. Well, this Pretender observed her industriousness and that the garments made by her hands were daily disposed of. He, of course, imagined that she sold all and had made some sizable amount for her efforts. “This,” he thought, “will make a fine wife for me who will make me comfortable all my days.” So, he approached her in this way.

Brisk “How now, fair *Mercy*, I so much admire your diligent labors. It is truly a commendable quality. And, how much, may I ask, are you able to make as wages in a day?”

At this, poor *Mercy* was somewhat confused at first, but she soon discerned his true intention and replied, “I do these things, not for my own gain, but for the good of the poor and needy to whom I freely give, that I might be rich in good works, laying up a treasure of a good Foundation for the future in order that I might take hold of Eternal Life” [I Tim.6:17-19].

Upon hearing this, he began to look somehow ill and hastened to excuse himself upon pretense of some urgent business. As he passed by he was heard to mutter, “*Mercy* is a pretty maid, ‘tis true, but her head is filled with strange ideas which don’t suit well with my own at all!” And,

in fact, he was never seen around those parts again.

Pru. “You did well, dear *Mercy*, to do as you have done and speak plainly to him. It is one of the graces of Pilgrims to be speaking the truth in love to one and all [Eph.4:15]. As for him, and all pretenders to Religion like him, he will broadcast an evil report of you as they do of all who love and practice the truth.”

Mercy “Let them say so. Neither my Lord nor the poor will speak evil of me for doing as I have done. For He has said that the one who is gracious to a poor man, lends to the Lord and He will repay him [Prov.19:17]. His wages are true Riches. I will rather wait for my God to reward my labors.”

Thus their day was occupied with many profitable discussions and lessons gained from their stay in the House. The following morning after their morning meditation on the Words of the King and having taken their breakfast together, *Christian* strolled out towards the Gate and there met the *Porter*.

Chr. “Greetings, good *Porter*, we are all so very happy to be here in this most beautiful Palace. I think that every Pilgrim would greatly profit by a stay here with you all.”

Port. “May the Lord bless you, dear *Christian*. It is true that there are many good things to be gained by turning in here, though not all do. In fact, there went by the Gate early this morning a Pilgrim who was hastening to the Heavenly City and thought it best to continue on his Journey.”

This was a most interesting bit of news to *Christian* who eagerly asked, “Do you know him? Did he tell you his name?”

Port. “Yes, he said that his name was *Faithful*.”

Chr. “O, I know him very well. He is my near neighbor from the City of Destruction, a very close friend indeed. O, how glad I am that he too is on Pilgrimage! How far do you think he has gotten to by now? Could I yet meet up with him?”

Port. “By now he may likely have gotten below the Hill, but you may yet meet him if you will hasten on your Journey this morning.”

So, I saw that *Christian* quickly made his way back into the House and gathered his Wife and Children about him and reported to them the

news he had just heard.

Channa. “This is wonderful news, my Husband! How merciful is our God to have awakened our neighbor to his dreadful condition and of the coming doom upon our City. Will you try and meet up with him?”

Chr. “It would be such a blessing to all of us if we could. I know he would be very grateful and we would all benefit by each other’s fellowship along the Way. Come, let us be going and catch up with him before he proceeds far.”

Channa. “But what shall we do for Mr. *Great-Heart*? He promised to be here by tomorrow, being sent by the Lord of the Way to guide us along on the Journey. I don’t think we should all leave until he arrives, do you, Dear Husband?”

Chr. “No, we should not. This is the Lord’s kind provision for our benefit and comfort along the Way and we can surely not disregard or abandon it. This is what we shall do. You and the Children remain here in the company of these blessed Family members until Mr. *Great-Heart* arrives tomorrow. I will leave now in order to join *Faithful* along the Way. When Mr. *Great-Heart* comes, you can all leave together and meet up with us where we will be waiting for you so we can all continue in our Journey together.”

Channa. “It is well, my Husband. May the Lord speed your steps and may you meet our brother in Peace. May the Lord Himself keep you along the Way.”

So when they had made known their intentions to the Family, they thought it well and prepared to send *Christian* on his way with their blessing. First, they brought him into the Armory and provided him with Sword, Shield, Helmet, Breast-plate, All-Prayer, and Shoes which would not wear out [Eph.6:13-18]. This they did that he might be equipped against any assaults that he might meet with in the Way.

Following prayer and entrusting him into the hands of Him who does all things well, his brave Wife and loving Children each kissed him in turn with assurances of their prayers and their soon reunion in the will of their God.

12

APOLLYON

It was thought best by the Family if certain among them should accompany *Christian* part way, to the foot of the Hill of Difficulty. At its base it enters into the Valley of Humiliation, and the going down is as dangerous as the going up. So *Discretion, Piety, Charity, and Prudence* went along with him, discussing many things of profit along the Way. Even so, careful as he was, he slipped once or twice but eventually reached the entrance to the Valley. There, his good companions bid him farewell after having given him a loaf of bread, a bottle of tonic, and sweet fruits.

*While Christian is among his godly friends,
Their golden mouths make him sufficient mends
For all his griefs; and when they let him go,
He's clad with northern steel from top to toe.*

But now in this Valley of Humiliation, poor *Christian* was severely tried. He had not gone far when he saw a foul Fiend coming over the field to meet him whose name was *Apollyon*.

At the sight of him, *Christian*, began to be afraid and to consider whether he should best go back or stand his ground. Then it came into his mind that he had no Armor for his backside and so thought it best to stand his ground and face the Fiend [Eph.6:13].

Now the Monster was hideous to behold: He was clothed with scales like a fish (and they are his Pride), he had wings like a dragon, feet like a bear, and out of his belly came fire and smoke, and his mouth was as that of a lion [I Pet.5:8]. When he had come up before *Christian*, he looked upon him with contempt and scornfully questioned him.

Apol. "Where have you come from and where do you think you are going?"

Chr. "I am come from the City of Destruction which is the place of Evil and I am going to Mt. Zion."

Apol. "By this I can see that you are one of my subjects; for all that country is mine, and I am the Prince and god of it. How is it that you have rebelled against your king? If it were not that I hope that you will yet do me more service, I would strike you to the ground with one blow."

Chr. "I was indeed born in your Dominion, but your service was hard and your wages, Death [Rom.6:23]. So, when I saw that I must surely perish in that place, I left for a better Hope from that King whose reward is Eternal Life."

Now the Beast thought that Deceit might be the better way to persuade him so he approached him thus:

Apol. "Since you complain of your service and the wages received, do agree to return and I promise to give you what our Country will afford to its loyal subjects. Many who have gone forth from your City have regained their sense and returned to me again. Do the same, and all will be well."

Chr. "I testify to you that the Prince under whose Banner I now stand is infinitely Superior to you in every way! And besides, O you destroying *Apollyon*, I love His Service, His Wages, His Servants, His Government, His Company, and His Country. Therefore, no more try to deceive me. I am His servant, and I will follow Him!"

Apol. "Consider again what you will likely meet with on this way. His servants meet with untimely and evil ends because they have transgressed against me. He has never come out of His place to deliver any of His own out of my hands as I have come forth to deliver you out of His. As for me, I have delivered either by Power or Fraud all those who

have faithfully served me from His hands. And so I will deliver you as well.”

Chr. “His choice to not deliver His own from all present afflictions is but to test their Love unto the End. And their death is only their entrance into that Glory which has been prepared for them by their Prince” [Phil.1:20-23].

Now, perceiving that he was making no headway by this means, he employed another tactic which was well suited to his nature since he was that very Slanderer who continually accuses the servants of the Prince [Zech.3:1; Rev.12:10].

Apol. “How do you expect to be received by Him since you are a profitless and unfaithful servant? You were almost choked in the Slough of Despond. You tried to remove your burden against the directions of your Prince rather than waiting for Him to take it off. And what of your sinful sleep and careless loss of your Testament? And did you not halt and nearly turn back at the sight of the Lions? Furthermore, all that you speak of concerning your Journey, you do so to receive the praise and recognition of men and not for any supposed glory to your Prince.”

Chr. “All this is true, and much more besides. But the Prince I serve is plenteous in Mercy and ready to Forgive. Yet even while in your kingdom I drank in all these things like water. But now I have groaned under them, repented of them, and have obtained free and full Pardon from my Prince.”

Then *Apollyon* broke out into a grievous Rage and bellowed, “I am an Enemy to this Prince! I hate His Person, His Laws, and His People! I have therefore come out on purpose to oppose you!”

Chr. “*Apollyon*, beware what you do! For I am on the King’s Highway, the Way of Holiness; therefore take heed to yourself.”

Then the Monster spread himself quite over the whole width of the Way and cried, “I am free of fear in this matter; prepare yourself to die; for I swear by the Pit of Hell that you shall go no further: Here I will spill your soul!” And with that he threw a flaming Dart at his breast; but *Christian* raised his Shield and so escaped injury [Eph.6:16].

Quickly *Christian* drew his Sword and made his approach upon

the Fiend who, by now, was hurling Darts as fast and furious as he was able. *Christian* fended them off bravely as possible though, notwithstanding, he received wounds in the Head, Hand, and Foot. This made him fall back a little, while the Beast pressed upon him harder still. But *Christian* again took Courage, and resisted as manfully as he could.

This Combat lasted for more than half the day, till *Christian* was nearly exhausted due to the length of the Conflict and by reason of his Wounds. The Monster saw this and charged upon him, wrestling him to the ground with a dreadful Fall. And as he was slammed onto the earth, his sword flew out of his hand.

Apollyon now pressed upon him heavily, almost squeezing him to Death; so that the good Pilgrim began to despair of Life [2 Cor.1:8-10]. But, as God would have it, while *Apollyon* was about to land his final blow, *Christian* nimbly reached out his hand for his Sword, and grasped it, saying, “Rejoice not against me, O my Enemy! When I fall I shall arise!” [Mic.7:8]. And with that he gave him a deadly thrust, which made him draw back as one who had received a mortal wound. Seeing that, he lunged at him again, saying, “In all these things we are more than Conquerors, through Him who loved us” [Rom.8:37]. Then the Beast spread forth his Dragon’s wings and flew away, no more to be seen by *Christian* [Jas.4:7; Rev.12:11].

No man can imagine what yelling and hideous roaring *Apollyon* made all the time of the fight, raging like a Dragon and spewing forth blasphemies against the Prince of Pilgrims. On the other hand, sighs and groans burst forth from *Christian*’s heart unto Him who can save from Temptation and Death. I never saw him give even one pleasant look till he had wounded the Monster with his Two-edged Sword; then, indeed, he smiled and looked upward: But it was the most dreadful Fight that I ever saw.

*A more unequal Match can hardly be:
Christian must fight an Angel; but you see
The Valiant Man, by handling Sword and Shield,
Did make him, though a Dragon, quit the field.*

So when the Battle was over, *Christian* knelt and gave Thanks to Him who had delivered him from the hand of his Adversary, saying,

*Great Beelzebub, the Captain of this Fiend,
Designed my Ruin; therefore to this end
He sent him harnessed out; and he with rage,
That hellish was, did fiercely me engage:
But my blessed Savior helped me, and I,
By means of Sword, did quickly make him fly:
Therefore to Him let me give lasting Praise,
And Thank, and bless His holy Name always.*

13

SICKNESS & LESSONS

Now I saw in my dream, that after *Christian* had departed from the Palace, his eldest son, *Matthew*, became terribly sick with horrible pains in his stomach. It so happened by the mercies of God that an ancient Physician of excellent reputation dwelt nearby. And at the suggestion of those in the House and with *Christianna's* approval, they immediately sent for him.

Within a very short time, this fine gentleman, *Mr. Skill* by name, arrived and examined the boy. It did not take long for him to arrive at his diagnosis.

Skill "This boy has been eating something unwholesome which lies undigested in his belly. And I tell you, unless he purges, he will surely die."

Then they all began to try and imagine what that might have been since they all had been eating the same thing. Finally, it was *Samuel* who recalled that he had taken of that fruit from the branches that hung over the Wall near the Gate at the beginning of the Way.

Channa. "True, my child, he did eat as you have said. I remember now that I reproved him but he ate nonetheless."

Skill "I knew that he had done so, and the fruit which you have mentioned is even the most harmful of all [Jer.2:17-19]. It is the fruit of *Beelzebub's* orchard. Many have died from it."

Then *Christianna* began to cry aloud, “O disobedient boy, and O careless Mother, what shall I do for my son?”

Skill “The boy must first purge and vomit and then he shall recover.” So he proceeded to mix a remedy made of the Blood of a Goat, the Ashes of a Heifer, and some other ancient ingredients [Heb.9:13, 14], but it was too weak [Rom.8:3]. So he proceeded to that which has never failed, made *Ex Carne & Sanguine Christi* (you know Physicians give medicines with strange names to their patients, this one, by translation, signifies, “From the Body and Blood of Christ”) [Jn.6:54-57]. It was made up into two pills, with a Promise or two, and a proper amount of Salt [Mk.9:50]. He was to take them with a measured amount of the tears of Repentance [2 Cor.7:10].

Yet, can you imagine, when the prescription was brought to the boy, he refused to take it though he was nearly being torn in two by his pains. “It goes against my stomach,” he groaned. The Doctor insisted that he must take it and looked to his Mother to implore him to do so.

Channa. “O, *Matthew*, these Pills are sweeter than honey. If you love your Father and Mother, if you love your Brothers, if you love Mercy, if you love Life, take it!”

So, by earnest Prayer, he was prevailed upon and yielded to the will of the Great Physician. He took it as Prescribed and it worked wondrously well, purged him of the poisonous fruit, and caused him to sleep with quiet rest.

Channa. “Good Sir, please make me up twelve boxes of these Pills, for there is nothing to compare with their Power to Cleanse and Restore.”

Skill “Gladly. These are effective to both prevent and to cure. And I will tell you the truth, if these will be used as they should, it will make one live forever. But they must only be used as I have prescribed or else they will do no good at all.” He then gave her request into her hand and bid them farewell with an affectionate smile.

Now *Matthew* had speedily recovered to the relief and gladness of all for which they bowed their heads with thanks to Him who alone can heal such maladies [Ps.41:4]. This grievous ailment and its wonderful Relief led him to inquire somewhat of *Prudence*.

Matt. “Why is it that generally the Doctor’s Prescription is bitter to our taste?”

Pru. “To show how unwelcome the Word of God and its effects are to a Carnal Heart.”

Matt. “Why does it cause us to Purge?”

Pru. “To show that the Word, when it works effectively within, cleanses the Heart and Mind.”

Being satisfied with this, he desired to understand other matters which he was unclear about. So, he proceeded to ask further, “What should we learn by seeing the flame of a fire go upwards, and the beams of the Sun strike downwards?”

Pru. “By the going up of the fire, we are taught to ascend to Heaven, by fervent and hot desires. By the Sun sending his beams, heat, and sweet influences downwards, we learn that the Savior of the World, though high, reaches down with His Grace and Love to us below.”

Matt. “Why do the clouds gather their water from the Sea and then empty themselves upon the Earth?”

Pru. “To show that Ministers should fetch their Doctrine from God and give what they have received from Him to the world.”

Matt. “What are we to learn by the Rainbow being caused by the Sun and Rain?”

Pru. “This tells us that God’s covenant of Grace is confirmed to us in Christ and that the Judgment which fell upon Him for our sins shall never be repeated.”

Matt. “Why do living springs of water come to us through the earth?”

Pru. “That we might know that the Grace of God comes to us through the Body of Christ.”

Matt. “Yet some springs rise out of the tops of high Hills.”

Pru. “This is to show that the Spirit of Grace can spring up even in some that are great and mighty, though mainly you will find the springs in the poor and lowly” [I Cor.1: 26-28].

Matt. “Why does the fire fasten upon the candlewick?”

Pru. “To show that unless Grace kindles upon the heart, there will be no true Light of Life in us.”

Matt. "Why is the wax and wick all consumed to maintain the light of the candle?"

Pru. "Because our whole Body and Soul should be at the service of and be spent for that Grace of God which is in us."

Matt. "I'm so very grateful for these wonderful and instructive answers which have given Light to my heart. Please, I would wish to ask but one more. What is it that we are to learn by the cock's crow?"

Pru. "To remember Peter's Sin, and his Repentance. It also shows us that the Day is coming soon. Let the crowing then bring to your mind that last and terrible Day of Judgment."

Having said these things, and knowing that the time of their departure from the Palace was soon approaching, the Family gathered *Christianna* and all together for some final words of encouragement. And such marvelous things they were shown.

First was shown that Apple, pleasant to the sight but poisonous to the taste, which Eve did eat and her husband. At the sight *Christianna* remarked, "How deadly a curse can such an innocent and desirable looking thing be when forbidden by God. It makes me tremble to even think of tasting what I must not" [Gen.3:6; Rom.7:24].

From there they were taken where they could gaze upon the Ladder of *Jacob* and beheld Angels ascending thereupon which made them marvel. It was *Joseph* who said, "This is a most pleasant prospect to rise with them into the Heavens above. It makes me long to be there myself" [Gen.28:12; Jn.1:51].

Next they came to where a Golden Anchor hung upon the wall and *Christianna* was bidden to take it down. "This," said they, "you shall have with you, for it is absolutely necessary for you to lay hold of that within the veil. By it you can stand steadfast against all manner of stormy weather encountered on your Way" [Heb.6:10].

They were then led to Mount Moriah where *Abraham* offered up *Isaac*, his son. There they gazed upon the Altar, Wood, the Fire and Knife, for they remain to be seen up to this very day. The sight of these deeply moved them within so that they raised their hands and blessed the name of the Lord, saying, "O! What a man for Love to his Master, and for denial of self was *Abraham*! May we do likewise and offer up to You

our dearest and best!" [Gen.22:9].

Finally, the Family had them to the dining room where *Prudence* played upon the harp and sang them this song:

Eve's Apple we have showed you;
Of that you must beware:
You have seen Jacob's Ladder too,
Upon which Angels are.

An Anchor you received and have,
But let not these suffice,
Until with Abra'm you have gave
Your Best, a Sacrifice.

14

VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH

We must now return to the progress of *Christian*, the Pilgrim, who, you will remember, had only just come off victorious against the Fiend, *Apollyon*. I saw in my dream that after his song of Thanks, a Hand came to him with some of the leaves of the Tree of Life. These *Christian* took and applied to the wounds that he received in the battle, and was healed immediately [Rev.22:2].

Being greatly encouraged by this merciful provision, he refreshed himself with a bit of bread and a drink of the bottle provided to him before. Thus strengthened and restored, he proceeded on, with Sword drawn in his hand. Yet he met with no other affront quite through to the end of this Valley.

Now at the end of this Valley was another, called, The Valley of the Shadow of Death. The Way to the Heavenly City lay straight through it and, as such, every Pilgrim must pass this way.

This Valley is a very solitary place. The prophet *Jeremiah* describes it as a wilderness, a land of deserts and pits; a land of drought, and of the shadow of death which no man (but a *Christian*) passes through, and where no man dwells [Jer.2:6]. Here, he was worse put to the test than his encounter with *Apollyon*.

When he had just gotten to the borders of this Valley, two men came racing towards him in panic and haste. Now they were children of

them that brought up an evil report about the good land [Num.13:31-33].

Then said he, "Where are you going?"

Men "Back! Back! And we would have you do so too, if either Life or Peace is prized by you!"

Chr. "Why! What is the matter? What have you met with and what have you seen?"

Men "Matter? What have we seen? Why we were nearly in the Valley itself when we saw it as black as tar, full of Spirits, Satyrs, and Dragons of the Pit [Ps.44:19]. We heard a continual howling as of people in anguish and misery. Over the Valley hang discouraging clouds of Confusion with Death spreading its wings over it and Chaos throughout its length" [Job 3:5; 10:22].

Chr. "I do not perceive as of yet by what you have said that this is the wrong road to the Heavenly City."

Men "See to that yourself. As for us, we will not choose this for our Way!" And, with that, they took to their heels again and *Christian* was left to face the Valley before him.

Now I saw that the Valley had a very deep Ditch on the right hand [Ps.69:14] into which the Blind of all ages have led the Blind to their mutual destruction [Mt.15:14]. Again, on the left, lay a very dangerous Quicksand, into which, if even a good man falls, he finds no bottom for his feet to stand upon. It was into this that King *David* once did fall and nearly was smothered therein had it not been for Him that is able who plucked him out.

The pathway here was exceedingly narrow and only with great caution did *Christian* avoid the Ditch and the Mire. The way, being so exceedingly dark, made him sigh and tread with trembling for he did not know where, or upon what, his foot may land.

Poor man! Where are you now? Your Day is Night:

Good man, do not be cast down, you yet are right.

Your Way to Heaven lies by the Gates of Hell:

Cheer up, hold out, with you it shall go well.

About the midst of this Valley, I perceived the mouth of Hell to

be very close alongside the Way. Here continually did flame and smoke billow out in such abundance, with sparks and hideous noises swirling about him. These things cared not about *Christian's* Sword as did *Apollyon* before, so he took up that other weapon, All Prayer [Eph.6:18]. Thus did he cry out, "O Lord, I beseech You, deliver my soul!" [Ps.116:4]. Thus with flames licking out at him, he proceeded on amidst woeful voices, and rushing to and fro, so that sometimes he thought he should be torn in pieces, or trodden down like mire in the streets. This frightful sight and dreadful noises were along his Path for quite nearly several miles.

He came then to a place where he thought he heard a whole Company of Fiends coming forward to meet him. Now here he stopped and began to think what he best ought to do. Sometimes he thought that perhaps he should surely go back. But then he would think that he might have already gotten halfway through the Valley. And then it came to mind that he had already vanquished many dangers, and that going back might be worse than continuing, and that he had no protection for his backside, neither could he face any opposition. So he resolved to press on.

The Fiends came yet closer and closer and when they were nearly upon him, he cried out, "I will walk in the Strength of the Lord God!" [Ps.71:16]. And they gave way and came no further.

Here in this Valley, I took notice that poor *Christian* was so confounded, that he did not recognize his own voice from that of another. And so it was when he had just come opposite the mouth of the burning Pit, that one of the Wicked Ones crept softly up behind him and whispered many grievous Blasphemies to him. Now, as I said, he was so confounded that he actually thought that these had come forth from his own mind.

This, above all else, did afflict him grievously to think that he would now Blaspheme Him who had loved him so well. Control it, he could not. Neither did he have the discretion to either stop up his ears nor to know from whence these thoughts proceeded.

After traveling in this miserable and degrading condition for some time, he thought he heard the voice of a man before him, saying, "Though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no

ill, for You are with me" [Ps.23:4]. Then was *Christian* glad; and that for three reasons.

First, because he perceived that some who feared God were in this Valley as well as himself.

Secondly, he understood that God was with them, though in that dark and dismal state. And, why not, thought he, with me as well, though I can hardly perceive it.

Thirdly, he had the hopes of overtaking them to have Company along the Way.

Thus greatly encouraged, he pressed on until, by and by, the Day broke. Then said the Pilgrim, "He has turned the Shadow of Death into Morning" [Amos 5:8].

Now, since Morning had come, he looked back, not out of a desire to return, but to see by the Light of Day, what Hazards he had come through in the Dark. Then he saw more perfectly the Ditch and the Mire as well as the Spirits, Satyrs, and Dragons of the Pit. Yet all of these he saw from afar off. For after break of Day, they did not come near, but they were shown to him according to that which is written, "He discovers deep things out of Darkness, and brings out to Light the Shadow of Death" [Job 12:22].

Christian was much affected with his deliverance from all the dangers of his solitary Way which he now saw more clearly in the Light of Day. And a Mercy it was too that the Sun would shine at this point, for the Way which lay ahead was, if possible, far more dangerous. From where he stood even to the end of the Valley, the Path was set full of snares, traps, and nets as well as pits and deep holes. Had he traveled this section in the Dark, had he a thousand souls, he surely would have lost them all.

But, as the Sun was now rising, he came quite safely to the end of this Valley where he exclaimed, "His Candle shines on my head, and by His Light I go through Darkness" [Job 29:3].

As he emerged, he stopped abruptly, for there ahead of him lie bones, blood, ashes, and mangled bodies of men who, though Pilgrims, had suffered a terrible fate. It then came into his mind what was written; "Our bones are scattered at the Grave's mouth, as when one cuts and

cleaves wood upon the earth” [Ps.141:7].

Now this did make him to call out to God, “My eyes are upon You, O God, the Lord, in You I take refuge; keep me from the snares which they have laid for me and the traps of the workers of iniquity” [Ps.141:8, 9]. No sooner had he finished praying than just before him, he spied three Giants lurking in their Caves. And fearful were they to behold.

By name they were *Pagan*, *Pope*, and *Psychos*, being born of the same father though by different mothers [Jn.8:44]. All were illegitimate children of harlotry, *Pagan* being the oldest of the three. His mother was one filthy wench of Babylon, *Samurais* by name, who was the consort of *Nimrod*. Now he was the one whose scattered Tower sent *Pagan* throughout the world [Gen.11:1-9].

His immediate junior brother was called *Pope*. This one was born by fornication with her whom he named *Mary* (not to be confused with the mother of our Lord). She held the haughty title of Queen of Heaven though she was nothing but a treacherous imposter.

The last born was a vigorous and attractive youth, quite strong for his age, named *Psychos*. His birth came from an unlawful union with the lustful mistress of one, *Sickman Fraud* (this is the true spelling of his name though others would have it, *Sigmund Freud*).

All three were violent haters of the Lord of the Way and desperate enemies of Pilgrims who crossed their path. They each have many in their service to do what harm they can to any traveling to the Heavenly City.

I saw then, as *Christian* stood somewhat amazed at the scene before him, that *Pagan* came forth and made his assault upon the Pilgrim. He first sent forth a black creature of the wing to swoop upon and grip *Christian* in its claws. But try as it might, never could it alight upon him [Prov.26:2].

This, of course, infuriated the Giant who now betook himself to his arsenal of charms, witchcraft, incantations, etc. by which he invoked all the powers of the Pit to effect. Now *Christian*, seeing that he was being attacked, drew his Sword and raised up his Shield by which he stoutly withstood the assault. The curses were turned to a blessing by the Lord of

the Shield [Deut.23:5] and the unclean spirits defeated by repeated thrusts of the Sword so that he was quite unhurt.

Pagan “I will have your blood, you miserable dog! I call upon the spirits of the Ancestors, all gods of the land, and the Demons from Infernal realms to devour, shred, and annihilate you!”

Then did *Christian* cry out boldly to the Throne of Grace, saying, “Let them curse, but do Thou bless; When they arise, they shall be ashamed, but Your servant shall be glad” [Ps.109:28]. At which cry *Pagan* did shriek horribly and fell back. Upon seeing this *Christian* followed quickly with another thrust of his Sword, declaring, “Counsel a counsel, and it shall come to nothing; Speak a word, but it will not stand, for God is with us!” [Isa.8:10].

Now at this Word, *Pagan* staggered, trembling upon one knee, furiously raging still. Pressing his advantage, the good Man landed his final devastating blows, “Stand now in your Spells and in your many Sorceries with which you have labored from your youth; perhaps you will be able to profit, perhaps you may cause trembling.

“You are wearied with your many Counsels; let now the Astrologers, those who Prophecy by the stars, those who predict by the new moons, stand up and save you from what will come upon you.

“Behold, they have become like stubble, fire burns them; they cannot deliver themselves from the power of the flame.

“So have those become to you with whom you have labored, who have trafficked with you from your youth; each has wandered in his own way; there is none to save you!” [Isa.47:12-15].

As the Pilgrim fell upon him with these Words, *Pagan* writhed in anguish, crying out as his wounds bled profusely. Summoning what little strength remained, he crawled, twisting and serpent like, back into his Cave where he moaned and did not come at *Christian* again.

Pope, who had witnessed this encounter, thought he would approach him with a different tactic. Now you must know that in former times, *Pope* always burnt Pilgrims at the stake or drowned them after subjecting them to all manner of unthinkable tortures. This he does up to today, only in certain parts of his domain where Civilization has little influence. Such barbarity is greatly frowned upon in those modern

environs where he attires himself in more comely garments. So he began thus.

Pope “How now, good Pilgrim, I can see that you are one of my estranged children. Welcome back to the fold, where I, the Papa of the Faithful, will comfort and assist you along your Way to the Heavenly City.”

Chr. “I have one Father, even God, and I serve one Lord, Jesus Christ, and none other [I Cor.8:6]. I will not come under your influence for I perceive that you are an Imposter since there is nothing written about you in the Word of my Prince.”

At this the Giant trembled with annoyance but quickly regained his composure, saying, “But it is your Prince Himself who has given me the Keys of the Kingdom, to bind and loose by my own authority.”

Chr. “Woe unto you, *Pope*, for you have taken away the Key of Knowledge; you yourself did not enter, and those who were entering you hindered, making them twice the Sons of Hell as yourself” [Lk.11:52; Mt.23:15].

Now the Giant nearly burst out in fury at this affront and just managed to control himself once again and replied, “I am willing to receive and forgive any who have strayed from the True Church. My bosom is large and accommodating to all, regardless of their differences of doctrine and practice. Come, and embrace me, my son.”

Chr. “Yours is the embrace that smothers. Your doctrines are devilish and your pretensions deceptive. You have exalted your goddess *Mary* as a co-mediator with the Prince of Peace. His Word condemns this, your idolatry. ‘For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus’ [I Tim.2:5]. You wickedly deceive men by saying that there is no salvation apart from your counterfeit church. Yet the Scriptures say that Jesus Himself is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, that no man comes to the Father except by Him [Jn.14:6].

“Moreover, you put men in bondage by your man-made device of confessing one’s sins to a priest who presumes to act in the place of God in pronouncing forgiveness. The Word of God condemns you, O *Pope*. *David* has taught us the True way, saying, ‘I acknowledged my sin unto You. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord”; and You

forgave the guilt of my sin. Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You’ [Ps.32:5, 6]. True Christians’ sins are forgiven because they pray to the God of Heaven who alone has authority to forgive sins and not to your imposter priests! Now, O Giant, stand back or suffer the thrusts of my Sword.”

At this, *Pope* made a desperate lunge at *Christian* in murderous rage. But before he could grab him, he became entangled in the Traditions wrapped around his feet and fell face down upon the ground which knocked him senseless for some time. And so, the Pilgrim escaped his hands and thankfully went on his way, saying, “He has delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me” [Ps.55:18].

Now I saw that as he passed on, he came near the entrance to the Cave of the third Giant, being that of *Psychos*. He contentedly smiled upon the Traveler with an inviting gesture to join him and numerous others who happily were gathered into his comfortable parlor.

There his eyes met the strangest sight. Within were a great host of Patrons of the Giant, each with subdued and pleasant smiles. They all sat with their own mirror before them while continuously arranging themselves in its reflection. They seemed to derive great satisfaction in contentedly gazing at themselves with great delight.

All the while this was going on, the most soothing and entrancing music softly played in the background sedating their souls into a stress-free stupor. What was most alarming though, were the Bible verses each were quoting while their eyes were steadfastly fixed on their own images in the glass.

“I have peace with God,” one would say. Another declared, “I am fearfully and wonderfully made.” Others repeated, “I am blessed,” or “In Christ, I am complete,” and “He loved me and gave Himself for me,” etc.

Psychos “Come and join this well-adjusted congregation. They are at peace with themselves. They have discovered their sense of Worth with a strong Self-Image. They can now love, for they have learned to love themselves.”

Chr. “Occupation with Self is the very thing that the Gospel of our Lord Jesus came to save us from. ‘He died for all that those who live

would no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf [2 Cor.5:15]. No, *Psychos*, I will not venture in lest I too fall under your spell.”

Psychos “But, my dear Man, does not the Word of God instruct us to gaze in the Mirror? Why it says so in the Epistle of James chapter one.”

Chr. “The purpose of gazing in the Mirror of God’s Word is not to appreciate oneself, but to discover the blemishes and uncleanness which are upon us that they might be remedied [Jas.1:23-25]. Our looking in the Word is for a twofold purpose: One, to recognize and be cleansed from our sins that we might become doers of His Word, and, Two, to see the Glory of the Lord Jesus therein that we might be transformed into His Image, not to improve our own” [2 Cor.3:18].

Psychos “That may all be well and good, but there is a great need for everyone to receive Healing of their Emotions by learning to accept themselves just as they are.”

Chr. “You are a deceiving Tyrant of the worst sort! It is by His Stripes that we are Healed, not of emotions, but of the deadly sin within the breast of all self-occupied sinners [I Pet.2:24; Ps.41:4]. And as for accepting yourself, this is an outright contradiction of the very Words of Christ Himself. He says that unless a man Denies himself, he cannot be a disciple at all [Mt.16:24]. A man must flee Self and Repent or he will surely perish [Lk.13:5]. The command of my Lord is clear for any who have eyes to see, saying, unless you Hate your own Soul, you cannot be My disciple” [Lk.14:26].

Psychos “But behold the peace of these within and how Loving Self has freed them from all manner of distresses.”

Chr. “This is no testimony of Freedom, but only of their Bondage while under your spell. Their own peace is simply that as the World gives and comes not from Christ Himself [Jn.14:27; 16:33]. He it is who has Overcome the World and bestows His Peace even in the midst of Trial and Tribulation. He Himself is our Peace [Eph.2:14], not this dazed stupor dependent upon your hateful techniques. And as for Loving Self, it is you who have perverted the Scriptures to your own destruction while likewise beguiling these. The Commandment of my Lord is twofold: to

Love Him with all my heart and soul and mind and strength and likewise, to Love my neighbor as myself [Mt.22:37-39]. The Commands are but Two, and not three, as if loving Self is to be added to them. We are simply to do unto others as we would have them do unto us [Mt.7:12] and esteem them more important than Self [Phil.2:3].

“In fact, your wicked ways are directly contrary to the Truth of the Word of God throughout. Christ demands death to Self by taking up one’s own Cross in order to follow Him [Mt.10:38]. We are forbidden to Look upon our own things, but rather to consider those of others [Phil.2:4]. And as for the true Servants of God, they have Overcome your father the Devil which these have not, and that in a threefold way [Rev.12:11]: One, they have been set free from his Dominion by being washed of their sins in the blood of the Lamb [Col.1:13, 14]. Secondly, they resist you and your father by the True Word of God which is not wrested to their own destruction as do these, your Slaves. And thirdly, they do not Love Themselves, even if it means dying for their Faithfulness to Him who died for them.

“No, I will not heed you for an instant, you son of the Serpent. He is more crafty than any beast of the field and you are his offspring indeed. Your tongue devises mischief and deceitfully loves Lying in all your devouring words. God shall destroy you forever, pluck you out of your dwelling place, and root you out of the land of the living” [Ps.52:2-5].

Psychos “Have it your own way, then. Go pleasantly; you may yet see the error of your ways and return to me. As for me, I am comfortably satisfied for the time being with this multitude of devotees. I am full (for he was of that clan of Cannibals who feed upon the Flesh of men) and need you not at the present. Others will come to replace those who have gone.”

And so *Christian* passed by him in amazement at the Smooth and Flattering words of this enemy of the Way of Righteousness. In fact, I did think that this one may prove to be the most deadly of the Three as, though he was yet a youth, he had already grown to be a Giant.

And so did *Christian* exit this Valley with little hurt to himself, but with a depth of experience which comes only by passing through this place.

15

GREAT-HEART RETURNS

No sooner had *Prudence* sounded the last note of her song, that there was a knock at the door to which the *Porter* responded. Each expectantly awaited the introduction of the guest, hoping that it might be their faithful Guide. When he strode into the waiting company, you can imagine what Joy there was!

Then said *Great-Heart* to *Christianna* and to *Mercy*, “My Lord has sent each of you a bottle of Tonic [S.of S. 5:1], and also some Parched Corn [Josh.5:11, 12], together with a couple of Pomegranates [S.of S. 4:11-13] as tokens of His love. And to you my boys, He has also sent some Figs and Raisins to refresh you along the Way” [Mic.4:4].

These they received with deep gratitude and humility that their Lord should think upon them thus. And so, they prepared themselves for their Journey and *Prudence* and *Piety* desired to escort them upon their Way.

As they came to the Gate, *Christianna* did heartily thank the good *Porter* for all his numerous kindnesses to her and her family and placed in his hand a golden coin showing *Michael* the Archangel slaying the Dragon.

He made a low bow and said, “Let your Garments always be white [Rev.3:4, 5], and let your head lack no ointment [Ps.23:5]. Let *Mercy* live and not die, and let her Works not be few” [Acts 9:36]. And to the boys he charged them, saying, “Flee youthful lusts and follow after Godliness

with those that are serious and wise [2 Tim.2:22]. Let no man despise your youth, but in everything prove yourselves to be an example to those who believe [I Tim.4:12]. So shall you put gladness in your parents’ hearts.”

They then thanked the good *Porter* once again and set out upon their Journey. As they came to the brow of the hill which descends to the Valley of Humiliation, *Piety* cried out, “O! I have forgotten what I intended to bring for all of you upon your leaving us. I will run back and fetch it.”

After she hurried back to the Palace, *Christianna* thought she heard in a little grove of trees, a most curious and melodious note with words like these:

*Through all my Life Your Favor is
So frankly showed to me,
That in Your House for evermore
My dwelling place shall be.*

And as she listened still, she thought she heard another answer it, saying,

*For why? The Lord our God is good;
His Mercy is forever sure:
His Truth at all times firmly stood,
And shall from Age to Age endure.*

Prudence, noticing her listening with wonder, said, “These are our Country birds; they sing these notes only seldom, except during the Spring when the flowers appear, then you may hear them all day long [S.of S. 2:11, 12]. We often times keep them tame in our House and they prove to be very fine company for us when we are melancholy.”

By this time *Piety* returned with an Outline of all those things that they had seen at their House. “This you may look upon when you find yourselves forgetful. The remembrance of them will be for your edification and comfort.”

Having bid them farewell, the company of Pilgrims made their way cautiously down the Hill into the Valley of Humiliation. Now the Way was slippery and steep, but they were very careful and made it down pretty well.

Great “It was reported in our Lord’s Place that here your husband met with the Fiend, *Apollyon* and did battle in this Valley.”

Channa. “Is it so? O, my dear husband! Please, is he well? How did he fare in the conflict?”

Great “He did valiantly and did make the Monster take to his wings and fly, having received many a wound from *Christian*’s faithful Sword. I am happy to relate that he is fine though he nearly was crushed by the Beast.”

Channa. “Our Lord is to be praised who delivers us from him who is too strong for us [Ps.18:17]. I fear this happened to my dear husband for my negligence in prayer in his behalf.”

Great “There are some things that may be caused by that, but it was not so in his case. Had he not slipped on his descent into this Valley, he would not have met with *Apollyon* in the plain. For they who get Slips there, must look for Combats here” [Eph.4:27].

James “Look, mother, over there stands a Pillar with an inscription.”

They drew up to it and read this, “*Let Christian’s Slips, before he came here, and the Battles that he met with in this place, be a warning to those that come after.*”

Then their Guide did turn to *Christianna* and say, “No offense to *Christian* more than to many others who have encountered the same thing in this place. This Hill is unlike others in the world, for it is easier to go Up this one, than to go Down.

“The Valley of Humiliation is well suited to expose that subtle turn from Trust in the Lord to that Vain-Confidence in oneself and his religious achievements. Even the Apostle *Peter* wrestled with *Apollyon* in this very place. You recall how insistent he was that he would never deny his Lord though both the Word of God and the Word of Jesus told him otherwise [Mt.26:31-35]. It was because of this Slip that he was sifted like wheat by Satan himself [Lk.22:31].

“Humiliation cures us of thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought to think [Rom.12:3] and of that vain boasting which imagines that we are something when we are nothing [Gal.6:3]. This is why we must look carefully to our Steps, lest we too miss our footing on this Slippery path.

“*Peter* discovered that it was the Word of the Lord which proved to be true, and not his own self-assessment. It was this Word along with our Lord’s own Intercession which brought about his Restoration [Lk.22:32, 61].

“These experiences make us weep bitterly when this subtle reliance upon Self is revealed to our hearts [Lk.22:62]. Of course, those who abide in Humility need not meet with such as did *Christian* and *Peter*, for the humble have learned the folly of Self-Confidence. Indeed, the Proud are always resisted by God while the Humble receive Grace upon Grace as they walk in lowliness of mind [Jas.4:6; I Pet.5:5].

“Yet truly, this is the most Fertile of Valleys and sustains bountiful Fruit by the handfuls, well-pleasing to the Lord of the Valley. Yea, Peace and Contentment reside here with nothing to molest or disturb.”

Now as they were going along, they saw in the meadow, a boy feeding his Father’s sheep. His clothing was of a poor and lowly kind yet his countenance was pleasingly fresh. And as he sat, he sang the words of this song:

*He that is down, needs fear no Fall;
He that is low, no Pride:
He that is Humble, ever shall
Have God to be his Guide.*

*I am content with what I have,
Little it be or much:
And, Lord, Contentment still I crave,
Because You will save such.*

Fullness to such, a Burden is,

*That go on pilgrimage:
Here little, and hereafter Bliss,
Is best from Age to Age.*

Then said their Guide, "Do you hear him? I will dare say, that this boy lives a more satisfied life, and wears more of that herb called Heart's Ease in his soul, than tens of thousands of those prospering in the things Below.

"Our Lord Himself loved much to be here; to walk in its pleasant Pastures and breathe its sweet Air. Besides, here a man shall be free from the Noise and hurrying of this life and all manner of noise and confusion so that he may Meditate on those things Above without hindrance.

"This is a Valley that no one walks in unless he loves a Pilgrim's life. And, I tell you, that in former times men have even met Angels here [Gen.18:1, 2; Heb.13:2] and have found Pearls and the Words of Life."

Mercy "I think that I am as well in this Valley as I have been anywhere else in all our Journey. This Place is most suited to my spirit. I love to be in such places where there are no roaring of engines and rumbling of wheels, where one can Meditate upon our King, and the heart be melted in contrition. They that go rightly through this Valley of Bacha (which is the King's language for Weeping), shall make it into a Spring [Ps.84:5, 6]. Indeed, here it is that a Door of Hope is opened amidst all our Trouble where we may sing for joy in the Vineyard of the Lord" [Hos.2:15].

Great "'Tis true, I have gone through this Valley many a time, and never was better than when here. I have been Conductor to several Pilgrims who have confessed the truth of these words according to the True saying: 'To this man will I look (says the King), even to him that is Poor, and of a Contrite spirit, and that trembles at My Word'" [Isa.66:2].

By this time they drew near to the entrance to the Valley of the Shadow of Death from whence emitted mournful groans and hideous tormented Lamentation. Then it was that the very ground began to shake under them and a hissing as of a Serpent reached their ears though nothing appeared to their sight.

Their Guide did admonish them all to look well to their feet lest

any might become ensnared along the Way. Now James began to be sick, likely due to fright. So his mother brought out a drink from her bottle of Tonic and gave him three of the Pills prepared by Mr. Skill, and the boy did revive.

About the middle of the Valley, those that most feared kept close to their Guide as an ugly Fiend rushed towards them in all its terror. But when it was just come up to them, it vanished to all their sight. They then remembered what had been said some time ago; "Resist the devil, and he will fly from you" [Jas.4:6].

They had not gone far when Mercy, looking behind her, saw a great Lion stalking after them whose hollow voice of roaring filled the whole Valley to echo fearfully so that their hearts did quake. Great-Heart swiftly put the Pilgrims before him while he moved to the rear and faced the Beast with Sword drawn in his hand. The Lion, seeing he was firmly to be Resisted, withdrew and came no further [I Pet.5:8, 9].

On they went, then, and came upon a great Pit that spread its mouth quite all across their Path. Before they could proceed, though, a thick mist and a Darkness fell upon them, so that they could not see their Way. And then they were tumbled about in their minds as to what they should now do.

Great "Fear not, stand still and see what end our Lord shall make of this as well [Ex.14:13, 14]. Be encouraged! Has not the Almighty said, 'Let them that walk in darkness, and have no light, trust in the name of the Lord, and rely upon their God?'" [Isa.50:10]. And so, they all cried out to God in prayer, "O send out Your Light and your Truth, let them lead me; Let them bring me to Your holy hill and to Your dwelling places" [Ps.43:3]. And you can well imagine, that their prayer was heard on High and the mists and Darkness disappeared.

They safely passed through the Pit unharmed only to be met with stinking and loathsome smells which made Mercy to exclaim, "This is not so pleasant a place as that of the Gate, or Interpreter's House, and the beautiful Palace we so shortly have left."

Samuel "It is not so bad to go through here as it is to abide here always. Why, if I ever get out of here again, I think I shall prize Light and the good Way better than I ever did in all my life and that our Home

above will become all the more sweeter to me.”

Great “Well said, *Samuel*, you have spoken truly like a man.”

Joseph “Cannot we see the end of this Valley as of yet?”

Great “The end cannot be reached without taking the next step. Look well to your feet, for we very soon shall be among snares” [Prov.4:25-27].

So they took heed to their Steps and managed to avoid the Snares strewn along the Way, though not without difficulty. They also spied a man cast into the Ditch on the left side with his flesh all mangled and torn.

“This,” said their Guide, “is one called *Heedless*, who has lain in this condition for long. You cannot imagine how many are killed hereabouts, and yet men are so foolishly bold to set out ill-prepared and lightly on Pilgrimage without Fear or a Guide.”

By this time they were nearly out of that Valley and approached unto those Caves which *Christian* encountered at the first. With Watchfulness and Prayer they passed before that of *Pagan*, for they had been warned of his devices against all who pass that way.

He, however, did not come forth against them though they were prepared to meet him with Resistance if he had. Then they noticed a trail of blood leading into his Cave which had been spilt by *Christian*’s assault upon him. And as they listened, they thought that they heard groaning of one in Misery from within and concluded that the Giant had suffered the worse at the point of the Pilgrim’s Sword.

But at the next Cave, *Pope* sat at the entrance in full view, glaring at them in hate and disdain. He made motions at the Company as if he would have grabbed whomever he could reach and make an end of them. But the enormous lump on his brow received when he pursued *Christian* had swollen his eyes shut so that he could not see. And thus, all he could do was shout insults and threats at them as they passed.

When the Den of *Psychos* was before them, they saw no one present in his parlor, neither the Giant himself. All that met their gaze was a multitude of scattered mirrors upon the ground, but no signs of life within. It was then that the sickening sound of cracking and crunching of bones was heard from deep within his Lair followed by an evil echoing

laugh of satisfaction.

With shuddering, they passed safely out of that Valley into the light of Day with good cause to rejoice at the Lord’s Deliverance all along the Way. It was *Matthew* who spoke what was in the hearts of all, saying, “I think that God has been wonderfully Good unto us, both in bringing us out of this Shadow of Death and in saving us from all of those Enemies and Evils within. As for me, I see no reason why we should distrust our God anymore, since He has given us such a testimony of His Love and Care as He has done in this place.” To this, they said their grateful “Amen,” and paused there to Thank the Lord of the Way.

16

FAITHFUL & FAMILY

Now as *Christian* went on his Way, he came to a little hill placed there purposefully by the King so that Pilgrims might see before them. He therefore ascended thereon and saw *Faithful* ahead of him upon his Journey. At this sight, *Christian's* heart leaped within him and he shouted, "Hello! Good Pilgrim, wait for a moment and I will be your Companion!"

Faithful looked over his shoulder without slackening his pace and replied, "No, I am fleeing for my Life, and the Avenger of Blood is behind me" [Deut.19:6]. At this, *Christian* hurried to overtake him and did, in fact, outrun him. Then he smiled in self-satisfaction because he was now ahead of his brother. But not taking good heed to his feet, he suddenly stumbled and fell and could not rise again until *Faithful* came up to help him [I Cor.10:12].

Then I saw in my dream that they rested and refreshed themselves a bit with each other's Company, for you must know that they both were exceedingly glad to now walk together in this Pilgrim Way. As they talked of those things they had met on Pilgrimage, *Christian* inquired about their neighbor, *Pliable*, saying, "Was there any talk in the Town when he returned after setting out with me?"

Faith. "Ah! He has been the subject of all men's mocking and is

now seven times worse off than if he had never gone forth at all" [Mt.12:44, 45].

Chr. "Well, at my first setting out, I had hopes of that man; but now I fear he will perish in the overthrow of the City. For it has happened to him according to the true proverb, 'The dog returns to its own vomit again, and the sow, after washing, to her wallowing in the mire' [2 Pet.2:22]. May the Lord have Mercy upon his soul. But let us relate of the Lord's dealings with ourselves which we have met along the Way. Tell me, Friend, what did you encounter upon your Journey?"

Faith. "I met with no mishap at the Slough of Despond and got up to the Gate without danger except that one enticing woman named *Wanton* approached me and nearly ensnared me."

Chr. "It was well that you escaped her Net: *Joseph* was sorely tempted by her as you have been, but it nearly caused him his Life [Gen.39:11-13]. But what did she do to you?"

Faith. "You cannot imagine what a Flattering tongue she had; she pressed me hard with her words to turn aside with her, promising me all manner of Satisfaction" [Prov.7:21].

Chr. "Not at all! She never promised you the Satisfaction of a Good Conscience! Thank God you have escaped her for it is the abhorred of the Lord who shall fall into her pit" [Prov.22:14].

Faith. "Well, I do not know whether I wholly escaped her or not."

Chr. "Why, I trust you did not consent to her desires, did you?"

Faith. "No, not to defile myself; for I remembered an old Writing that I had seen, which said, 'Her steps take hold of Hell.' So I shut my eyes, because I would not be bewitched with her looks [Prov.5:5, 6:25, Job 31:1]. It was then that she railed against me and went her way."

Chr. "For this we truly bless the name of the Lord, my Brother. Was there anything else to relate?"

Faith. "Oh, yes, indeed. I met a very aged Man who asked who I was and where I was going. So I told him and he said, "You look like an honest fellow; why not dwell with me and I will give you your Wages." He then introduced himself as *Adam the First* and then our conversation went on like this:

Faith. "May I know where you dwell?"

Adam "I dwell in the town of Deceit with my three lovely Daughters."

Faith. "And what is the nature of your Work and the Wages you pay?"

Adam "My Work is many Delights and my Wages are that you shall be my Heir at last."

Faith. "And what type of House do you maintain and how long am I to live with you?"

Adam "My House is full of all the Dainties and Delights of this World. I will also give you all three of my Daughters in marriage whose names are *Lust of the Flesh*, *Lust of the Eyes*, and *Pride of Life* [I Jn.2:16]. And there you can live with me as long as I live myself."

Chr. "Well, what did you and he finally conclude?"

Faith. "At first, I was somewhat inclined to go with him, for I thought he spoke very well. But as I looked at his forehead as we talked, I saw there written, 'Put off the Old Man with his Deeds' [Eph.4:22]."

Chr. "And what then?"

Faith. "Then it came burning hot into my mind that, whatever he might say, when he got me to his House, he would sell me for a Slave. So I told him to leave me, for I would never come near the door of his House. At that he reviled me, and told me that he would send such a one after me, that it would make my Way bitter to my Soul."

"So I turned to go away from him; but just as soon as I did, I felt him take hold of my Flesh and give me such a deadly jerk back that I thought he had pulled part of me after himself. This made me cry, 'O wretched Man!' So I went on my way up the Hill."

"Now when I had gotten about halfway up, I looked behind me and saw one coming after me, as swift as the wind. He overtook me at just about the place where the Arbor stands."

Chr. "That is the very place where I sat down to rest and lost my Testament when I was overcome with Sleep."

Faith. "Sorry, my brother. But let me conclude. Well, as soon as the man reached me, he spoke but one word and promptly struck me so hard that I was knocked to the ground, I thought, half-dead. When I

was aroused but a little, I asked him why he had done so. He replied, 'Because of your secret desire to go with *Adam the First*': And, with that, he landed another deadly blow on my chest and beat me down backwards so that I lay at his feet as before."

When I came to myself again, I cried out to him for Mercy but he said he didn't know how to show Mercy to any; and, then he knocked me down again [Gal.3:10]. He undoubtedly would have made an end of me had not One come by and told him to leave me."

Chr. "And who was it that sent him away?"

Faith. "I did not know Him at the first; but as He passed by, I perceived the Marks in His hands and side and concluded that it was our Lord [Lk.24:39, 40]."

Chr. "That Man who overtook you was Moses. He spares no one, neither does he know how to show Mercy to those who transgress his Laws."

Faith. "You have rightly said so. For it was he who came to me when I dwelt securely at home and told me that he would burn my house down over my head if I stayed there."

Chr. "The Lord be praised who Delivers us from the terrors of the Law and the craftiness of the Old Man. But what of your Journey through the Valley of Humiliation. Did you not meet anyone there?"

Faith. "Yes, indeed. I met with a man named *Discontent* who willingly would have me go back with him. He told me that the Valley was altogether without Honor and that to proceed would be to disobey all my Friends, such as *Pride*, *Arrogance*, *Self-Conceit*, *Worldly-Glory*, and others, whom would be very much offended if I made such a Fool of myself to continue through this Valley."

Chr. "And so how did you answer him?"

Faith. "I told him that all of these, it was true, were my relations according to the Flesh. But now that I have become a Pilgrim, they have all disowned me, as I have also rejected them. Furthermore, I said, you have misrepresented this Valley, for it is Written, 'Before Honor is Humility and a Haughty spirit goes before a Fall' [Prov.18:12]. Therefore, I had rather go through this Valley to the Honor of Him that is the Wisest than listen to any Natural Fleshly Reasoning or your own

Discontent.”

Chr. “You answered his wicked counsel well, my Brother. We have cause to thank our God for His ever present Grace in time of need to meet with such Tests of Faith” [Heb.4:16].

Faith. “It is truly a great blessing, especially when I next met *Shame*. He was the most forward opponent I’ve come across all along the Way.”

Chr. “Why, what did he say to you?”

Faith. “What! He spoke against Religion itself, saying that Lowliness of Mind was an unmanly thing; that always watching carefully over one’s Words and Actions would make him the ridicule of any Sensible man of the World. He told me that it was Shameful that there were but few of the Noble, Mighty, Rich and Wise of this World among Pilgrims” [I Cor.1:26, 3:18].

Chr. “Ha! A bold Rogue he is indeed.”

Faith. “But that is not all. Listen further. He said it was only Fools who would risk the Loss of all for something as despised and uncertain as going on Pilgrimage [Phil.3:7, 8; Jn.7:48]. And which of you, said he, understands the Learning of Science or the Philosophy of the Age? Your Ignorance is your Shame. And furthermore, it is a Shame to sit and moan under the words of a Sermon, to ask one’s Neighbor for Forgiveness for petty faults, and many other such things which he cast up in my mind like refuse and mud” [Isa.57:20].

Chr. “But what did you answer to all his Shameful accusations?”

Faith. “Truly, at first, I could not tell what to say for he so caused Shame to rise up within me. But at last I began to think that what is highly esteemed among men, is an abomination in the sight of God [Lk.16:15]. And I thought further, that this *Shame* has told me only what Men think and nothing of what God says. This led me to consider the Final Day of Doom. We will not be Judged there by the Opinions of Men but by the Unchanging Wisdom and Law of the Most High.

“I thought, then, that what God says is Best and True, though all the World is against it. That it is the most Noble attainment to become a Fool for Christ’s sake, to be Weak and without Honor, than perish in the Folly of Human Judgment” [I Cor.4:10].

Chr. “Your reflections are sound and well grounded in the Word of Him who cannot lie. But did you not say anything to this *Shame* himself?”

Faith. “Indeed, I did. I spoke to him thus, ‘*Shame*, depart, for you are an Enemy to my Soul’s Salvation. Shall I entertain your Wicked Words against those of my Sovereign Lord? Never! For I am determined to never be Ashamed of His Ways and His Servants lest He be Ashamed of me at His Coming’ [Mk.8:38]. But, I’m telling you, he was a bold Villain; one which I could scarcely shake off and leave his company. He continued to sneak and whisper in my ear Shameful things about the Pilgrim’s Way. I at last rebuked him by saying that the things which he did most despise are those things which are my greatest Glory [2 Cor.12:9, 10]. Finally, however, I was free of him and went on my Way, singing,

*The Trials that those men do meet in all,
That are obedient to the Heavenly Call,
Are manifold and suited to the Flesh,
And come, and come, and come again afresh;
That now, or some time else, we by them may
Be taken, overcome, and cast away.
O let the Pilgrims, let the Pilgrims then
Be vigilant, and behave themselves like Men.*

Chr. “I am glad, my Brother, that you did withstand this Villain so bravely. He is, as you said, a most Troublesome sort, for he boldly follows us in the streets and tries to put us to *Shame* before all men so that we might deny the Good. But let us steadfastly resist him, for he is nothing more than the worst of Fools according to the true Word, ‘The Wise shall inherit Glory: but *Shame* shall be the promotion of Fools” [Prov.3:35].

Faith. “It is true, my good Friend, we must cry to the Lord for help against this *Shame*, that we might be Valiant for the Truth upon the earth.”

Chr. “It is well to do as you have said according to what has been Written, ‘If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be Ashamed. But

let him Glorify God on this behalf“ [I Pet.4:16].

Faith. “But what of yourself, have you not met with anything along the Way?”

Chr. “Met with! Ah, my Brother, it was the fiercest Contest a man could ever endure. Not long after I entered the Valley of Humiliation, I was assaulted by one of the most Hideous Fiends imaginable. In fact, he...”

Now, I saw in my Dream, that just at this juncture, *Christian’s* narration was interrupted by approaching Melodious notes coming from that end of the Valley they had so lately left. The two Pilgrims rose from the Shade of their tree and beheld a small Company of Travelers approaching under a Banner of Love [S.of S. 2:4], with the High Praises of God in their mouth, and a Two-edged Sword in their hand [Ps.149:6]. Leading the Way was a seasoned Soldier of the Prince of Peace whom neither had before met, though they could easily see that they were Pilgrims indeed.

At this sight, the two Men rejoiced at the prospect of others joining in their Fellowship along the Way. As they drew nearer, Shouts of Joy arose from, first the approaching Company, and then from *Christian* himself as they recognized each other’s faces.

The Good Man fairly leaped like a Hart in his haste to Greet his Beloved Wife and Family with a Kiss of Love [S.of S. 2:17].

Channa. “O, my dear Husband, is it well with you? Has the Lord rescued you from all Evil?”

Chr. “With many Thanks to Him who Reigns above, it is Well with my Soul as I trust it is with you, our Children, and our Sister, *Mercy.*”

Channa. “We Bless the Lord, my Husband, it is so with us as well. The Lord has delivered us from many Dangers by His Grace and through the help of our trustworthy Guide.”

Chr. “Dear Sir, it is with a Thousand Thanks I greet you for all of your kindness shown toward these, my Family and Friend.”

Great. “All Praise and Glory belongs to the Most High. I am merely an unworthy Servant who has done only what I ought to have done [Lk.17:10]. Your Testimony has spread far and wide [I Thess.1:8], Good *Christian*, and I am Grateful to God for meeting you thus.”

At this, *Christian* bowed a low bow, saying, “Whatever I am, I am by the Grace of Christ [I Cor.15:10], though I would not attribute to Him my many Faults, but only Praise Him yet more and more that His blood cleanses from all Sin” [I Jn.1:7].

Great. “I can see that this Valley of Humiliation has been a blessing to your Soul as that Fruit of all Fruits, Humility, is springing up in your Heart.” The Pilgrims’ Guide then turned and warmly greeted *Christian’s* Friend. “It is with Joy that we meet you here upon the Way to the Heavenly City, my Brother. My name is *Great Heart.*”

Faith. “With Pleasure I join your Band in this Way of Life. It is one of Life’s greatest Comforts for Brethren to dwell together in Unity along the Upward Way [Ps.133]. And I am, by name, *Faithful.*”

They all then Greeted one another in Brotherly Love [Heb.13:1] and discoursed upon those things which they encountered upon the Way. *Christian* did Bless each of his Children and ask after their Welfare and Progress as Pilgrims to the Satisfaction of his heart. *Mercy* attended to Deeds of Kindness to make each as Comfortable as possible while *Faithful* and *Great Heart* rehearsed the Goodness of the Lord in leading them thus far.

After refreshing themselves with a bit of Bread [Jn.6:51], *Christian* took up his story about his Battle with *Apollyon* to the fearful amazement of the Brethren who listened intently. When they had heard, they committed themselves to the Lord in Prayer with Thanksgiving, rejoicing in their Mighty Deliverer, and arose to continue upon their Way.

17

HONESTY, FEARING, SELF-WILL & TALKATIVE

They had not gone far when they spied an Old Pilgrim fast asleep under the shade of an oak tree. They could tell that he was a Pilgrim because of his Clothes, Staff, and how he was Girded for the Journey [Ex.12:11]. So they approached and awakened him, at which he cried out and jumped to his feet, saying, “Who are you? And what is your business with me?”

Great “Come now, do not be so hot. We are Friends who, like you, trek this Path to the Heavenly City. Greetings, in the name of our Lord Jesus.”

When Mr. *Honest* (for that was his name) heard this, he relaxed somewhat and said, “Please, I beg your pardon for my approach upon you at first. I thought that you were of that band of Robbers who lately have been in these parts. But I can see truly that you are none of those.”

Great “Why, what had you thought to do if we were Robbers?”

Hon. “Do? Why I would have fought as long as there was breath in me; and I am certain that I would not have been overcome, for that can by no means be unless the man himself yields to the assault” [I Cor.10:13].

Upon hearing this, the Company smiled amongst themselves at finding so Bold a Companion as this, and welcomed him to join with them along the Path, saying, “We perceive that you are an Honest man, for you have spoken the Truth plainly.”

Hon. “And I, as well, by your so saying, am certain that you know what true Pilgrimage is, for others believe that We are the easiest to overcome among all men.”

Chr. “Well, now that we have so happily met, please, let us know your name and from whence you have come?”

Hon. “By name I am called *Honest*, though I could wish that it was more of my Nature than merely my name. I dwelt in that town known as Stupidity, not far from the City of Destruction, but further removed from the Light of the Sun than they. It is a colder and more senseless place than that of their neighbors, but I am persuaded that though a man was in a mountain of Ice, if the Sun of Righteousness would but shine upon him, his frozen heart would melt in that Light; and so it has been with me [Mal.4:2]. And now, good Companions, please let me know your names.”

Chr. “Gladly. I am by name, *Christian*, and this is my Beloved *Christianna*, and these...”

Now before he could proceed further, Old Mr. *Honest* leaped and skipped around like a lamb while blessing them with a thousand good wishes, saying, “I have heard the Good Report of your Faith, Courage, Endurance, and Sincerity from many who hold you in high Esteem. May your End be blessed as was your going out so that your entrance into that Inheritance Above be abundantly supplied to you [2 Pet.1:11].

“And you, Dear Sister *Christianna*, truly you have arisen a Mother in Israel, may your Children and Husband ever rise up and call you Blessed, having as your Garland, that Beauty which arises from the Fear of the Lord” [Prov.31:28-30]. Then he turned to the Boys and asked of their names, and proceeded thus:

“*Matthew*, may you be like that Tax Collector turned Apostle, not in his Vice but in his Virtue. And you, *Samuel*, may you resemble that Prophet who so excelled in Faith and Prayer above many.

“*Joseph*, follow the example of your namesake in Purity of heart, fleeing Temptation and Forgiving your Brethren [Gen.39:9-13; 50:17-21]. And *James*, follow after him who was the brother of our Lord, not in his Unbelief, but in Revelation of the Risen Christ to his soul [Jn.7:5; I Cor.15:7].

“And who is this Daughter of Jerusalem,” he inquired as he turned towards *Mercy*. Having learned her name, he looked kindly upon her, saying, “*Mercy* is your name; and by *Mercy* you shall be sustained and

carried through all Difficulties encountered along the Way until you look full in the Face of that Fountain of all Mercy, opened up at the Cross which flows freely now from the Throne of Grace.

“And you, my dear Brother *Faithful*, that is your name, and Faithful shall you remain, though the Gates of Hell descend upon you. Be Faithful unto Death, and you shall receive the Crown of Life [Rev.2:10].

“Lastly, I salute you, a *Great Heart* indeed; a true *Barnabas*, a Son of Encouragement. May you continue a Good Man, full of the Spirit and of Faith unto the Blessing of many” [Acts 11:22-24].

Having said so, the whole Company was very much pleased and smiled lovingly upon their new Companion as they joined in step once again upon the Way. And, as they walked, they conversed together as Pilgrims do.

Great “Do you happen to know a Mr. *Fearing* who came forth on Pilgrimage from your town?”

Hon. “Yes, very well indeed. He was a man who had the Root of the matter within him, but one of the most troublesome Pilgrims one could ever meet with.”

Great “I perceive by this answer that you know him well. It was my charge from our Lord to conduct him along his way to the Heavenly City.”

Hon. “Then, please, let us hear of how he fared along the Journey.”

Great “Gladly. He was of the sort that always Feared that he would come short at last of that Place to which he desired to go. Everything frightened him, even the talk of others, not to mention any actual opposition. I was told that he lay for nearly one month at the Slough of Despond roaring and crying out fearfully that he should never be able to cross. Even so, he would not go back to what he had forsaken.

“This one was cast down in his spirit at every difficulty, and stumbled at every straw cast upon his Way. Well, one Sunshine morning, he somehow managed to get across, and even then would hardly believe it of himself. I think that he had a kind of Slough of Despond in his mind which he carried with him everywhere he went.

“When he drew near to the Gate at the head of the Way, he feared to knock lest he be rejected and gave place to others before himself saying that he was unworthy to enter. And there the poor man would stand there shaking and shrinking back, but he would never turn and go back.

“At last he summoned up what little courage he had and rapped lightly once or twice at the Gate. When asked, ‘You that Tremble, what do you seek?’, he fainted quite on the spot. So he was assisted up and bid enter with the words, ‘Peace be to you. Up, for I have set before you an Open Door. Come in, you Blessed of the Lord.’ Even then, he was ashamed to show his face.

“When he was encouraged along his Way, he proceeded to the House of the *Interpreter* where he lay outside in the cold for many a day, not having the courage to even knock for admission. But in all this, he never went back. In fact, he had a note of Necessity given to him to present to my Master that he might receive and comfort him and provide him with a valiant Guide for his safe conduct. Even still, he lay outside the House until he was almost starved.

“It was I who noticed him outside and went forth to ask him what he wished. Ah, poor man, the tears came into his eyes and he could scarcely speak. Knowing what he wanted, I told it within the House where, when the Lord heard of it, He bid him come within and unto Himself. And I must say that our Lord was exceedingly loving towards him as He is with all those who are fearing.

“Never was he more Cheerful than when he gazed upon the Cross and the Tomb where he stood in admiration for some time before leaving that Place. The Hill of Difficulty and the Lions did not cause him the least concern, for his fears were not of those things, but of whether he would be accepted at last.

“Reluctantly, I was able to manage him into the Palace Beautiful, not that he did not greatly desire the blessings of that House, but that he felt himself too unworthy to share in such Company. I saw him more than once, listening around the corner to the profitable Discussions within the next room, but he rarely would come and sit together with us. Afterwards, he told me that he loved to be in those two Houses, but he

lacked the Boldness to say so.

“As we reached the Valley of Humiliation, I never saw him brighter than when there. Why, he would fairly embrace the ground and kiss the very flowers that grew in that place. He cared nothing at all about how lowly or despised he might be so long as he would, at last, be received Above.

“Ah, but when approach was made at the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I thought I had nearly lost my man, not that he had any inclination to go back, for that he always abhorred, but that he seemed that he would die of Fear. Yet, I confess, that I never before or since saw that Valley as quiet as when we passed. I suppose that those Enemies had a restraint placed upon them by our Lord until he had gotten quite through [Job 1:12].

“Well, it would be too tedious to tell you all else that he passed through other than, when we approached the River and he saw no bridge, he was cast into a very heavy and mournful state of mind, bemoaning that he should never see that Face who had brought him thus far. But when I was able to encourage him somewhat to enter the Waters, it was remarkable at what a low ebb they flowed. I think they have never been so still as when he went over to the Other Side when I saw him no more. But he, at last, got himself safe Over and up to the Gate of the City where he was received with Joy.”

Hon. “So, it seems that all was well at last.”

Great “Yes, yes. I never had a doubt of him. He was a man of choice spirit, only kept himself so low that he made his life burdensome to himself and troublesome to others” [Ps.88].

Hon. “But why is it that a good man such as this should be all his days so much in the dark?”

Great “In the Wisdom of God, it is discovered that some must play the Pipe and others must Weep [Mt.11:16-18]. Now Mr. *Fearing* was one who played upon the Bass notes and not a bright Trumpeter. This, however, is much to be preferred to that shallow false profession which is always Positive and Bubbling, never having known that Heaviness of mind which leads to true Repentance [2 Cor.7:9]. Indeed, the first string that is touched by the musician when he would put all into tune, is the

Bass. God plays upon this string first, when He sets the soul in tune for Himself. Only here was the imperfection of Mr. *Fearing*, he could play upon no other music but this one until he crossed over into that Better Land.”

Channa. “This recounting of Mr. *Fearing* has done me good. I had thought before that no one had been like me. But now I see that there is some similarity between this good man and myself. For, while his troubles were open and evident, mine were kept hidden within. He would scarcely venture to knock for entrance, while my own discomfort made me to knock all the more.”

Mercy “If I might be permitted to speak my mind, I must say that some of his nature has dwelt in me as well. Fear of the Lake and the loss of Paradise [Rev.20:13-15] has ever terrified me more than the loss of anything in this World.”

Matt. “Fear was one thing that made me think that I was far from having Salvation. But if it was so with this good man, why not also with me?”

James “No fears, no Grace. Though there is not always Grace where there is the fear of Hell, yet to be sure, there is no Grace where there is no Fear of God.”

Chr. “Fear is that healthy Dread and Hatred of Evil [Prov.8:13], apart from which, no one can properly claim to be on Pilgrimage.”

Great “Well said, you have all hit upon the mark; for the Fear of God is the beginning of Wisdom. And if a man lacks the Beginning, you can be sure that he will have neither the Middle nor the End. And so, we shall leave him for now with this parting word:

*Well, Master Fearing, you did Fear
Your God, and were afraid
Of doing anything while here
By which He is betrayed.
And did you Fear the Lake and Pit?
Would that others did so too!
For, as for those who lack your wit,
They do themselves undo.*

Now I saw that they went on in their discussion as they walked on together. And it was Mr. *Honest* who inquired if any had met with one, Mr. *Self-Will*, along their Journey. None had, so he related his encounter like this:

Hon. “Ha! I doubt that I’ve ever met with a more Stubborn man. He cared nothing for Others, for sound Reason, or for godly Example. He was rightly named, for whatever his own mind prompted him to do is what he did. I am persuaded that he never came in at the Gate.”

Faith. “Tell us, then, what Principles did he hold to?”

Hon. “Principles? He had but one, *Self-Will*. He insisted that a man might equally follow the Vices of Pilgrims as well as their Virtues and still enter in the City Above. Why, he said that the Scriptures themselves supported his *Self-Willed* notions.”

Great. “This is amazing! How could anyone imagine that God approves of doing the Evils as well as the Good of Pilgrims and make no distinction between them? I can see that this one is a dangerous sort.”

Hon. “Indeed he was. He claimed that since *David* committed adultery and yet was the Beloved of God, that he could as well. He said that *Solomon* had many wives, so he could also. Furthermore, he pretended that because *Rahab* and the Midwives of Egypt spoke lies and yet were saved, so he could do the same. And that’s not all! He asserted that if the Disciples went at the request of their Master and took away the owner’s donkey, that he could equally do likewise. Finally, he wickedly claimed that since *Jacob* used Deceit and Hypocrisy to gain the Inheritance of his father, that his own Heavenly portion could be obtained thusly.”

Great. “What! Have any of you heard of a more Wicked wresting of the Scriptures to one’s own Destruction than this?” [2 Pet.3:16].

Hon. “Now he did not claim that just anyone might behave so, only those who also possessed the Virtues of Pilgrims.”

Chr. “But what could possibly be more false than this? This is the same as saying that, because a good man sinned due to of a weakness of the Flesh, that he might do it willfully by predetermined choice. Or, if a child stumbles on a stone and is dirtied by the fall, that he might

willfully wallow in the mire like a hog.

“Who could imagine that a man might be so Blinded by his own Lust to think like this? It has happened unto him according to what is Written, ‘They stumble at the Word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed’ [I Pet.2:8].

“And to imagine that if someone has a godly man’s Virtues, he can equally addict himself to their Sins is Abominable to Him whose eyes are too pure to look upon such [Hab.1:13]. It is the same as saying that a Dog can have the qualities of the Child by simply licking up his excrement. To eat up the Sin of God’s People is no sign that one is possessed with their Virtues at all [Hos.4:8]. He is among those who make the Way of our King to Stink in the nostrils of men and give them reasonable cause to Blaspheme the Name of our Lord” [Rom.2:23, 24].

Faith. “There are many strange Opinions in the world. Some say that it is soon enough to repent when they are about to die.”

Great. “These only show their Folly. Which man who had one week to run twenty miles, would postpone that Journey to the last hour of that week?”

Hon. “You have spoken the Truth. Many claiming to go on Pilgrimage are of these misguided notions. Some set out as if they would drive all the world before them, and yet, in a few days, have died in the Wilderness. I have seen others who have spoken well of a Pilgrim’s life at the first who, after a while, have spoken as much against it. There are those who Boast of what they would do should they meet with Opposition that even at a false alarm, have fled the Faith, and given up all. And, then again, there are those who have shown little promise at the first who, one would have thought, could not have lasted but a day, that have proved to be very good Pilgrims.”

And then did the Brethren sing:

*He who would go as a Pilgrim down here,
Needs Tremble with caution and godly Fear;
For He who judges and casts into hell,
Watches if Evil’s despised very well.*

Now I saw in my dream that they happened to come upon one walking along the Path just ahead of them. *Faithful* then, being greatly encouraged by the Brethren who had joined with him lately, eagerly sought to bring this man into their same Fellowship. Now the man (whose name was *Talkative*) was tall and handsome to appearance, more at a distance than at close observation, and *Faithful* addressed him:

Faith. "Friend, how now? Are you on your way to the Heavenly Country?"

Talk. "I am going to that very Place."

Faith. "That is wonderful! I hope then that we might have your good company along our Way?"

Talk. "With a very good will, I would like nothing better."

Faith. "Come then, let us spend our time in discussing things that are profitable."

Talk. "To me, to Talk of things that are good is very acceptable and it is a pity so many choose to speak of things to no profit. What better use of the Tongue than to Talk of the things of God: Things such as the History, Miracles, and Mysteries of the Holy Scriptures.

"By doing so, a man may gain Knowledge of many things, like the vanity of Earthly things, the necessity of the New Birth, the insufficiency of our Works; and the need of Christ's Righteousness as well as learning what it is to Repent, to Believe, and to Pray.

"Talking is the sure way to learn what are the great Promises and Comforts of the Gospel, the need of Faith, and the necessity of a work of Grace in the soul unto Eternal Life. Yes, Talk will deliver us from ignorantly living in the works of the Law by which no man can enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

Faith. "These are true things you say. But, excuse me please, no man can attain to these by human wisdom or by merely talking of them."

Talk. "All this I know very well. A man can receive nothing unless it be given to him from Heaven. All is of Grace, not of Works. Why, I could quote a hundred Scriptures to prove it so."

Faith. "Well, what then should we Talk of?"

Talk. "Why, anything you wish: I will Talk of things Heavenly, or things earthly; things Moral or things Evangelical; things Sacred or

things Profane; things Past or things Present; any and all are alike to me provided that it be to our profit."

Now *Faithful* began to wonder somewhat about the man, what the others thought about him, so he excused himself momentarily in order to seek the Counsel of those Wiser than he [Prov.11:14]. So as he joined the Group, he exclaimed (though softly so as to not to be heard by *Talkative*), "I think we have found ourselves a very excellent Pilgrim."

To this there was no immediate reply and *Faithful* began to sense that the others did not share his enthusiasm. It was *Christian* who gently commented first.

Chr. "This man with whom you are so impressed will deceive with his Tongue twenty men who do not know him."

Faith. "Do you know him then?"

Chr. "I am surprised that you do not, for he dwells in our City of Destruction. His name is *Talkative*, son of *Say-Well*, who lives along Babbling Blvd."

Hon. "What *Christian* has said is quite true. This man is for any Company, provided he can Talk. He is equally at home in the Church as he is in the Beer Parlor. Godliness has no place in his heart, house, or manner of life. All the Religion he has is in his Tongue to make a noise thereby."

Faith. "Then I have been greatly deceived in my estimation of him!"

Great "You may be sure of that, good Brother. Remember the Proverb, 'They say and do not' [Mt.23:3], and 'the Kingdom of God is not in Words, but in Power' [I Cor.4:20]. He Talks of Pearls yet remains a Swine. The common saying where he lives is, 'Saint abroad, and a Devil at home.'

"He is so abusive and unreasonable at home that his own family hardly knows how to speak to him. And should any of his sons begin to be moved in their Conscience about their sins, he will rail on them as Fools and blockheads.

"In his dealings in the Market place, he is despised by all for his unfaithfulness and greed at other's expense. He has been the cause of many Stumbling and falling, and, if God does not prevent it, will be the

ruin of many more. In short, he is a Blot and Stain on all true Pilgrims by his wicked burning life notwithstanding his Tongue of Silver.”

Hon. “I know for a fact that good men are ashamed of him and none of them dare call him Brother or Friend. The very mention of his name makes them blush because of his evil Reputation.”

Faith. “Well, I see clearly that Saying and Doing are two different things altogether.”

Chr. “As different as night and day. One may Speak while yet in the dark, but only in the Light can one Walk without peril to his own soul. As the Body without the Soul is dead, so is Talk if it be not joined with Deed. This is plainly the Scripture’s meaning when it says, ‘What use is it, my Brethren, if someone Says he has Faith, but he has no Works? Can that Faith save him?’ [Jas.2:14]. Certainly not, for it is Written again, ‘Prove yourselves Doers of the Word, and not merely Hearers who delude themselves’ [Jas.1:22]. And I assure you, this *Talkative* is no more than a puff of a Cloud with no Water” [Jude 1:12].

Hon. “*Christian* has rightly spoken. For, what is to be the Fate of a tree who constantly drinks of the rain and puts forth leaves, but bears no Fruit? Surely the Sentence is, ‘Cut it down!’ [Lk.13:7]. And thus it shall be with all such empty Talkers who have nothing Good to show for all that they profess.”

Faith. “This reminds me of what God has spoken through *Moses* when describing the Clean and Unclean animals. To be Clean, one must both chew the Cud and divide the Hoof [Lev.11:3, 4]. The Camel, though it chews the Cud, it does not divide its Hoof, and thus is Unclean. It is thus with this *Talkative*. He so loves to have the Word in his mouth but his walk is no different than that of a dog or other Unclean beasts. He Speaks great things, but his feet do not part ways with Sin. This, I see clearly, is the great error of all Talkatives.”

Great “You have spoken the true Gospel sense of those texts, my Brother. And let me add one further thing: *Paul* calls some who, though they Talk like Angels, are nothing more than noisy Gongs and clanging Cymbals [I Cor.13:1]. He says this for two reasons. The first being, that they have not that Life of Love which makes their speech sweet and good, which gives Grace to the hearers [Eph.4:29]. They are therefore Lifeless

things though they make a great Noise.

“Secondly, having not that Life of Love, all that comes forth from their Mouths is made offensive and hateful in the ears of the hearers as there is no harmony between what is said and done, but only a grinding and disgusting Noise. And thus the true saying has its fulfillment in *Talkative*, ‘Like the legs which are useless to the Lame, so is a proverb in the mouth of fools’” [Prov.26:7].

Faith. “Brethren, your Counsel is a Balm to my soul. But what should I now do, seeing I’ve already welcomed him as I did?”

So they consulted together briefly and concluded with one mind [I Cor.1:10] that he should go to him and engage in some serious conversation about the Power of the Gospel. “Ask him,” they said, “whether it has been established in his Heart, House, and Manner of Life.”

Faithful then stepped up again to him, greeted him, and asked after his Health and general well-being.

Talk. “Thank you, well. I thought that by now we should have had a great amount of Talk.”

Faith. “Well, let us begin now with this question: How does the Saving Grace of God show itself when it is in the Heart of a man?”

Talk. “I see then that our Talk must be about the Power of Things: Well, it is a very good question and here is my reply. First, where the Grace of God is in the heart, there will occur a great Outcry and protest against Sin.”

Faith. “Excuse me, please. I think you should rather say that it shows itself by causing the soul to hate its own Sin.”

Talk. “Why what is the difference between Speaking against Sin and the Hating of it? Its all the same to my mind.”

Faith. “Oh! But they are altogether different, for a man may raise his Voice against Evil in general while never raising a Hand against it in his own soul. Many cry out against sin in the Pulpit while holding it close to the bosom in House and Community.

“*Joseph’s* Mistress cried out with a loud voice as if she were very holy; though she desired lustfully to commit uncleanness with him” [Gen.39:15].

Talk. "I perceive that you are trying to catch me in my words."

Faith. "No, I am only for setting things correctly. But please, go on."

Talk. "Secondly, is that one will have great Knowledge of Gospel-Mysteries."

Faith. "This sign should have been First; but either way, it also is false. For even great Knowledge of Gospel-Mysteries may be obtained without any Work of Grace in the soul at all. The Apostle confirms that a man may Know all Mysteries, and yet be Nothing [I Cor.13:2].

"When Christ said, 'Do you Know all these things?', He proceeded to add, 'You are Blessed if you Do them' [Jn.13:17]. The Blessing is in the Doing, not in the Knowing alone.

"For if a man Know His Master's Will, and not Do it, he shall be judged with the greatest of Judgment; for he Knew but did not Do [Lk.12:47]. The only Knowledge which is pleasing unto God is that which sets a man upon Doing His will. All else is that Knowledge which will serve to the stricter Condemnation of Talkers and Boasters."

Talk. "You are trying to find me out again! This is not for edification."

Faith. "Well, propose another sign of the true Grace of God in a soul."

Talk. "Not I, for I see we will not agree."

Faith. "If you then will not, may I continue?"

Talk. "You are free to do so if that is what you wish."

Faith. "A Work of Grace in the Soul is evident both to him that has it and to those who observe him. He himself knows it because he is Convicted of his own Sin, inner Corruption, and Unbelief [Jn.16:8, 9, Rom.7:24; Ps.38:18; Jer.31:19]. Then He is convinced of his need for a Savior, and will not rest until he has repented of Sin and Received the Provision of Christ Himself [Acts 2:37-39; 4:12; Jn.1:12]. This is followed by that Righteousness, Peace, and Joy flooding his soul which only comes through Holy Spirit of the Most High [Rom.14:17].

"The Testimony of this Gracious Work to fellow men is evidenced by his confession of Christ as Lord [Rom.10:10] in accord with a life of Holiness: Heart-holiness, Home-holiness, and Community-holiness [Jn.14:15; Ezek.20:43; I Pet.1:14-16]. This causes him to hate it in

himself, not tolerate it in his home, and turn away from Evil in all his dealings with men. And this is done, not by Talk, like a Hypocrite or a Talkative person may do, but by a practical subjection in Faith and Love to the Power and Cleansing of the Word of God [Jn.17:17; 2 Thess.2:13].

"And now, Sir, I wish to ask you if you have experienced the First part of this Work and if your Life bears witness to the Second? Do not answer, 'Yes,' unless both the Lord of Heaven and those who know you best would agree with your Talk."

Now *Talkative* seemed to chafe most uncomfortably under this Discourse and particularly at those pointed Questions to his own Soul. He managed to recover himself somewhat though and rather stiffly replied, "This kind of Discussion I did not expect, nor do I need to give you an answer in this. You are not my Judge and so I will not reply. But why do you ask me such things?"

Faith. "Because I saw you very ready to Talk, though all Reports of you by Good and Honorable Men declare that your life proves your Words to be Lies. While your Mouth opens to Talk of Heaven, it equally opens to swallow Beer. Though you Speak against the Crimes of the Times, your Family cries against your Ungodly Crimes at Home. You are just as comfortable in the company of Saints as you are with the Sons of Belial. A Chameleon of the worst sort are you; here one way and there another.

"Some have already Stumbled at your wicked ways and many more are in danger of being destroyed thereby. The proverb of the Harlot is true of you, which says, 'She is a Shame to all Women.' So you are also a Shame to all Pilgrims."

Talk. "Since you are quick to believe any manner of Report blowing about and to judge so maliciously as you do, I can see that you are a Dismal man filled with only your own misguided opinions, and are therefore unfit to Talk to."

And having said so, he turned to his own way and kept his distance from the Brethren whom *Faithful* now joined once again.

Chr. "It is how we knew it would happen. Your Words and his Lusts could never agree. He had rather leave our Company than Reform

his life.”

Hon. “Yes, Brother, let him go. The Loss is no one’s but his own. For his going with us would have only been a Stain in our midst. Besides, the Apostle says, ‘From such turn away’“ [2 Thess.3:14].

Great “You did well to speak plainly to him as you did. There is but little of this Faithful dealing with men in our days which makes Religion to Stink in the sight of many. Should such Corrupt and empty Talkers be admitted into the Fellowship of the Godly, it causes the world to puzzle, it blemishes Christianity, while grieving the Sincere. It is a true saying; Our Teaching ought either to drive men to Christ, or drive them away altogether.”

Then did *Faithful* say:

*How Talkative at first lifts up his plumes!
How bravely does he Speak! How he presumes
To drive down all before him! But so soon
As Faithful talks of Heart-Work, like the Moon
That’s past the Full, into the Wane he goes;
And so will all, that no Heart-Work knows.
Alas! O Talkative, where shall you then be?
Will Talk bring you a Blessed eternity?
Nay! Though Truth, in your Mouth, ring like a bell,
Your Feet will yet plunge you to Hell.*

Now the day was soon to draw to a close and the Pilgrims, being wearied from their Journey (especially the Women and Children), longed for a place of Rest along the Way. After a moment’s reflection, *Great-Heart* spoke up with an encouraging Word. “There lies just before us an Inn, hosted by a very honorable Disciple who loves to entertain Travelers upon this Way. Be of good Cheer, we shall presently be at his door.”

18

GAIUS

Because of this good Report given by their Guide, they were all content to turn in at his Lodging. And above the door hung this sign, “Host to all the Church” [Rom.16:23]. When they read this, they were pleased and gave Thanks to the Lord of the Way who had provided such a Shelter for His own. When the Master of the House greeted them, they inquired if they might pass the night there. Then said *Gaius*, for that was his name, “If you be Sincere and True Pilgrims, you are heartily welcome to Partake of all that is within.”

At this they were all Glad, for it was evident that he was a lover of the King’s Travelers, and were accordingly warmly received in the bonds of Love. Now when they were ushered inside, *Gaius* quickly called for his Daughter, *Phoebe*, and sent her to fetch their good Companion, Mr. *Mnason*, a Disciple of long standing [Acts 21:16], along with his two daughters. That being done, he sent word to the Cook, by name, *Taste-that-which-is-Good* [Ps.119:103], to prepare for their Guests while they conversed until Supper was ready.

Introductions were made all around. When it was *Christian*’s turn, their Host sat forward in his chair with great interest as he presented his family. He then sat back in amazement.

Gaius “So, this is the famous *Christian* whose Testimony has spread even to the regions beyond. Welcome! Welcome, good *Christian*,

and Welcome, you, his dear family. I knew your father and your father's Father.

"Your ancestors first dwelt at Antioch and were very worthy men, the best of the age [Acts 11:26]. They have, more than any I know of, showed themselves to be men of great Virtue and of strong Courage. Ah! And what Trials they have endured for the sake of the Truth, for Love to His name, and unto the Blessing of their Brethren.

"*Stephen* was one of the first of your Family's clan who stood Immovable for the Testimony [Acts 7:59, 60]. *James*, another of this generation, lost his head by the sword [Acts 12:8]. Not to mention the names of those Worthies, *Paul* and *Peter*, who perished for the Faith at the hand of the wicked Nero by his sword and cross.

"These were the Patriarchs of this good *Christian* family. Their descendants, in the next generation, endured all things even as your forefathers did. There was *Ignatius* who was eaten alive by the lions. *Romanus* had his flesh cut by pieces from his bones and *Polycarp* who sang as the flames surrounded him and burnt him to ashes.

"Others, whose names are lost to our records (but Recorded permanently on High), were hung in baskets in the sun for the wasps and ants to eat. Some were placed in sacks and thrown into the waters to drown.

"It would be impossible to relate all that this *Christian* family has suffered by way of injury, insult, and death for the Love that they have had for a Pilgrim's life. But glad I am to entertain you here today. May the Lord grant you and this, your faithful Wife, and these, your sturdy Boys, to Walk in this Way fearlessly, without turning to the right or to the left, and to receive the Crown of Life at last."

Now *Christianna* blushed at being included among such a catalog of notable Martyrs and the Boys would hardly raise their eyes, thinking that their own faith, so recently begun, should not be mentioned in the same breath with those of their Ancestors.

Chr. "Dear Sir, we do humbly receive your Hospitality shown to us, the lowliest among His Brethren and the smallest in our Clan. We are not worthy of even the least of His Mercies, but by the Grace of God we have come this far. And, as for your kindness shown to us, we

gratefully give thanks to God and to your Household. May He who righteously Rewards, not forget your labor of Love."

Gaius "By this answer I am even more certain that you are of this Ancestry and are a *Christian* indeed. Humility is the Garment worn by this Family by which they are recognized by all" [I Pet.5:5]. And then gesturing to all his Guests warmly, he welcomed each one again, saying, "It gives me and my house no greater Joy than to entertain Strangers and Pilgrims along the Way of Life."

Just then there entered into the Company that Disciple, *Mnason*, along with his two Daughters, *Grace* and *Martha*, accompanied by their escort, *Phoebe*. The girls bowed as they were introduced to the Guests and the Disciples embraced them all with great affection.

Their Host looked pleasantly upon the assembled Company and remarked, "The Lord has blessed our gathering with many dear Sisters, all Fair as the Moon [S.of S. 6:10]. Let us hold them in high esteem for the Honor granted them by our Lord as fellow heirs of the Grace of Life" [I Pet.3:7].

Now at these statements, they all cast their eyes down, embarrassed to be spoken of in such a manner. But the good Host was not finished with his praise of them yet and proceeded as follows:

Gaius "Let me now speak on the behalf of Women, to take away their reproach among men. Our first Mother, Eve, was called the Mother of all Living, for through a woman God would send His Son into this world [Gen.3:15, 20; Gal.4:4]. I will say again, that when the Savior was about to be born, women rejoiced in Him before either man or angel [Lk.1:42-55].

"Never have I read that any man gave to Christ even so much as one cent, but the women that followed Him gave of their substance [Lk.8:2, 3]. It was a woman that washed His feet with her tears and a woman that anointed His body for burial [Lk.7:37, 50; Jn.11:2]. They were women that wept when he was going to the Cross and who also followed Him from the Cross [Lk.23:27; Mt.27:55, 56].

"Women they were who sat by His tomb when buried and that were first with Him on that Resurrection morning [Mt.27:61; 28:1]. The first to bring the Glad Tidings that He was risen from the dead were

women [Lk.24:9, 10]. Women are therefore highly favored, and show by these things, that they are sharers with us in the Grace of Life.”

Now the Cook sent to signify that Supper was nearly ready, so the three Girls excused themselves to prepare the Table; to spread the Linen, arrange the plates, and set the Salt and Bread in order.

Matt. “The sight of this Cloth and the Preparations make me hunger all the more to partake.”

Gaius “Let all the Doctrines from the Word in this life, create that appetite in you to sit at the Supper of the great King in His Kingdom. For all the preaching and books here are only like setting Salt and Bread upon the table compared to the Feast prepared Above.”

So they all came and sat at the Table and, after Prayer, were presented with their food. *Grace* provided abundant portions so that there was not a needy person among them [Acts 4:33] while *Phoebe* and *Martha* served the Guests, for they were of the serving type [Rom.16:1; Jn.12:2]. And thus it was that by Grace, all the Brethren were served [2 Cor.9:8].

First were lifted up the Thigh and Breast with Thanksgiving and set before them [Lev.7:32-34] to show them that they must always begin their meal by lifting up Prayer and praise unto God [Ps.25:1; Heb.13:15]. These two dishes were very fresh and good and they all partook of them heartily.

Next was brought a Bottle of Wine, red as blood. “This,” said their Host, “is the juice of the True Vine that makes glad the heart of God and man” [Jud.9:13; Jn.15:1]. “Drink of this to your Joy and Refreshment.”

The Girls then came forth with Pitchers of Milk which they were directed to set before the Boys that they may grow thereby [I Pet.2:1, 2].

That being done, a large dish of Butter and Honey was set before them. “Eat freely of this,” encouraged good *Gaius*, “for this will cheer up and strengthen your Judgment and Understanding. This was our Lord’s portion when he was a Child as it is written, ‘Butter and Honey shall he eat, that He may know to refuse the Evil and choose the Good’” [Isa.7:15].

Apples, fragrant and red, were next presented and were found to

be very tasty indeed. Then said *Matthew*, “May we eat Apples, since by the Apple the Serpent deceived our first Mother?” To which *Gaius* replied:

*Apples were they with which we were beguiled,
Yet Sin, not Apples, has our Souls defiled;
Forbidden Apples, if eaten, corrupt the blood:
To eat such when commanded, does us much good;
Drink from His Vessel then, you Church, His Dove,
And eat of His Apples, who are longing for Love.
[S.of S.2:5]*

Matt. “I hesitated, because I once became sick from eating fruit.”

Gaius “Forbidden fruit will make you sick, but not what our Lord has provided.”

Now I saw that while they talked, the Girls set before them a bowl of Nuts. Then did *Christianna* say, “Nuts spoil tender teeth, especially those of the Children.” To which their Host replied,

*Hard Texts are Nuts, (I will not call them Cheaters)
Whose Shells do keep their Kernels from the Eaters.
Open then the shells, and you shall have the Meat,
They are brought here for you to crack and eat.*

Hon. “Well, then, my good Landlord, let me propose a Riddle for you to crack for us. It goes like this,

*A man there was, though some did count him mad,
The more he cast away, the more he had.*

They all paid close attention to what *Gaius* would say; so he sat for a moment and then replied,

*He that bestows his Goods upon the Poor,
Shall have as much again, and ten times more.
[Prov.28:27]*

Joseph “I dare say, Sir, I couldn’t imagine how you could have found out the meaning.”

Gaius “O! I have been trained up in this Way for a great while now. I have learned both from His Word and by Experience that the Lord repays Kindness shown to the needy.”

Then *Samuel* whispered to his father, saying, “Father, this is a very good House. Let us stay here for some time to come that we might all get profit to our Souls.” Now their Host overheard the Boy and smiled upon him and said, “Nothing would please us better, my Boy.” And he blushed that his words had been overheard, but his heart was glad at the invitation.

Great “Well done, good *Gaius*, but let me now put forth my own to Mr. *Honest*.” So his companion nodded his consent and listened carefully as *Great Heart* said:

*He that will kill, must first be overcome:
If to live outside, he first must die at home.*

Hon. “Ha! It is a hard one; hard to expound and harder yet to practice. But I think the sense is this;

*He first by Grace must conquered be,
If sin he would mortify:
And he, that lives, must convince me,
That unto himself he has died.*

Gaius “It is right. Good Doctrine and Experience both teach us this. For unless Grace first displays itself, and overcomes the soul with its Glory, a man is altogether without heart to oppose Sin. Besides, if Sin are the cords whereby Satan binds the Soul, how can a man make resistance before Grace has loosed him from that condition?

“Secondly, no reasonable man could ever be convinced that another is a monument to Grace who is a slave to his own corruption. The greater the Corruption, the greater the Grace that overcomes it and

the greater the realization to the Soul of the power of Grace to deliver” [Rom.5:20].

Chr. “Let me now direct my own riddle to our brother *Mnason*. I will state it like this:

*Indwelling a man, and he, dwelling therein,
Must be slain by him to rise alive again.*

Mnason “This one requires more than a quick mind to resolve. If a man would live and yet be slain, it will take something more than his own resources, even the very power of God. Let me explain its meaning in this way;

*A man both dwells in his Flesh and it in him,
But its not the Body, but its Evil within,
That must by the Sword be slain,
If he, the man, would Live again.*

Chr. “You have told the truth of the matter, my Brother. Though we dwell in the body, it is the evil desires and corruptible deeds that each, by his own hand, must put to death [Col.3:5]. And it is this crucifixion of our own Flesh which is the sure evidence that we are Christ’s, and that we are possessed of His Life” [Gal.5:16-24].

Faith. “I like your riddle very well and, better yet, its explanation. Let me now be permitted to ask our Host one which, I trust, will also be for our profit. It goes thus:

*This one, both loved by God and judged by Him,
Is ruled unlawful by Devil and Sin;
A snare to Saints, though living therein.*

Gaius “Good *Faithful*, you have opened up a deep one for us to unravel. The answer may be stated at once, though its outworking lasts a lifetime. Here is how I see it:

*God so loved the World, He sent His Son to die
For those of the World, to raise them on High.
Yet be warned! The World, its Pride, its Lust,
Is ruled by its Prince, though we tread on its dust.*

Faith. “Well said, Brother. It is this present evil World that our Lord has come to save us from [Gal.1:4]. We cannot escape living in it, but we can escape it living in us [I Cor.5:10; Jn.17:14-16]. To love its ways makes us Enemies of our King [Jas.4:4], and proves that we do not have the Love of the Father in us [I Jn.2:15-17]. In fact, the whole World lies in the power of the Evil one [I Jn.5:19] and this is why we must be on our guard against it at all times.”

Matt. “Father, and Esteemed Sirs, I am greatly profited by this Discourse which has cheered my heart more than one who has found great spoil [Ps.119:162]. I would not presume to be able to propound any such Riddles to this Company, but, if I may, I would wish to ask a question.”

Now when his father and the rest heard this, they were pleased and indicated that he should proceed, and he did so, saying, “How is it that a true Believer can both Hunger and Thirst and yet be Satisfied. For if he is Hungering, is he not unsatisfied? And if Satisfied, will he not cease to Hunger? Please, I would be happy if you could expound this unto me.”

Chr. “It is a fine inquiry, and one which raises an issue of deep interest to all who walk this Pilgrim Way. Only Christ Himself can Satisfy the soul’s Hunger. While yet in the Far Country, the Prodigal hungered after the Husks of the Swine, and no one was giving him anything [Lk.15:16].

“But when he came to his senses, he proceeded directly to his Father’s house where he feasted upon the fatted calf and the Abundance of that Table [Lk.15:17, 23]. There he was Satisfied with more than enough with much remaining.”

Mnason “Your father has spoken truly. In Partaking of Christ, Hunger after Righteousness finds its Satisfaction. He is the Satisfying end of the Soul’s search so that one never Hungers for or is Satisfied with

anything but Him.

“Yet once eaten and received, He both Satisfies every Moment and, at the same time, causes Growth in the soul of the Believer. This very Growth necessarily develops the inner man and enlarges the Appetite which only continually coming to Christ can Satisfy” [Ps.119:32].

Great “God’s ancient people fed upon the Passover Lamb which strengthened them to move out of Egyptian Bondage [Ex.12:11]. But that one meal did not carry them throughout their Journey’s end. They yet Hungered for that true Bread from Heaven which they found to be their only Satisfying supply throughout the barren Wilderness of this World. But Satisfaction will only be gained in the gathering and partaking of the Bread of God, day by day [Ex.16:18, 21, 35; Deut.8:3]. May the Lord Jesus be your continual Satisfying Portion who fills your every Hungering after godliness.”

Matt. “I am very Grateful, Father, and Sirs, for this explanation. May I find Him to be so as you have said.”

To this, the Company smiled and said, “Amen.” So with many similar words of Encouragement and Edification to each other’s souls, they passed that first night even until dawn in this blessed fellowship.

Now when the Sun had risen upon them, *Christianna* asked *Joseph* to read a chapter from the Book for all to profit thereby. So he read from the 53rd of Isaiah.

Hon. “Why was it said that the Savior came out of dry ground, and also that he had no Appearance that we should be attracted to Him?”

Mnason “To the first I answer: Because among the Jews in the time of our Lord, nearly all the Sap and Spirit of true Religion had been lost. Such Dryness existed among them that, not only did they not receive Him, but outright hastened Him to the Cross.

“To the second I say, that the eye of the Unbeliever looks on the outward and carnal, and has no apprehension of the true Nature of Christ within [I Sam.16:7]. They are like those who cast aside as worthless the precious stone because it is covered with a common crust, or the pearl due to the despised form of its shell.”

And thus were passed their days for a good long time while they abode with *Gaius*, Host to the whole Church. It was evident to all men

that they were Disciples indeed, for their Love abounded yet more and more in true knowledge and all discernment [Jn.13:35; Phil.1:9], being expressed in manifold deeds of Charity and kindness [I Thess.1:3; Gal.6:10]. This did much to commend True Religion to those dwelling in those parts [Jas.1:27].

On one occasion, *Gaius* approached his Guests in this manner. “My Beloved Brethren, let us address ourselves to rid this place of one notorious Enemy of our Lord. Not far from here dwells a Giant, one *Slay-Good*, who does greatly annoy and maim those who proceed along this Way. He is Master of a number of thieves who molest Pilgrims however they are able.”

Great “This being the Lord’s Battle, we are willing to engage the Foe. Let us arm ourselves with the weapons of Righteousness for the right hand and the left [2 Cor.6:7] and go forth for the Honor of our King and the Good of our Brethren.”

Chr. “We are with you as one man in this. Come, *Matthew, Samuel, Joseph*, gird on your Swords and join with us (for you must know that, by now, they had grown to be young men who could stand their own against the Evil One [I Jn.2:14]). *James*, stay here with your Mother, *Mercy*, and the daughters of these brave men and do not cease to lift up your voices on High so that we might not be overwhelmed in the Valley of conflict below” [Ex.17:11-13].

Thus they went forth, a small Company, though as Awesome as an Army with Banners, to the place where he was known to inhabit. There they discovered him with a Pilgrim, *Feeble-mind*, in his hands whom his servants had waylaid along the Path. Just as they came upon him, he was stripping him of his Treasures and preparing to do away with him altogether.

Hon. “O *Slay-Good*, release your prisoner and let him Go! Today shall be the end of your Wickedness, for we have come out against you in the Name of the Lord of the Way!”

Then did the Giant drop the Pilgrim from his grasp and move to the entrance of his Cave, demanding who they were and what they wanted.

Great “We are Servants of the King of kings and have come forth

against you to revenge the Quarrel of the many Pilgrims you have slain when you have dragged them from the King’s Highway. Therefore, today you shall fall at our hands, and your evil will perish with you.”

Slay. “Assault me you may. Slay me you cannot, for it is my Nature to Slay-Good, and no one can deliver themselves out of my hand.” And with that, he rushed upon them, raging and blaspheming most fearfully. But they made their resistance in the Strength of the Lord and the Power of His Might [Eph.6:10] and so engaged him with flashing Swords.

Now the Battle was fierce, for the death of the one meant the victory of the other. He assailed them with nothing but Evil, and they faced him with nothing but Good, for this is how Pilgrims are used to conduct their own resistance [Rom.12:21].

At times it appeared that the Brethren would prevail, and many blows were landed to his weakening and wounding. Then, he seemed to recover somewhat and came upon them again with mounted fury, driving them back with amazing force. It was at these times that the Family at the Inn had grown slack in their crying unto God on their behalf.

By and by, though, as the Lord would have it, they made their advance upon him, cutting and piercing fearlessly so that the Giant stumbled to the ground. Then, while *Christian* and his Boys assailed him from the front, the other five rushed upon him from the sides and eventually had his head off.

Quickly the men moved to the side of *Feeble-mind* and, raising him up, assisted him to the Inn and attended to him there where all heard his story.

Feeble. “I am greatly indebted to you, dear Brethren, for your Valiant efforts on my behalf, and to you, my Sisters and children, for your faithful prayers for my deliverance. My name you know and I come from the town of Uncertain.

“Though I am a man of no strength of body or mind, yet I am set upon Pilgrimage even if I need to crawl the length of the Journey. I have met with many kindnesses along the Way, from our Lord who did not despise my Feeble-mind and from his Servants who have shown me consideration according to the Word of their Master [I Thess.5:4].

“When I came up to Assault Lane, this Giant met me there and took me captive to do what he might with me. Though I was persuaded that he could not kill me, for I have heard that no Pilgrim who is taken by violent hands can die by the Enemy’s craft who keeps himself whole-hearted for his Prince [Rom.8:35-39].

“And so you see, I have been robbed, to be sure, but I have escaped with my life by the Providence of God and by your noteworthy efforts for which I thank My King as the Author and yourselves as the means.

“I expect to meet other dangers along my Way, but I have determined this; to Run when I can, to Walk when I cannot Run, and to Crawl when I cannot Walk. As for me, I thank Him that He Loves me. I am set; my Way is before me and my heart is fixed beyond that River which has no bridge, though I am, as you can see, a man of *Feeble-mind*.”

Gaius “Be of good Cheer, Sir, you are welcome to me, my House, and these my Brethren. Whatever we have which can be of service and comfort to you upon your Journey, we will do with a willing mind.”

Feeble. “This is an unexpected Favor, like the Sun shining out of a dark cloud. For when the Giant had determined my destruction, God has so turned my sorrow into joy.”

So he came to abide with them very comfortably which ministered to his upbuilding and strength of soul. Now after many months had passed (for you must not imagine that this Pilgrimage is a day’s Journey), it came into *Christian* and *Christianna*’s mind that their Sons should take to themselves wives. So with intention of discussing such, they asked to see their Host and that Old Disciple privately to gain their consent.

Chr. “My dear Brothers, beloved by God and highly esteemed by us [Phil.2:3, 4], we are led of the Lord to approach you both with a very important matter. It concerns the marriage of our sons to true Daughters of Zion. And, since we know of none fairer in all the land than your Daughters [Job 42:15], we humbly request that you consider whether it would be fitting in the sight of God for them to be joined to our *Samuel*, *Joseph*, and *James* as wives.”

Gaius “Dear Brother, and my fair Sister, in the time I have

known you and your Family, it has pleased me very well to have made your acquaintance by the tender Mercies of the Most High. And, I must confess, that it would be my greatest joy to see my Daughter joined as wife to your Son.”

Mnason “And I, as well, hold you and yours in highest esteem. The Boys, though in their youth, have shown themselves to be an example of those who believe [I Tim.4:12]. I do therefore agree with my Brother, so that my heart overflows with joy at the prospect. With all good will, then, let it be so.”

Gaius “Let us call the Girls and consult their wishes in the matter” [Gen.24:57]. And so, they had *Grace*, *Phoebe*, and *Martha* into their midst and set before them their discussion and conclusion, asking them whether they would be willing. Each was asked in turn, “Will you go with this man?”; to which each replied, “I will go” [Gen.24:58]. And so the matter was concluded and *Christian* and his Wife went next to discuss with their Sons.

First was called *Matthew*, for he was the eldest. His Father discussed with him while *Christianna* drew *Mercy* aside to speak upon her heart about the matter. And it went thus with them.

Chr. “My Son, your Mother and I have been much in prayer about all of our Children, that all of you might be guided along this Way with the Lord’s fullest Blessing. We have considered carefully those things which will minister to your everlasting good and have endeavored, by the Grace of God, to provide whatever we can to ensure your progress in Life and Godliness.

“It has entered our hearts that your further development along this Path will be greatly helped and enriched by traveling with a Godly Companion, one that will cleave unto you as a true Helpmeet. After careful reflection for some years now, we have observed consistent, godly, and self-denying character in one fair Virgin above all the rest which we believe will prove to be a loving and faithful bride for you.

“It is *Mercy* that I speak of. Would you be pleased to take her to yourself as wife?”

Now, this approach came as no surprise to the Boy as he knew that his Parents desired nothing but his good and had been carefully

looking out for this most important decision of life in his behalf. He, as well, had been observing the behavior and character of various young maidens, and noting those of excellence who feared the Lord. So, his reply came not from impulse, but from studied reflection and prayerful seeking of the Lord's will himself.

Matt. "Father, I am so very blessed to have godly Parents as I do. Your own wisdom and experience far exceeds my own, and I trust your judgment wholeheartedly. I could not wish for anything more than your blessing and approval upon this single most important decision in this life.

"My heart is full and rejoices in your loving care all through my life even to this point. Your Counsel is well pleasing to my soul and, I must say, so is *Mercy* unto me as well. I know of no other Maiden who so faithfully devotes herself to the Glory of our Lord and to the good of all than she. I therefore accept this proposal with a glad and willing heart."

And so it was with *Matthew*. Now *Christianna* at the same time was making her will known unto *Mercy*, saying,

Channa. "Dearest *Mercy*, my loving Sister and darling Daughter, we have walked in this Way together for several years now with sweetest Fellowship and delight. We have so much benefited by your devoted and lowly service to one and all. We love you, Dearest, with all of our hearts.

"It is because of this that we wish to draw you into an even closer relationship than we have known as an enduring member of our family. *Mercy* dear, you are a lovely and true Daughter of Jerusalem and the time has come for Love [S.of S.2:7].

"We wish above all else that you might consent to become the bride of our *Matthew*. What, Dearest, do you think of this? May the Lord guide you in your reply."

Mercy "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. For He has regarded the humble state of His maidservant. The Mighty One has done great things for me and His Mercy is on those who fear Him [Lk.1:46-50]. I am Blessed above many. "How my soul does Bless the Lord for all His Mercies! How I praise Him for Tender Lovingkindness that never fails! How thankful I am for you and your dear Husband who have been more than Mother and Father to me!

"Do I love you? A thousand times, yes! Do I love your Family? More than that of my birth! And do I love your *Matthew*? Yes, with all my heart; a man who greatly fears the Lord, who has grown strong in His Word, and whose heart is set on Pilgrimage.

"If his lips will but say, 'Arise, my darling, and come along!' [S.of S.2:10], my heart will say, 'Let his left hand be under my head and his right hand embrace me' [S.of S.8:3]. I will come, dearest *Christianna*, I will come!"

Now I saw then that they embraced with tears of Joy at the blessed prospect before them and went forth to bring the glad tidings to *Christian* and *Matthew* who, as well, rejoiced to convey their own. Thus the arrangements were settled and a date fixed for the wedding along with their remaining Sons and Daughters to whom they spoke in similar manner.

The glad day having come, and the Virgins having veiled themselves before their bridegrooms and the assembled brethren [Gen.24:65], the Fathers began their address and solemn charge to their beloved Children.

Chr. "My dearly beloved Sons, hear the words of a Father on this, the day of the rejoicing of your hearts [S.of S.3:11]. You yourselves know the manner of our life from the day we set forth from our City of Destruction up to today upon this Narrow Way. Be imitators of us as we also imitate Christ [I Cor.11:1].

"For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the Grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially toward you [2 Cor.1:12]. Therefore, heed well the instruction of a Father and do not forsake the teaching of your Mother [Prov.1:8].

"These Daughters of Zion whom you are taking as your Wives are a crown unto your head and blessing to your souls [Prov.12:4]. Therefore, Cherish them for they are your glory [Eph.5:29; I Cor.11:7]. Delight in them at all times and be exhilarated always with their love [Prov.5:19].

"They are Helpers indeed, but not your slaves [Gen.2:18]. Property never, but the very bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh [Gen.2:23]. Love them! Cherish and nourish them! Be unto them as

Christ your Lord is unto His Church; loving, devoted, laying down your lives for them [Eph.5:25-33].

“You are their Providers and Guides. Supply their every needs with diligent tenderness and kindly wisdom [I Tim.5:8; I Cor.14:35]. They are fashioned by God as weaker vessels, therefore treat them with gentle understanding, holding them in highest esteem as fellow heirs of a common Grace of Life [I Pet.3:7].

“If you will do these things, my Sons, and God helping you, you and your beloved brides will never regret this day and your prayers shall never go unheeded.

“Now, may the Lord bless you, and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you, and give you peace; both now and unto Endless Day [Num.6:24-26]. Amen and Amen.”

Gaius “And unto you, dearest Daughters, beloved by your Father above and by your Fathers below, hearken unto my voice for I speak Noble things and the opening of my lips is in Truth. This day my heart overflows with a good theme.

“Listen, O Daughters, give attention and incline your ear: Forget your people and your father’s house; then the King will desire your beauty. Because He is your Lord, bow down to Him. In place of your fathers will be your sons; you shall make them princes in all the earth [Ps.45:10, 11,16].

“O you, our precious Jewels, today we commit you into the bosoms of your beloved Husbands to cleave to them all your days. In the sight of our God and in the sight of all the Saints, your Gentle and Quiet spirits testify to your godly fear before all [I Pet.3:4]. Let this imperishable quality be your adornment with the Grace of Submission unto your husbands, even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him, lord [I Pet.3:4-6].

“May contention be far from you but rather Prudence be your portion! [Prov.19:13, 14]. May you, like *Ruth*, be known abroad as women of excellence! [Ruth 3:11]. And now, we commend you to God and the Word of His Grace which is able to build you up and Save you as you abide in that blessed womanly sphere assigned by your God with Faith and Charity and Holiness with Discretion” [Acts 20:32; I Tim.2:15].

Mnason “Darling Daughters, whom we have loved and labored for night and day to this end, that you might become women of Virtue as you are today; never grow Slack in your Noble calling. Do your Husbands good and not evil all the days of your lives [Prov.31:12].

“May they ever have cause to trust you! May your Labors for the blessing of the Household and the relief of the Poor not be few! May the Teaching of kindness flow with Wisdom from your lips! May your Children rise up and bless you! May your Husbands praise you for excelling the maids of earth as a Lily is found among thorns! [Prov.31:10-31; S.of S.2:2].

“We, your fathers, are full of Joy this day. We have fashioned you, our Arrows, with tender careful devotion all these years; and today, we release you from our Bows knowing that you will fly Straight and True to the intended mark [Ps.127:3-5].

“Bless you, our Daughters! And bless you, our Sons! This is indeed the day of the Gladness of our hearts! Let us therefore make merry, and rejoice in it for His Lovingkindness is everlasting upon the Israel of God!”

And so, the Couples exchanged solemn Vows, pledging themselves by Covenant to each other in the sight of God and man with the determination that what God had joined together, no man would ever put asunder [Mt.19:6].

O, and then, can you imagine what festivity followed! There was embracing, blessings, prayers, songs of rapture, sharing of Communion, with Peace and Joy flowing like rivers accompanied by gifts of love showered in abundance. They shared their meal together with gladness and sincerity of heart amidst Thanks and Praise to the Almighty all that day and into the evening time until each retired to their rest.

Well, it was not long afterwards that the Company, with their four new families, prepared to depart the Inn of good *Gaius*. So the Brethren endeavored to pay their Host the customary fees for his entertainment of them. But he declined, answering them thus,

Gaius “At my Inn, it is not the practice for my guests to pay for their stay. I board my lodgers by the year and look to the good Samaritan for my wages, who has promised to repay me fully upon His return”

[Lk.10:33-35].

Great “Beloved, you have done faithfully in what you are doing for the Brethren, even though they are strangers to you. They have borne witness of your Love before the Church as we ourselves do. You have done well in sending us upon our Journey as you have [3 Jn.5, 6] and our Lord will surely repay all that you have spent and more so, for the sake of His Name and the comfort of His saints.

“We are grateful and indebted beyond measure for your innumerable kindnesses to us. And so, though it be with tears of love, we will now continue on the Way to the City above.”

And so, with much embracing, they departed each other’s company with a kiss of love and God’s speed along the Path. Now, as they were taking their leave, Mr. *Feeble-mind* lingered at the doorway as if he would not proceed with them, which, when they had noticed it, they asked him the reason.

Feeble “Woe is me! For I am not strong and bold as you are. I am but a weak man and therefore choose to go alone so as not to be a Burden to your Progress. I know little of the Truth and am offended and weakened by that which others can bear.

“I am so weak that sometimes, if I hear others rejoice, it troubles me, because I cannot do the same. I am like a sick man among the healthy so I feel it best not to trouble you.”

Hon. “Nay! Do not say so, my brother. We have a commission from our Lord to comfort the Feeble-minded and help the weak [I Thess.5:14]. No, we protest. You must come along with us.”

Faith. “Indeed, we will wait for you and lend you whatever help we may, only come with us. We will deny ourselves of things, both of our own Opinions as well as in Practical preference for your sake” [Rom.14; I Cor.8].

Great “Yes, brother, we shall not enter into doubtful Disputes with you in order to judge your Opinions [Rom.14:1]. You shall not be despised by this Company but rather loved and assisted by one and all.”

Now while they were engaged in this discussion, a Pilgrim passed by the door of the Inn. He was, by name, *Ready-to-halt*, and moved about by means of Crutches. As soon as he came into view, *Feeble-mind* cried out

with what almost seemed to be joy. The two of them fell into warm discussion and immediately found in each other similar spirits and a common nature. This they found to be of great encouragement to both and so consented to travel together with the Company which gladdened them all.

19

EVANGELIST & VANITY FAIR

Greatly blessed as they were at the house of good *Gaius* and *Mnason*, they nevertheless went forth with renewed eagerness upon the Upward Way. And so they moved together, in that sweetness of fellowship born of the love of God having been poured out in their hearts through the Holy Spirit [Rom.5:5].

They had not traveled far when, glancing behind, they saw one approaching them as if to join with them. Now when *Christian* and *Faithful* recognized him, they both exclaimed at once, "Praise the Lord! It is our good friend *Evangelist!*"

And so it was. He drew near and greeted them thus, "Peace be with you, dearly Beloved, and Peace be to these your Families and Brethren."

Chr. "Welcome, welcome, my good *Evangelist*; the sight of you brings to my remembrance your ancient kindness and unwearied laboring for our Eternal Good."

They all, then, with goodwill and gladness, greeted their Beloved Brother and fellow laborer. After introductions and exchange of affection, they related each one what they had met with upon the Way; the Comforts and Trials, their Stumblings and Victories, and how they had performed acts of Righteousness, obtained Promises, escaped the edge of the sword, and were made Strong from their weakness [Heb.11:33, 34].

Evang. "In all these things I rejoice that you have endured as seeing Him who is unseen [Heb.11:27]. I am glad, both for your sakes and for mine. I have sowed, and you have reaped, and the Day is coming when he who sows and he who reaps shall rejoice together [Jn.4:36]; that is, if you endure; for in due time we shall reap if we do not faint [Gal.6:9].

"The Crown is before you, and it is an incorruptible one; so run, that you may obtain it [I Cor.9:24-27]; for there are some who have it taken from them by failing to hold it fast [Rev.3:11]. You are not yet out of the gunshot of the Devil: You have not yet resisted unto Blood, in your striving against Sin [Heb.12:4].

"Let the Kingdom always be before you, and believe steadfastly on the things Above. Let nothing here Below get within you: And above all, watch over your own hearts with all diligence [Prov.4:23], for it is surely a deceitful and desperately wicked thing more than anything else [Jer.17:9]. Set your faces like a flint; you have all the power in Heaven and Earth on your side."

Then did the Company thank him for the Exhortation and desired that he might further encourage them along the Way, for they knew him to be a Prophet and could unfold to them what they might meet ahead and how to Overcome. So he consented and continued, saying,

Evang. "My Brethren, you have heard in the Words of Truth, the Gospel, that through many Tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of Heaven [Acts 14:22]. And again, that in every City, Bonds and Afflictions await you [Acts 20:23]. You cannot therefore expect that you will go long on your Pilgrimage without meeting with such in one form or another.

"By your Testimonies, you can see that you have met with some of these things already, but there are more to immediately follow. Just before you lies a Town whose inhabitants despise the Lord of the Way and any who travel upon it. They will be after you, soul and body, and one of you will seal his testimony with his own Blood; but be Faithful unto Death, and the King will give you the Crown of Life [Rev.2:10].

"He who will die there, though his death will be unnatural and his pains perhaps great, will actually be the more blessed among you. He will be first to reach the Heavenly City and will thus be spared many of the other miseries that the rest will meet in the remaining Journey.

"When you are therefore come to the Town, be on the Alert, stand firm in the Faith, act like Men, be Strong [I Cor.16:13]. And in

everything, commit the keeping of your souls to a Faithful Creator in your well-doing" [I Pet.4:19].

Such words ministered a sober composure mingled with thanks unto their souls and they expressed their gratitude sincerely to their Friend and took their leave of him as he returned to greet the host of the Inn. Now they determined among themselves in light of the awaiting troubles, that *Faithful* and *Christian* should lead the Company followed by old Mr. *Honest*, *Feeble-mind*, and *Ready-to-Halt* who were to go before the Women and Young Men, with *Great-Heart* bringing up the rear.

Then I saw in my dream that they presently approached the Town that had been described to them. Now the name of the Town is Vanity, and at the Town is held a Fair all the year long called Vanity Fair. It is named so because that Town is lighter than Vanity [Isa.40:17]; and because all that is sold there is Vanity [Eccl.1:2].

This Fair is of no recent origin, but has stood from ancient times. It came about in this way. It was observed by *Apollyon*, *Beelzebub*, and *Legion*, that the Path to the Heavenly City lay right through the center of Vanity, and they therefore determined to erect a Fair to, if possible, ensnare and waylay Pilgrims.

At this Fair are all manner of merchandise sold, such as houses, lands, trades, honors, amusements, countries, kingdoms, lusts, and pleasures. Added to these are delights of all sorts like whores, wives, husbands, children, masters, servants, reverends (yes, they also are for sale), blood, souls, gadgets, silver, gold, wines, pearls, precious stones, and anything else imaginable that this World has to offer.

Moreover, at this Fair at all times are to be seen juggling, cheats, games, plays, fools, apes, and rouges, and that of every kind. Here are to be seen also thefts, murders, adulteries, liars, and all of a blood-red color.

The Fair was laid out by several rows or streets where particular wares would be most readily found. There is the British row, the French row, The American row, the German row, the African row, and many more besides. But those who have gained more than others by selling their wares are the *Broad Ways of Pagan*, *Pope*, and *Psychos*.

You must know that if one would avoid going through this Fair, he must go out of this world altogether [I Cor.5:10]. Even the Prince of

princes Himself, when here, passed through this Town to His own Country. And the records have it that it was *Beelzebub*, the Chief Lord of the Fair, that invited Him to buy of his Vanities. In fact, he showed Him all the Kingdoms of the World and their wares, and even would have made Him Lord of the Fair if only He had agreed to worship him as He went through the Town [Mt.4:8, 9]. But that Blessed One had no desire for his vain merchandise and left that place without paying so much as one coin for any of it.

By this time the Pilgrims were come to the outskirts of the Town and proceeded on their Way through its midst. As soon as they had entered, all the people of the Fair, at first, gazed upon them in amazement and then began a great clamor and disturbance, and that was for three reasons.

First, the Pilgrims were clothed with Garments which were completely unlike those of any who traded at the Fair. Some said they were fools; some called them mad; while others were offended by their outlandish attire.

Secondly, because they were men of the World, they wondered at their speech; for few could understand what they said (for you must know that naturally they spoke the language of Canaan). So from one end of the Fair to the other, they seemed like Barbarians to one another.

Thirdly, which was a cause of great amusement to the Merchandisers, the Pilgrims had no interest to even look at their wares. If they were asked to come and buy, they stopped up their ears [Isa.33:15] and cried out, "Turn away my eyes from beholding Vanity" [Ps.119:37] while lifting their eyes Heavenward to show that their trade was in the things Above.

Now one of them, when he saw them doing this, mockingly said, "What will you buy?" One and all looked soberly upon him and *Faithful* replied, "We buy the Truth" [Prov.23:23]. At this reply, the people of the Town despised them all the more; some mocking, some reviling, with others who called upon all to smite them. But *Faithful* cried out boldly, "Men, why do you do these things? We preach the Gospel to you that you should turn from these Vanities unto the Living God who made heaven and earth!" [Acts14:15].

That statement sent the entire Fair into a great confusion and disturbance, one saying this while another said that. Word was presently sent to the Great One of the Fair who quickly came down and sent some of his most trusty friends to examine them as to who they were and where they were going.

When they replied that they were Pilgrims going to their own Country and that they had done nothing to abuse or molest the citizens of the Town but had only spoken the Word of God, they reviled them and refused to believe their words. Orders were then given that they should be arrested, beaten, smeared with dirt, and placed in the Cages that they might be made a Spectacle to all the men of the Fair.

“And see to it that these two at the head of this miserable bunch of madmen be placed in a separate Cage and punished more severely, for this one is clad in armor from head to toe and certainly means to do us harm, and the other insults us with his high-sounding words of nonsense. As for the rest, they are nothing more than old men, cripples, and escorts of women and young boys. Take them away!”

So it was that *Christian* and *Faithful* were treated the more harshly and imprisoned separately from the rest. They therefore lay there exposed to all manner of their sport, malice, or revenge while the Great One of the Fair laughed them to scorn for all that came upon them. **But** the Pilgrims bore all their reproaches patiently, not returning insult for insult but rather blessing instead and showing kindness for injuries done to them [Rom.12:16]. Some of the men of the Fair that were more observing and less prejudiced, began to reprove the baser sort for their continual abuses to the Brethren.

This did greatly raise the anger of the multitude who accused them of being Sympathizers with the Pilgrims and as bad as they were and therefore worthy of the same punishments. To this, these men replied that they thought the Company to be harmless and, moreover, that there were many in the Fair who were worse culprits than them and ought to be placed in the Cages themselves.

Well this led to heated words being exchanged on both sides while the Saints bore all wisely and soberly. Eventually, however, they began to fight each other with many blows exchanged on both sides.

This, of course, was blamed upon the Innocent within the Cages and so they brought them out, beat them pitifully, and then bound them in Chains while leading them up and down in the Fair for an example and terror to others.

This, however, had just the opposite effect upon some of the citizens, for the Brethren bore their shame with such meekness and patience that several were won over to the side of the Pilgrims which only further enraged the rest. They then, in heated fury, threw them back into the Cages, threatening death to their two leaders for abusing and deluding the men of the Fair.

Now I saw in my dream that the women pleaded at the Throne of Grace saying, “O deliver not the soul of Your turtledove unto the multitude of the wicked: Forget not the Congregation of Your poor forever. Have respect unto the Covenant: For the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of Cruelty. Forget not the voice of Your Enemies: the tumult of those that rise up against You increases continually” [Ps.74:19, 20, 23]. With these and many other such entreaties and supplications did they make their requests known to Him who is afflicted with all their afflictions [Isa.63:9].

*Behold Vanity Fair! The Pilgrims there
Are chained, and stoned beside:
Even so it was our Lord passed here,
And on Mount Calvary died.*

It was not long until *Christian* and *Faithful* were dragged before the Magistrate unto Trial for their crimes as a terror and intimidation to the rest. This they did thinking that to destroy the Leaders would scatter the Flock, not knowing that the Blood of the Martyrs is the Seed of the Church.

They were therefore arraigned in Court and the Judge was one, Lord *Hate-Good*. The Crimes they were charged with, in summary, were these: That they were Enemies to and Disturbers of their Trade: That they had instigated Riots and Divisions in the Town, and had won over some of the Citizens to their dangerous Opinions in contempt of the law

of their Prince.

Then *Faithful* stood and presented his Defense. "I have only set myself against that which has set itself against the Most High. As for Disturbance, neither I nor any of my Companions have done so, being a People of Peace. Those who were won to us joined us by beholding our Truth and Innocence, and have only turned from the worse to the better. Finally, as to the King you talk of, since he is *Beelzebub*, the Enemy of our Lord, I defy him and all his angels."

Now this did nothing to the hearts of the Judge and Jury but arouse their hatred all the more. Therefore the Judge called for Witnesses against the accused. Now the first to testify was a rogue named *Envy* who proceeded in this way, "My Lord, despite this man's name of *Faithful*, he is one of the vilest men in our Country. He regards neither our Prince, People, Customs, nor Laws, but does nothing but try to fill the minds of men with disloyal notions of Principles of Faith and Holiness.

"In particular, I heard him once affirm that Christianity and the Customs of our Town were absolutely opposed to one another and could never be reconciled. By saying this, my Lord, he has at once condemned not only our manner of life, but ourselves as well."

Next was summoned a very bigoted man, by name, *Superstition*. He had this to say, "My Lord, I do not know much about this man except that he is a very troublesome fellow. I heard him say that our Religion was nothing and could never please God. In short, he states that our worship is in vain, that we are yet in our Sins, and finally will perish in Hell."

Now another was sworn in to give his account, namely, *Tell-Tale*, who brought this accusation against him. "My Lord, and you gentlemen all; this man I have known for long and I have heard him speak repeatedly against all that and all whom we hold dear. He has railed on our noble Prince *Beelzebub* as well as speaking with contempt against his honorable Friends whom we all know well and hold in high esteem.

"To be specific, he has maligned the Lord *Old-Man*, the Lord *Carnal-Delight*, the Lord *Luxurious*, my old Lord *Love-Lust*, the Lord *Vain-Glory*, Sir *Greedy*, with all the rest of our Nobility.

"And as if that was not enough, he said that he would be well

content if not one of these Noblemen should ever live in this Town again. And to crown it all, he has not been afraid to rail on you, my Lord, calling you an ungodly Villain. And with many other similar slanderous terms he has cast filth on most of the esteemed gentlemen of our Town."

Hate-Good "You Renegade, Heretic, and Traitor, do you hear what these honest gentlemen have witnessed against you?"

Faith. "May I speak a few words in my own defense?"

Hate-Good "Bah! You deserve to live no longer, but to be slain immediately upon the spot! Yet, so all men will know our Gentle and Impartial Judgment towards you and all men, let us see what you have to say."

*Now Faithful, act like a man, speak for your God;
Fear not the Wicked's malice, nor their rod:
Speak boldly, man, the Truth is on your side;
Die for it, and to Life in triumph ride.*

Faith. "First, in answer to what Mr. *Envy* has spoken, I only said this; that any Rule, Laws, Customs, or People that are against the Word of God, make themselves enemies to Christianity. If I have spoken wrongly in this, convince me of my error and I shall recant.

"Secondly, in reference to Mr. *Superstition's* charges against me, I spoke simply this, that Divine Faith is required in the Worship of God which can only come from Divine Revelation. Therefore, whatever is thrust into the Worship of God that is not according to Divine Revelation is only a human Faith which will profit nothing, much less to the attaining of Eternal Life.

"Finally, as to what Mr. *Tell-Tale* has said, I repeat that the Prince of this Town, with all his rabble, attendants, and those mentioned by name, are more fit to be in Hell, than in this Town and Country. And so, may God have Mercy upon me."

Then the Judge called to the men of the Jury that they should consider carefully the testimony set before them and the Defense offered, because it was in their power to execute him or to spare his life. But first, he desired to remind them of the precedents set by their Law.

Hate-Good “There was an act made in the days of *Pharaoh* the Great, servant to our Prince, that severe measures be taken against the spread of a contrary Religion. Thus it was decreed that, lest they grow too strong for him, all the males should be thrown in the river [Ex.1:9, 10, 22].

“As well, the famous King *Nebuchadnezer* the Great, another of our Prince’s faithful servants, issued a decree that any who did not fall down and worship his Golden Image should be thrown into a Fiery Furnace [Dan.3:6].

“Nor are we to forget that in the time of *Darius*, any who dared to call upon any God but him was to be thrown into the Lion’s Den [Dan.6:7]. Now the substance of these Laws this Rebel has broken, not only in thought, which is enough to condemn him to the death, but also in word and deed. His conduct is therefore all the more intolerable.

“This man has committed serious Crimes against our Laws and Despises our Religion showing his Treason and is thus worthy to die the Death.”

Then the Jury went out to deliberate, being thirteen in number. Now after they had each one cast their vote against him, they returned a unanimous verdict of Guilty to the Judge; and they spoke thus:

Blind-Man “I see clearly that this man is a Heretic.”

No-Good “Away with such a fellow from the earth!”

Malice “I agree, for I hate the very looks of him!”

Love-Lust “I could never endure him to remain alive.”

Live-Loose “It is certain that he would always be condemning my Way.”

Hot-Head “Hang him! Kill him! Burn him to ashes!”

High-Mind “A miserable worthless fellow is he.”

Enmity “My heart rises against him.”

Liar “He is a Rogue.”

Cruelty “Hanging is too good for him. Let him suffer much.”

Hate-Light “Let us immediately remove him from our sight!”

Rev. No-Word “He causes Division, lacks Love, is Narrow-Minded, and is possessed of a wicked Intolerance which will ruin our Religion.”

Bigotry “Though I might have all the World given to me, I could

never be reconciled to him. Therefore, we all agree that he is Guilty and deserving of Death.”

They therefore arose as one man and beat and pushed *Christian* and *Faithful* out of the Court, raising a great cry of “Away with him! Away with him!” This, of course, aroused the entire Mob to join with them in dispatching *Faithful* and *Christian* to the place of Execution outside the Town.

In the midst of the raging fury of the multitudes leaving the center of Town, a few of those who had been won over to the Pilgrims’ Way came secretly to the Brethren who yet remained in their Cage. Quickly and quietly they released them from their Prison, saying, “Take Courage, Friends, we mean you no harm, for we, too, have come to Love the Lord of the Way by reason of your godly Testimony. With all haste, flee this City to the next [Mt.10:23] and we will do what we can for good *Christian* to rescue him from their wrath. With Eternal Thanks, we wish you God’s Speed.”

And having said this, they slipped unnoticed back into the side streets, leaving the former Captives to flee. Though distressed over the plight of *Faithful* and *Christian*, and while offering fervent prayer in their behalf [Jas.5:16], they hastened as best they could out of the Town into Safety and Freedom, and so escaped a similar fate by the Loving Providence of God.

In the meantime, the senseless fury of the Mob had reached its height. The two were driven before the maddened horde with all manner of insult and abuse. When they had reached the place of Execution, they first whipped them until they bled. Following this they cut their flesh with their swords to add to their torment.

It was after this that they threw *Christian* to the ground, saying, “Watch well what we shall do to this miserable companion of yours, condemned by our worthy Court. You shall taste of the same after your own Trial.” And, with that, they gave him several kicks and left him to behold the fate of *Faithful* at their hands.

Stones and curses alike flew at him thickly, bringing him to the ground. He was roughly jerked to his feet and tied to a stake as wood was piled around his feet. With no further ceremony, the fuel was set ablaze

to their great delight which at the last, burned him to ashes.

Now I saw, that there stood behind the multitude a Chariot which carried *Faithful* directly up through the clouds with the sound of Trumpet into the Heavenly City. But this, none else did see.

*Brave Faithful! Bravely done in word and deed!
Judge, witnesses, and jury have, instead
Of overcoming you, but shown their rage,
When they are Dead, you'll Live, from age to age.*

Having witnessed all, *Christian* was next dragged and pushed back into the Town by the brutish throng and thrown into the Cage awaiting his own Trial on the following morn. There he lay in deep distress, pouring out his soul unto Him who is touched with the feelings of our infirmities.

Now these things worked strangely upon the hearts of some of the Townsmen. The violent outrage against *Faithful* and his patient endurance of the Shame along with that of *Christian* made certain of them pity them. And this Pity made them further reflect upon their own wickedness and caused some to smite upon their breasts in remorse.

One of these had awakened within himself a Hope of eternal life when he considered his own sin and the hatred of it. It worked in him that godly sorrow leading to that repentance of which there is no regret [2 Cor.7:10]. This one, therefore, came to *Christian's* Cage in the very early and dark hours of the morning while the Town yet slept, and his name was *Hopeful*.

Hope. "Psst! Wake up, good *Christian*, this hour your God has sent deliverance to you. Arise and flee this place, and I, by the Grace of God, will join with you. For I am now, by the Mercies of God, truly called *Hopeful*. Let us be going while men are at rest." And having said so, he managed to undo the lock and release his fellow.

Chr. "Thus it is that one dies to Testify of the Truth and another arises out of his ashes to be a Companion upon the Way of Life. Welcome, good brother, may the Lord reward you for your kindness shown to His name."

So the two of them made their way through the darkness unnoticed outside the Town, though they moved but slowly due to *Christian's* injuries. But at last they were beyond the hearing and sight of Vanity making their way by the light of the moon. It was then that *Christian* softly sang this song:

*Well, Faithful, you have faithfully professed
Unto your Lord, with Him you shall be blessed;
When faithless ones, with all their vain delights,
Are crying out under their hellish plights:
Sing, Faithful, sing, and let your Name survive;
For though they killed you, you are yet alive.*

And so they hastened as best they could onward past villages and towns, in order to put distance between them and the men of the Fair, lest they pursue and overtake them. Thus they traveled the remaining hours of darkness until the Sunrise lightened their Path with its warming gladdening rays.

20

HOPEFUL, BY-MEANS, & DEMAS

Now I saw in my dream, that the Company who had first escaped from the Cage in Vanity Fair proceeded directly to the very nearby town and entered therein. That Town, being one of ancient origin, had been placed there by the Lord of the Way for the safety of His Pilgrims. And the name of the Town was Refuge, into which, if a man would flee, he should be safe from the one seeking his life [Num.35:12].

So they did enter there and were saved from the vengeance of those in Vanity. Now, unknown to *Christian* and *Hopeful*, they had passed by this very Town during the darkness as they fled from Vanity, never realizing that their family and brethren were within. And so it was, that they became separated for a time.

Well, as I said, the Sun had risen upon them and they proceeded on in the fellowship of each other's company for some time. It was not long though before they overtook one who was traveling in their direction whose name, they later learned, was *By-Means*. And so they fell into conversation.

Chr. "Sir, how now? From where have you come and to where are you going?"

Means "Thank you, I'm fine on this sunshiny day. I am going to the Heavenly City having set out from the town of Fair-Speech." But he did not tell him his name.

Chr. "Fair-Speech? Is there any good thing that dwells there? [Prov.26:25]. I think that it is a rather wealthy place, is it not?"

Means "Why, it is indeed a prosperous place. Many of my rich

relations are there up to today; renowned men such as my Lord *Turn-about*, Mr. *Facing-both-ways*, Mr. *Anything*, and the Reverend of our congregation, Rev. *Two-tongues*. And I myself am the son of a boatsman, who looked one way and rowed the other, and I have followed in his trade."

Chr. "Are you a married man?"

Means "O yes, and to a very virtuous woman. She is the daughter of Lady *Pretense* and is very well cultured in all matters of the world. It is true, we differ somewhat from those of a more stricter religion, yet only in two small points. First, we never strive against Wind and Tide. And then, we are always most zealous for Religion when he goes in his Silver Slippers, when the sun shines and men applaud him."

Chr. "I am beginning to recognize you. Are you not *By-Means* from the town of Fair-Speech?"

Means "No, indeed, that is not my name. It is merely a reproachful nick-name given to me by some who cannot abide my wisdom of moving with the Current of this present Age. So far a good End is achieved, I see no harm in using *Means* to attain it."

Chr. "Here is where you are dreadfully mistaken. For any who imagine that the Ends justify the Means will be condemned [Rom.3:8]. If you will travel in our Company, you must go against Wind and Tide, not only when it is pleasant and comfortable. You must embrace true Religion when in his Silver Slippers as well as when in his Rags; when he goes with applause or whether bound in Irons."

Means "You must not lord it over my faith; leave me to my Liberty and be content to let me walk with you."

Chr. "Not a Step further, unless you will abandon your carnal ways."

Means "I shall never desert my old Principles, since they are harmless and profitable. Since you are of the more Rigid and Exclusive persuasion, I see that I must walk alone until meeting up with more agreeable company." So, they parted from each other and *By-Means* walked by himself for some time until three men came alongside him, all of whom made a very low bow before him and greeted him with flattering compliments. The names of the men were Mr. *Hold-the-world*, Mr. *Money-*

love, and Mr. *Save-all*. Now all of these had been his classmates taught by one, Mr. *Discontent*, the schoolmaster in Love-gain, which is the market town in the region of Coveting.

This man taught them the art of Getting, either by violence, flattery, lying, fraud, or by pretending to Religion. And all of them had learned the Art so well that any of them could have opened a school of their own.

Means “Let me tell you a thing or two about those fellows before us. They are of the type that are so rigid and so much love their own opinions and lightly set aside those of others, that they could never agree to travel with any who were not of their persuasion.”

Save-all “That’s very bad; but we read of some who are overly righteous and so ruin themselves [Eccl.7:16]. These men’s narrow mindedness causes them to judge and condemn all but themselves. Very bad indeed!”

Means “In fact! In their stubbornness they conclude that they must rush on their Journey in all weather. I am for waiting for Wind and Tide. They are for risking all for God at a moment, and I am for applying wisdom to take advantage of opportunities to secure my Estate. They are for holding on to their beliefs even though others oppose them. I am for Religion in so far as it is agreeable to the spirit of the Age. And they are content with Religion whether in Rags and Contempt, but I move with him when he is dressed ever so fine.”

Hold-world “Don’t give heed to them for a second! Hold fast your Principles, good friend, for I do count them but Fools. Let us be wise as Serpents. It is best to make hay while the sun shines. God sends sometimes rain and sometimes sunshine. If they be so foolish to travel in both, let us not join them, but move when we have fair weather.

“Since God has given us the good things of life, let us hold them to ourselves for His sake. *Abraham* and *Solomon* grew rich in Religion and *Job* tells us about the place of silver and gold [Job 28:1]. Let us therefore follow these good and prudent examples of godly men and be done with these fools.”

Means “Since we are all on Pilgrimage, as you see, let me put this question before you for our profit. Suppose a Minister or a Tradesman

should have an opportunity to attain some of the good things of this life and, in order to obtain them, he must become very zealous in some points of Religion. May he not use these Means to attain his End and still be a right and honest man?”

Money-love “Let me first of all address that of the Minister. Now, if his salary is but small and he has opportunity to increase his wealth by Religion, it is the Providence of God to do so. It has the approval of God. And for these reasons; (1) By becoming more studious and preaching more frequently, he not only increases the number of offerings taken, but becomes a more devoted Minister in the process. (2) If he has to change some of his Principles to attract a larger congregation, this is of no harm, provided, of course, that he has a Call. It is a good thing to address a larger congregation so that more men come under the influence of Religion. It shows that the Minister is not narrow minded and judgmental and thus more fit for his ministerial duties, since he accommodates a wider audience for his sermons.

“I conclude, therefore, that a Minister who changes his small gain for great should not be judged as covetous, but rather be counted as one that pursues his Call and the opportunity put into his hand by God. Now, concerning the Tradesman, if his business is faring but poorly, I see no harm in his becoming Religious in order to improve his station in life. Why, he might perhaps get a rich wife, improve his business, and obtain more and far better customers.

“Now this is acceptable because to become Religious is a virtue, by whatever Means a man may become so. And who could object against getting a rich wife or more customers in one’s shop by doing so?”

“For if a man gets these by becoming Religious, he gets good things from those that are good by becoming good himself! So, here is a good Wife, and good Customers, and good Gain, and all these by becoming Religious, which is good! Therefore, to become religious to get all of these, is a good and profitable Design.”

This answer, you can well imagine, was highly applauded by them all and considered sound in reason and advantageous in application. They further thought that it could be refuted by no one, it being so excellent a reply. Thus they jointly agreed to assault *Christian* and *Hopeful*

with the same question, and Mr. *Hold-the-world* was chosen to approach them and ask their reply. And so he did and thus did they reply:

Chr. “Even a babe in Religion could answer ten thousand such questions. For, if it is unlawful to follow Christ in order to receive loaves as our Lord has said [Jn.6:26, 27], how much more abominable is it to use Him and Religion as a pretense to get and enjoy the World? There are none other than Heathen, Hypocrites, Devils, and Witches who are of this opinion.

“Look at the Heathen, *Hamor* and *Shechem*. They had a mind to gain the daughters and cattle of *Jacob* and saw that there was no way to get them except to be circumcised. And so they adopted Religion as a pretense in order to gain their desire [Gen.34:20-23].

“The Hypocritical Pharisees were also of this Religion: Long Prayers were their Pretense; but to gain widow’s houses was their Intent which led to their even greater damnation [Lk.20:46, 47]. And as if this were not enough, they went so far as to sell Religious Goods in the very Temple of God, thus making it into a den of Thieves! [Mt.21:12, 13].

“*Judas*, the Devil [Jn.6:70, 71] practiced this Religion. He was religious for the bag, that he might possess what was therein [Jn.12:6]; but he was lost, cast away, and the very Son of Perdition [Jn.17:12].

“Nor let me fail to mention *Simon* the Witch who followed in this Religion too; he would have the Holy Spirit, though he wickedly imagined that he could pay to receive this Power. And why did he want Religion if not to maintain his own status as the Imposter, ‘Great Power of God’? [Acts 8:9-11, 19-23].

“Furthermore, any man who takes up Religion for the World, will throw away Religion for the World. For as surely as *Judas* became religious in order to gain the World, so surely did he sell his Religion and his Master for the same.

“Therefore, to answer your question in the manner that you have answered it, only proves that you are Heathens, Hypocrites, and Devils; and your Reward will be according to your Works.”

Then they stood staring at one another, but their mouths were closed by reason of the soundness of *Christian’s* arguments. And so, Mr. *By-Means* and Company staggered and drew back, not willing to walk with

them again.

Chr. “If these men cannot stand before the sentence of men, what will they do with the sentence of God? And if they have nothing to reply when dealt with by vessels of Clay, what will they do when they shall be rebuked by the flames of a devouring Fire?”

And thus it was that the Two proceeded on their Way while the Four kept quite to themselves, having been shamed by the Pilgrim’s reasoning.

I saw then in my dream that they came upon a Silver Mine just a little off the road. From there, one whose name was *Demas* called to them in a gentlemanly way, “Ho! Turn aside here and I will show you a Silver Mine where, for only a small effort, you can richly provide Treasure for your profit.”

Hope. “Brother, let’s go and see!”

Chr. “Not I. I have heard of this place before now and how many have been slain herein. Besides, Treasure is a Snare to those who seek it which chokes the Word [Mt.13:22]. No indeed, I will abide by what is written of old, ‘The Law of Thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces’ [Ps.119:72]. Then he called to *Demas*, “Isn’t that place dangerous and has hindered many in their Pilgrimage?”

Demas “O, not very dangerous, except to those who are careless” (but he blushed as he spoke). “Do come and see.”

Chr. “You are an Enemy to the right ways of the Lord of Heaven and have already been condemned by one of His Majesty’s Judges [2 Tim.4:10]. And would you now bring us into the same condemnation?”

Demas “No, my brothers, for I am one of you and have *Abraham* for my father. I too, am on the Pilgrim Way.”

Chr. “Its not true. I know you; *Gehazi* [2 Kings 5:20-27] was your great grandfather, and *Judas* your father [Mt.26:14, 15], and you have followed in their steps. Your father was hanged for a traitor [Mt.27:1-6] and you deserve no better reward. Your longing after riches has already led you into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which have plunged men into ruin and destruction. You yourself have wandered away from the faith, are off the Path of Life, and surely will

meet a disastrous end [I Tim.6:9, 10]. Since you will not be persuaded of the Truth, we must leave you to your fate.”

So the Two passed him by and left him to his Silver Mine as he did not join with them on the Way. Now, it was not long afterwards that Mr. *By-Means* and his Company came in sight of *Demas* and immediately proceeded to gaze upon his Mine at the first invitation.

Now, whether they fell into the pit by looking over the brink, or whether they went down to dig, or whether they were smothered by the mists and dampness that commonly arise out of the place, I don't know. But this I observed, that they were never seen again in the Way. Then *Christian* did sing:

*By-Means and Silver Demas both agree;
One calls, the other runs, that he may be
A Sharer in his Riches, so these two
Join hands with the World, and Life they loose.*

Just on the other side of this plain, the Pilgrims came upon what appeared to be a strange sort of Monument, seemingly in the shape of a woman with an inscription written thereupon. It read, “Remember Lot's wife” [Lk.17:32]. Then they concluded that it surely must be that Pillar of Salt into which Lot's wife was turned for looking back on Sodom with a covetous heart.

Hope. “Ah! This might have been me for my foolish desire to behold *Demas'* Silver. I wonder what the difference is between her sin and mine? She only looked back whereas I had the desire to see. Let Grace be adored, and let me be ashamed that ever such a thing should be in my heart. Let this serve as a caution to us, that we ourselves should not be such an example to others.”

Soon the Way came to a pleasant River which *David* called the River of God [Ps.65:9] but *Ezekiel*, the River from the Sanctuary [Ezek.47:12]. Now along the banks were green Trees that bore all manner of fruit whose leaves were good for Medicine, growing beside a peaceful Meadow where they could rest in safety [Ps.23:2]. This kindness from their Lord made them to sing:

*Behold, how these Crystal Streams do glide
To comfort Pilgrims by the highway side.
The Meadows green, besides their fragrant smell,
Yield dainties for them: And he that can tell
What pleasant Fruit, yea, Leaves, these Trees do yield,
Will soon sell all, that he may buy this Field.*

Now I saw in my dream that the River and the Way did continue for a time side by side but eventually parted which caused some sadness to the Travelers. And not only that, but the Way from the River became increasingly rough so that their feet soon became tender and uncomfortable.

So the Souls of the Pilgrims were much discouraged, because of the Way [Num.21:4]. Therefore, as they went on, they wished for a better Way, to hasten their Progress with ease. It was then that they came upon a Meadow with an entrance through the fence, just to their left.

Chr. “Ho! Here lies a path according to my wish where the going is easier. And it lies along our Way! Come, good *Hopeful*, let us walk therein and the sooner we shall join up with my Wife, Family, and the Brethren who escaped your Town before us” (for he imagined that they had continued on their Way, not knowing that they were yet in the City of Refuge).

Hope. “But what if this Path should lead us out of the Way?”

Chr. “That is not likely; look, does it not go alongside the Way?”

And so, being persuaded by his companion, they crossed over together and entered into that comfortable land known as *By-Path-Meadow*. Indeed, they found it very easy for their feet and even encountered another walking in this path ahead of them. Now they called out after him (his name was *Vain-Confidence*) and asked him if this path did not lead to the Heavenly City, to which he replied that it did.

Thus was *Christian* made even more confident that his choice was justified. Not long, however, and the Night came on so that the man was lost sight of in the darkness. It then happened that the man, walking vain-confidently in the dark, fell into a deep Pit [Isa.9:16] and was dashed

to pieces with his fall.

The Two, hearing him fall, called out to him but they heard no reply except groaning from within the earth. Then said *Hopeful*, "Where are we now?" At this *Christian* fell silent, thinking that he had misled his brother out of the Way. Just then, a terrible storm broke upon their heads, with lightening and thundering most dreadfully; and the water began to rise with the downpour.

Hope. "O, that I had kept on My Way!"

Chr. "Good brother, do not be offended, I am sorry I have brought you out of the Way and placed you in such Danger. Please, forgive me, I did not do it out of an evil intent, but out of foolish desire for my own ease."

Hope. "I was afraid to do as you said from the beginning and that is why I gave you that gentle caution. I would have spoken more plainly, but you are older than I. But, yes, be comforted, I do forgive you."

Chr. "I am glad to have with me such a merciful brother. But we must not stand here like this. Let us try to go back again."

So they proceeded to return as best they could, *Hopeful* leading the way lest *Christian* due to his distressed mind might be misled again. As they moved through the Night they heard a Voice for their Encouragement, saying, "Let your heart be towards the Highway; even the Way that you went, turn again" [Jer.31:21].

But by this time the Waters were greatly risen which made the way back very dangerous. (Then I thought that it is easier going out of the Way when once we are in, than going in when we are out). Yet they endeavored to go back, but it was so dark, and the Flood was so high, that they were nearly drowned nine or ten times. At last, not being able to reach the gate where they left the Path, they sat down under a tree, and being wearied, fell asleep.

*The Pilgrims now, to gratify the Flesh,
Will seek its Ease; but O! how they afresh
Do thereby plunge themselves into Grief anew!
They who seek to please the Flesh, themselves undo.*

21

DOUBTING CASTLE & GIANT DESPAIR

Now, there was, not far from the place where they lay down, a castle, called Doubting-Castle owned by Giant *Despair*. It was his very grounds that they were trespassing on and, as he inspected his land early that morning, he discovered the Two Pilgrims. He then, with a grim and surly voice, roughly awakened them and, seeing that they were Pilgrims, treated them the more harshly for Trespassing.

By force they were taken captive by him to his castle and thrown into a Dungeon, one most nasty and stinking to their spirits. Here they lay in dense darkness, how long, they knew not, for they could not see the Light of day. Neither did they taste one bit of bread, or drop of water, nor did any visit or ask after their welfare, but were removed far from Friends and Acquaintance [Ps.88].

Now the Giant had a wife, and her name was *Doubtful*. So that night as he went to bed, he told her of the Trespassers in the Dungeon and asked what further should be done with them. She, being one with her husband (as *Doubtful* and *Despair* must necessarily be), advised him to beat them without mercy early the following morning.

And this he did; first he abused them as if they were dogs, and then he fell to beating them most fearfully with a grievous twisted wooden club. So tormented were they by his heartless rage, that they could do nothing to help themselves, but only lay moaning with sighs of bitter Lamentation.

When his wife learned that they were yet alive, she further advised him to counsel them to kill themselves. Again, he came to them in a most threatening and despairing way, and beholding their miserable and sore condition, said,

Despair "You shall likely never come out of this place alive. The only thing left for you to do is to end your own lives, either with the Knife, by Hanging, or with Poison. For why should you choose Life, since it is attended with so much Bitterness?"

Hope. "O, God forbid that we should do such. Please, let us go."

With that, he looked ugly upon them, and rushed upon them as if to make an end of them himself. He likely would have done so, had he not fallen into one of his fits and lost the use of hand for a time. For he sometimes in Sunshiny weather, fell into fits of paralysis. So it was that he withdrew and left them to consider what they should choose.

Chr. "Brother, what shall we do? The life that we now live is miserable! For my part, I do not know whether it is best to live thus, or to end it all as *Despair* has told us. My soul chooses Strangling, and death rather than Life [Job 7:15]. The Grave is more easy for me than this Dungeon! Shall we listen to the Giant?"

Hope. "Indeed, our present condition is dreadful, and death would be far more welcome to me than to be like this forever. But let us not forget that our Lord has said, 'You shall not Murder' [Ex.20:13]. This applies not only to others, but to ourselves as well.

"You speak of ease in the grave, but have you forgotten Hell to which all Murderers certainly shall go? [I Cor.6:9]. This Giant is not Sovereign as is our Prince. Others have been taken captive by him and yet escaped by the Mercies of our Lord. Who knows, God may have *Despair* to die, or forget to lock us in, or fall again into one of his fits and so we might escape thereby.

"Recall to mind how our Lord delivered you from *Apollyon* and what hardship and terror you endured in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, not to mention how you were not afraid of the Cage or bloody Death itself at Vanity Fair. Why should you fear now? See me, I am in the Dungeon with you suffering the same evils, and I am both weaker in my nature and younger in the Faith than you. Let us exercise Patience as

best we can."

As he habitually did, *Despair* consulted with *Doubtful* that evening again as what next they should do, seeing that they were, as he said, stubborn rogues. She, therefore, thought to instill terror into the Two by taking them into the courtyard and showing them the Bones and Skulls of those who had been torn into pieces by the Giant in times past. And this he did along with fearful threatening accompanied by fresh wounds inflicted both to and fro.

That night, the Giant marveled that neither by Blows, Counsels, or Threats could he bring them to an end and wondered aloud what might be the cause.

Doubtful "I fear that they are holding on to a secret hope that some will come to rescue them or that by some other means, they hope to escape."

Despair "You have well spoken, my Dear. I shall therefore search them thoroughly in the morning."

Now it happened that about midnight in the Dungeon, the Pilgrims began to Pray, and they continued therein until just before the Dawn. It was then, at the first signs of Light, that *Christian*, as one half amazed, broke out in this passionate speech:

Chr. "What a Fool I am to lie in this stinking Dungeon! All this while we may have been free and walking at Liberty had I but remembered the Key! I have a Key in my bosom called Promise, which I am persuaded will open any lock in Doubting Castle."

Hope. "That's good news, dear brother! Pull it out of your bosom and try it."

Then the Key was brought out and inserted, which immediately released the Lock, causing the Dungeon door to swing open with ease (for a Key opens nothing unless used). Both Pilgrims made their exit from there and came to the door leading to the Courtyard which equally yielded to the Promise. They hastened from there to the outer Iron Gate of the Compound. This too, though very stiff, gave way to the Key.

Now as this Gate was pushed aside, it groaned with a great creaking which awakened the Giant. Hastily he arose in pursuit of his fleeing prisoners but felt his limbs fail him as one of his fits seized him

once again, and so they escaped from his hands.

With speed and gladness, therefore, they made their way once again to the King's Highway and entered therein at that very point where they had left the Way. For since the time of *Abraham*, none have ever re-entered the Path except at that place where they had left it [Gen.13:3, 4].

22

THE BRETHREN RETURN & DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS

For many long days the Brethren had remained in the City of Refuge awaiting the arrival of news of *Christian*, whom they had imagined still lie bound in Vanity Fair. Now you can well imagine how they did pray night and day most earnestly that the Lord of the Way might be merciful unto him and to them as well. The Wife of the good man was heard to cry almost continually,

Channa. "Remember this, that the enemy has reproached, O Lord, and that the foolish people have blasphemed Your name. O deliver not the soul of Your turtledove unto the multitude of the wicked: forget not the congregation of your poor forever. Have respect unto the covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty" [Ps.74:18-20].

Things became, if possible, more hostile and uproarious in Vanity after the escape of the Brethren and *Christian* and *Hopeful*. Any who were thought to be in sympathy with the Pilgrims were looked upon with great suspicion and many were abused and even tortured to try and force them to confess who had released the Prisoners. So it was, then, for some time that any movements outside the town were closely watched and were undertaken only with threats of peril from the outraged citizens.

It was therefore nearly one week before word reached them in Refuge that *Christian* and one of the members of the Town had escaped and fled past them upon the Way by night. This news brought great relief

to the Company of Disciples who bowed their heads in deep gratitude to Him who had proclaimed Liberty to His captives [Isa.61:1].

They therefore sought to go forth from there with all speed in the hopes of soon meeting up with their beloved Brother and faithful Husband. It so happened by the Providence of God that the very time they received the message of *Christian's* departure was a major Market day in Vanity. Thus everyone was completely absorbed in his main concern in life; gaining Riches by his Trade. Thus they went forth from the nearby City of Refuge without notice of the inhabitants of Vanity and proceeded upon their Way unmolested.

Rapid progress was made, so eager were they to meet up with their separated loved ones. Thus they came to that River of delight with its fair meadows and lush fruit where *Christian* and *Hopeful* were greatly refreshed. Here they met One to whom the young wives were enjoined to commit their babes yet to be born.

This Good Shepherd is full of compassion and knows how to gather the Lambs in His arms and carry them in His bosom [Isa.40:11]. This Man, if any of them go astray or be lost, will bring them again to his fold, bind up the broken, and strengthen the sick [Ezk.34:11-16]. Here they will never lack and will be kept from thieves and robbers, for He will die before any of those entrusted to His care will perish [Jn.10:11]. And so, they were well content to commit their forthcoming children into His care.

Moving from there, for they did not delay long since they were in haste, they entered that rough and stony portion of the Way which was so troublesome to the Two. But they called to mind for their encouragement what they had learned at the Hill of Difficulty, namely, that better is the right Way, though it be ever so hard, than that of Ease, being wrong.

Just as they were feeling the weariness of the Path, they thought they saw Two Travelers resting in the shade before them. They therefore called out to them hoping to discover if they perchance had met *Christian* and his Companion along the Way.

As they drew near, what a Shout arose from one and all as they recognized each other and embraced with Joy. *Christianna* wept glad tears

for the Deliverance of her beloved husband from the Lion's mouth [2 Tim.4:17], and he Blessed the name of the Most High for tender Mercies shown in rescuing them all from so great a death [2 Cor.1:10]. And thus they related with each other all they had met with since the days of Vanity Fair up until the present.

What was of particular cause for thanks to God was the Saving Power of Christ who had Rescued them all in such marvelous ways: of *Faithful* being ushered into the Heavenly City as he was, of their own Deliverance from the Fair, the Saving of *Hopeful's* soul from the Vanity of this World, their Protection in the City of Refuge, and their Escape from Giant *Despair*. Truly He saves to the uttermost.

This last testimony caused them to consider what might be done to protect fellow Travelers from his ravages. After some discussion it was proposed that they return to Doubting Castle and see what damage they might inflict upon him and his Fortress.

Now some objected that it was not lawful to tread upon Forbidden ground though the end of so doing might be good. This put them into somewhat of a debate until *Great-Heart* concluded the matter.

Great "It is true that none is ever justified in leaving the Way for his own Ease and in Unbelief. That is very clear and must not be done as our dear Brethren have so painfully learned.

"However, if in obedience to the Directives of the King Himself, one takes up the Sword of the Spirit in order to destroy Doubt and Despair, this is not only lawful, but is praiseworthy. Our Lord Himself entered the Robber's Den, not to gain profit thereby, but to cleanse it of its defilement and stumbling to others. And this He did for the Zeal which He had for His Father's House [Jn.2:14-17] and for no other reason.

"Thus He did not leave the Way in the slightest, though He was found in the midst of Corruption itself. It did not stick to Him, as it had no place in his heart. I dare say, that our Two Brethren will return with us across By-Pass Meadow and into the Castle itself, for motives completely unlike the ones that prompted them at the first: This time, in Faith, Obedience, and Victory rather than in Unbelief, Disobedience, and Despair."

And so it was settled that the men would make the assault while the women stayed in the Way under the Guard and protection of Mr. *Feeble-Mind* and Mr. *Ready-to-Halt*. For in this very spot along the King's Highway, if one kept to the Way, even a little child might lead them [Isa.11:6].

This small army thus set out led by *Great-Heart* and Old Mr. *Honest*, followed by *Hopeful* along with *Christian* and his four Sons, all of whom had gained skill in wielding the Sword [I Jn.2:13, 14]. When they came up to the Castle-Gate, they knocked boldly for entrance with unusual noise.

Despair "Who and what is he that is so foolishly rash as to make demands from Giant *Despair*?"

Honest "We are Pilgrims upon our King's business who have come to remove your head and demolish Doubting Castle around your corpse."

Despair "Ha! Pilgrims? Have I not made a conquest of Angels? Who then are you to frighten me? I shall feed your flesh to the dogs." And, with that, he rushed upon them with a helmet of steel upon his head, a breast-piece of fire girded to him, and shoes of iron with a great and mighty club in his hand.

But they encountered him with a brave assault with this as their Battle-Cry, "Through God we shall do valiantly: For He it is that shall tread down our Enemies" [Ps.60:12]. And so they fell to blows and the struggle was fierce indeed, and all the more so when the Giant discovered that his former Prisoners were now his assailants.

Doubtful, the Giantess, joined in the desperate conflict and resisted and hacked away, shrieking in rage until she fell to rise no more under the Sword of Old *Honest*. The rest fought for their lives, for the Giant himself stiffly retaliated with unheard of strength and fury. Eventually they prevailed upon him and brought him to the ground, though he was very loath to die. He struggled hard until the last when, together, they had off his head.

Immediately they proceeded to demolishing his Castle, and that with ease for both the Giant and his wife were no more. Even so, they were seven days in pulling it down, so formidable is Doubt and Despair

and so strong the bars of their Castle. A great pile of stones was heaped upon the two Enemies of the Prince of Pilgrims from the rubble of their dwelling.

While they moved from one place to the other, they discovered in one cellar two Prisoners, Mr. *Despondency* and his daughter, *Much-Afraid*, nearly starved to death. These they rescued and brought out into the Light of Day. But it would have made you wonder to have seen all the bodies laying here and there with the great heap of dead men's bones in the Dungeon.

When their exploit was completed, they took the two former prisoners into their care since they were Pilgrims, though kept in his Castle. When they returned to their Companions, they burst into joyous acclaim at seeing the Giant's head. Some of the women, therefore, played upon their instruments since they were so merrily disposed. Even Mr. *Ready-to-Halt* danced with his one crutch along with *Much-Afraid*. Her father, however, was more for eating than for dancing, so *Christianna* gave him some of her bottle of Tonic which revived him while she prepared something for him to eat.

And they thus were comforted and greatly relieved by the successful venture upon this most stalwart Enemy of those in the Way. They set the Giant's head upon a pole alongside the Highway as a warning to any who may be tempted to enter into his grounds, having this inscription:

*Though Doubting Castle be demolished,
And the Giant Despair has lost his head,
SIN can rebuild the Castle, make it remain,
And arouse Despair the Giant to live again.*

After refreshing themselves awhile and hearing the story of the two recently rescued, they proceeded upon their Journey. By and by they came unto a hill country abounding in Gardens, Orchards, and Fountains of water known as the Delectable Mountains. At the ascent were Shepherds assigned to the place by the Lord of the Heights to feed His Lambs with Knowledge and Understanding [Jer.3:15].

When the Shepherds had learned from where they had come and the intent of their Journey, they looked very lovingly upon them, welcoming them, saying, "Come, blessed of the Lord, you are welcome to us for we have a charge from our Lord to entertain strangers and tend His Lambs, be they feeble or strong, even the least of whom is our joy to serve" [Heb.13:1,2; Jn.21:15-17; I Thess.5:14].

They brought them graciously forward to partake of a feast of the finest that Emmanuel's Land had to offer, with especial care given to the less robust among them. This made *Great-Heart* remark, "By this I know that you are my Lord's Shepherds indeed; for you have not pushed aside these weak ones, but rather have done unto them as you would to Christ" [Ezek..34:21].

After they had partaken to their satisfaction, they each went to rest, for the day had already declined and they were wearied from their Journey. In the morning, seeing that it was clear and bright, the Shepherds thought it would be profitable to show them certain rare sights which can only be viewed from their Mountains.

So they had them pleasantly by the sweetness of the Orchards and through the flowered Meadows leading to the foothills of Insight before them.

*Mountains Delectable they now ascend,
Where Shepherds be, which to them commend
Things both Alluring and those Cautions to hear:
Pilgrims are kept steady by Faith and Fear.*

First they were taken to Mt. Marvel where, some distance away, was a man who tumbled the hills about with Words. And truly it was marvelous to behold how, by the Word of the King, the mountains themselves could not stand before the Faith of this son of Grace [Zech.4:6, 7; Mt.17:20].

Next they ascended to the Top of a hill called Error which dropped off suddenly as a sheer Cliff on the farthest side. *Watchful*, one of the Shepherds, bid them to carefully gaze over the edge where they saw several men all dashed to pieces at the bottom. The Pilgrims shuddered at the sight and the Women did gasp and cry out. "Beware," said he, "of

drawing near to this Place as did these who listened to *Hymenaeus* and *Philetus* and were thus destroyed by such misguided Faith" [2 Tim.2:17, 18; I Tim.1:19, 20].

Innocent Mount was nearby where they beheld a man clothed all in white; and two men, *Prejudice* and *Ill-will*, continually casting dirt upon him. What was wonderful to observe was that, no matter whatsoever manner of Dirt they might throw, it simply fell off after only a short while so that his Garment remained ever so spotless. Then did *Sincere* open the meaning to them. "This is one, *Godly Man*, whose blameless life cannot be polluted by the slander of those who hate his well-doing. Thus will God vindicate His innocent ones and bring forth their righteousness as the Light and their judgment as the noonday" [Ps.37:6].

From there they were led to another Peak named Caution from where afar off they could see certain men blindly stumbling about among the Tombs. When the Company looked with amazement desiring an explanation, *Knowledge* unfolded its meaning. "These are those who left the Way at the parting of the fence opposite By-Pass Meadow where the going is tiresome to Travelers. They were taken captive by Giant *Despair* and thrown into his Dungeon where he put out their eyes and have been left to wander among the Tombs unto this very day. And so you see, the saying of the Wise Man has its fulfillment, 'A man who wanders out of the way of Understanding, shall remain in the Congregation of the Dead'" [Prov.21:16].

Then did *Christian* and *Hopeful* tremble greatly with tears gushing out and related to the Shepherds their experiences there and how the Brethren made an end of the Giant and his Doubting fortress. To this the Shepherds nodded knowingly and *Experience* spoke what the Two had come to realize, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not" [Lam.3:22].

Since there was yet more for their profit, they then moved on to the Mountain of Charity where a most pleasing sight greeted them, especially was it so to *Mercy* who was of this temperament. There they saw a man with a bundle of cloth before him out of which he cut coats and garments for the Poor who continually stood about him. Now what was wonderful to behold was that, no matter how much he would cut and give

to the Needy, his roll of cloth was never any the less. It was *Sincere* who unfolded the meaning to them, "This man who loves the Poor and gives unto them shall never lack, and the Lord repays and replenishes him, for the poor are Dear to the heart of our God" [Prov.28:27; 19:17].

Just alongside this Mount is the Hill of Folly where they watched the fruitless efforts of *Fool* and *Lack-wit* who repeatedly washed an Ethiopian in the attempts to remove the color of his skin. But the more they applied their soaps, the darker he appeared. "A lesson indeed is here," explained *Experience*, "As impossible as it is to change this man's skin, so can a heart of sin not be remedied by applying external solutions [Jer.13:23; 2:22]. Rather, his condition worsens and renders him that much more abominable as the Pharisees became."

Now in the side of this Mountain was found a door which the Shepherds bid them to peer into, which, when they did, they discovered it to be very dark and smoky. Also, they heard a rumbling as of Fire, the crying of Torment, and smelled the scent of brimstone and sulfur, and the very ground beneath them did groan and quake.

"This," said *Watchful*, "is the By-Way to Hell by which Hypocrites go in although they have a show of going on Pilgrimage. It is here that many have perished such as *Esau* who sold his Birthright for the sake of his Belly [Heb.12:16, 17; Phil.3:18, 19]; or like *Judas* who sell their Master; or of such as blaspheme the Gospel as *Alexander* [2 Tim.4:14, 15]; and those that hypocritically lie as did *Ananias* along with his wife, *Sapphira*" [Acts 5:1-4].

At last, before they set out upon their Way again, the Shepherds brought them up unto the Hill called Clear from where one could see even the Gate of the Heavenly City through the Telescope provided to them. Now some saw the place Brighter than others according to their measure of Faith and Steadiness of hand as they gazed. Yet all perceived, to one degree or another, the Glory of the Place to which they longed to be, and this made them all the more anxious to be on their Way again and caused them to sing:

*Thus by the Shepherds Secrets are revealed,
Which from all others are kept concealed:*

*Come to the Shepherds then, if you would see
Things deep, Things hid, and that Mysterious be.*

When therefore they were about to depart, *Knowledge* gave them a Map of the Way and *Watchful* warned them to Beware of the Flatterer. It was *Experience* who cautioned them against Sleeping on the Enchanted Ground and *Sincere* smiled upon them, wishing them God's speed. And so it was that they passed from there wiser and more eager to finally behold the face of their Prince.

23

IGNORANCE, TURN-AWAY, & LITTLE-FAITH

The Company moved along comfortably for some distance, blessed in their Fellowship with one another and recalling the lessons gained for their eternal advantage along the Way. Presently they came upon a Crooked little lane that came into the Highway which descended from the land of Conceit (for it was a high place).

There came forth from there a very brisk lad out of that country whose name was *Ignorance* and presumed to join up with the Pilgrims. They inquired of him from where he came and to where he hoped to go, to which he replied with assurance that he was headed to the Heavenly City.

Hon. “But how do you think to get in at the Gate of the City?”

Ignor. “I imagine the same way other good people do.”

Hope. “But what do you have to show at that Gate so you will be admitted there?”

Ignor. “Why, I know my Lord’s Will and have lived a good life; I am not in debt to any man, and I Pray, Fast, pay my Tithes, and have even left my country for this Journey. I suppose this is enough for any man to enter there.”

Great. “But you did not come in at the Narrow Gate that is at the Head of this Way. You got here through this Crooked lane and therefore, I fear, at the last, you will be shown to be a Thief and a Robber, and shall never reach that Place which you ignorantly imagine will be

yours.”

Ignor. “Gentlemen, you are utter Strangers to me. Be content to follow your own Religion, and I will follow that of my own country. I hope that all will be well eventually since I, like you, are in the Way, regardless how I arrived therein. Besides, that Narrow Gate you speak of is far off from our region and, now that I think about it, no man from Conceit even knows the way to reach it.”

Christian, therefore, when he heard these things, said to the Brethren, “Do you see a man who is wise in his own Conceit? There is more hope for a Fool than for him [Prov.26:12]. And, as you can see, his wisdom fails him and he shows to all that he is nothing more than a Fool [Eccl.10:3]. Let us therefore leave him for the present, perhaps he will reflect upon what he has heard, though there is little hope that he will.”

This they did and *Hopeful* took up this note:

Let Ignorance a little while now muse

On what is said, and let him not refuse

Good Counsel to embrace, lest he remain

Still Ignorant of what’s the highest Gain.

God says, Those who be not Understanding’s slave,

Think what they may, them He will not save.

Presently they entered a very dark lane, where they met a man whom seven devils had bound with seven strong cords [Prov.5:22; Mt.12:45] and were dragging back to the Door in the side of the Hill, being that By-Way to Hell. Now the sight of this did make the Women tremble at this fearful spectacle and the still more terrible prospect awaiting him. As he passed by, *Matthew* noticed on his back a paper written with this bold inscription, “Wanton Professor,” and, “Damnable Heretic.”

Great. “It is who I suspected, one, *Turn-Away*, from the town of Apostasy. This man would hearken to no Counsel, but once he began to Turn Away, no persuasion could stop him [Heb.10:26-29].

“Even when he came to the Cross and the Tomb, he gnashed

with his teeth and stamped his feet and said he was determined to return to his Apostasy. Not even when the good *Evangelist* offered to lay hands upon him and turn him again into the Way would he yield. Rather, he resisted stoutly and railed upon him, climbing over the Wall into Beelzebub's domain."

Now the sight of this man caused them all to soberly reflect upon the consequence of failing to heed the Voice of Him that calls Today, lest there should be among any one of them an unbelieving heart in falling away from the Living God [Heb.3:12]. It also brought to mind the story which *Christian* had heard of a fellow Pilgrim who had met with Trouble near this place.

Chr. "I remember what I learned of a good man from the town of Sincere whose name was *Little-Faith*. It so happened that at this junction ahead is that road known as Dead-Man's-Lane which comes down from Broad-Way-Gate. It is so called because of the frequent murders and robberies which occur there.

"Well, this Traveler had chanced to sleep near the spot not realizing his danger when three Rogues known as *Faint-Heart*, *Mistrust*, and *Guilt* speedily fell upon him. With threats of force they made him to stand and demanded his money. Now the poor man's knees became as weak as water and he had no power to either fight or flee.

"Since he hesitated to give up his money, *Mistrust* rushed up to him and seized his bag of silver at which *Little-Faith* cried out, "Thieves! Thieves!" With that, *Guilt* promptly dashed him upon the head with a mighty club which brought him to the ground where he lay bleeding most pitifully. The Thieves, hearing the approach of one whom they feared might be *Great-Grace* from the city of Good-Confidence, escaped into the darkness of the surrounding forest."

Hope. "It makes one's heart ache for the poor Brother. But did they take away everything that he possessed?"

Chr. "No, they did not discover or take from him his Jewels which he had with him until his Journey's end, though he proceeded with many a hunger and pain by reason of losing most of his money [I Pet.4:18]. Nor did they collect his Certificate by which he was to be admitted at the Heavenly Gate. But this, I learned, was more due to the

good Providence of God than by his Endeavor [2 Tim.1:14; 2 Pet.2:9]. It was also reported that for the rest of his Journey, he could talk of little else than his loss and grief encountered here. He never quite recovered from all that he suffered.

"Yet in all this, he would never sell his Jewels. These were more precious to him than to even think of trading them to amend all the afflictions and fears he was beset with. He was no *Esau* who sold his own for the sake of his own Belly. A dove cannot be persuaded to feed upon the flesh of beasts, though a vulture would rush at the chance. So *Esau* and those like him will gladly give whatsoever they have to secure fleshly lusts and worldly comfort. But he that has saving Faith, be it ever so little, can never do so."

Jos. "Why, I think that these three fellows are nothing but Cowards. Why else would they run at the very sound of one approaching? For myself, I will say that he should have plucked up a greater heart and resisted them."

Chr. "You speak in the bravery of your Youth because you have prevailed against the Giant in Company with those who've fought the Lord's Battles. *Peter* spoke bold words in the presence of Christ with the Apostles by his side, but in the time of Trial when alone, a little girl did make him fall back under the influence of these three Rogues" [Mt.26:35, 69, 70].

Jos. "But, father, did they not run away when they thought that *Great-Grace* was coming upon them?"

Chr. "True, they have often fled, both they and their Master, when *Great-Grace* has but appeared. But, he is one of the King's Champions and there is quite a difference between him and *Little-Faith*. Not all of the King's subjects are His Champions, nor can all do such feats of War as he. Is it possible to imagine a little child handling *Goliath* as *David* did?"

"The strength of an ox will not be found in a bird in the hand. Some are strong, some are weak; some have great Faith, some have little. This Pilgrim was of the weaker sort whom we are bidden to bear their infirmities, and not to please ourselves [Rom.14:1]. God forbids us to think more highly of ourselves than we ought, for all we have is received

from above” [Rom.12:3].

Hon. “This you have truly stated, dear Brother. For even *Great-Grace* himself, though excellent with his weapons, cannot but be thrown down by *Faint-Heart*, *Mistrust*, and *Guilt* if they get within him. If you will look well upon his face, you can see the signs of cuts and scars to demonstrate what I say. I have even heard him to say when in the midst of this combat, ‘We despaired even of life’ [2 Cor.1:8].

“How these sturdy Rogues made *David* groan, moan, and roar! And besides all of this, their King, *Leviathan*, is at their beck and call. And once he has been aroused, will not any man be laid low at even the sight of him? [Job 41:9]. I tell you, there is none so fierce that dares to stir him up [Job.41:10].

“The sword that reaches him cannot avail, the arrow cannot make him flee, and he laughs at the shaking of the spear [Job 41:26, 28, 29]. Upon earth there is no one like him, who is made without fear. He is king over all the sons of pride [Job 41:33, 34]. In this conflict, carnal weapons and self-confidence are worse than useless but will actually give these three and *Leviathan*, their King, the advantage over a man. Only those weapons which are Mighty through God can avail, and that with difficulty” [2 Cor.10:3-5].

Great. “Well said, my Brethren. In fact, he that had Skill has said, ‘Above all, take up the Shield of Faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the fiery Darts of the Wicked one’ [Eph.6:16]. It was this Shield of Faith that our robbed brother had little grasp of.

“It is also good that we desire to venture not even one Step unless the Lord go with us. It was this moving in Step with our Living Prince that made *David* fear no evil in the very Valley of the Shadow of Death [Ps.23:4]. It is what made *Moses* rather die on the spot than move one centimeter without the Lord’s Presence [Ex.33:15].

“O, my Brethren, if our God will but go with us, what need is there to fear though ten thousands set themselves against us? [Ps.3; 27:1-3]. But woe to that man who meets such Thieves without the Lord at His side and without the Shield in his hand.”

Then I saw that three among their Company, namely, *Ready-to-Halt*, *Feeblemind*, and *Despondency* were gladdened and encouraged by this

discussion; for they perceived that one like themselves did actually arrive safely at the Gate to the City and was admitted there.

Hope. “I shall be glad if we ourselves meet with no such dangers, though I suspect that we are not past all yet. However, since the Lion and the Bear have not yet devoured us, let us Hope that God will also Deliver us from the next uncircumcised Philistine across our Path” [I Sam.17:37].

And so, in remembrance of *Little-Faith* this song was sung:

Poor Little-Faith! *Have you been among Thieves?
Was robbed? Remember this; Who so believes,
And gets more Faith, shall then a Victor be
Over ten thousand; else scarce over Three.*

24

VALIANT-FOR-TRUTH, FLATTERER, & ATHEIST

Now it was as they had paused for rest in the shade near this very Lane discussing *Little-Faith*, that one came up to them, bloodied and with Sword drawn in his hand. Upon seeing him, the men jumped to their feet and drew their Swords as *Great-Heart* challenged him, “Are you for us or for our Adversaries?” [Josh. 5:13].

“My name is *Valiant-for-Truth* and I am a Pilgrim on my way to the Heavenly City when I met with three Thugs who advised me to join with them, turn back to my Town, or die there on the spot. And, as you can see, I have resisted unto blood in my striving against sin” [Heb.12:4].

Upon hearing this, *Christianna* quickly implored *Mercy*, *Phoebe*, and *Grace* to dress his wounds while she and *Martha* hastened to prepare something nourishing to refresh him.

Hon. “Well, my brother, we bless the Lord indeed for His delivering *Mercy* to you. But how did you reply their evil intent to have you join with them?”

Valiant “To that I replied that I never could join with the likes of them, for I had been a True man for a long while [Prov.1:10-16]. And as for going back, that has never entered my heart, for I desire a better country, even a Heavenly one [Heb.11:14-16]. At the last I told them that I am at the command of my King and would rather die in His service than listen to them for an instant. And with that, we fell to blows for upwards of three hours, and I dare say, I got the best of them though receiving my

own wounds as you can see.”

Great. “But here are great odds, three against one!”

Valiant “’Tis true; but little and more are nothing to him that has Truth on his side: ‘Though a host should encamp against me,’ said one, ‘my heart shall not fear: Though War should rise against me, in this will I be confident’ [Ps.27:3]. Besides, I have read in some Records that one man has fought an army [2 Sam.23:11, 12]. And how many did *Samson* slay with the jaw-bone of a donkey?” [Jud.15:15].

Chr. “But did you not cry out for someone to come to your aid?”

Valiant “I did to my King, who I knew could hear, and He sent me invisible Help, and that was sufficient for me [2 Cor.12:9]. Why, let a man have one of these Swords with skill to use it, and he can venture upon an Angel with it. Its edges will never blunt and it will cut flesh and bones, soul and spirit, and all” [Heb.4:12].

Hope. “Ah, but you fought for a great while, I wonder that you were not weary.”

Valiant “I indeed fought until my Sword did cleave to my hand, and the Lord gave a great victory this day” [2 Sam.23:10].

And so he was welcomed by all into their Company as a true traveling Companion. By this time his wounds had been treated and the sisters had provided good things for his comfort which were brought forth by *Grace*. While he ate they heard his story.

Valiant “I dwelt in the Country of Dark-Land, not far from the City of Destruction. A Mr. *Tell-True* came into our parts and told us how a certain *Christian* had left his doomed Place in order to go on Pilgrimage and how his Wife and Children followed him as well. Well, when I heard this Testimony, it kindled within me a desire for the things Above which moved me to forsake all in order to walk in this Way.”

When they heard this, they all smiled to themselves and *Christian* and his Family did blush from embarrassment. It was then that old Mr. *Honest* said, “My dear brother, that very *Christian* and his Family are right here before you.” Now you can imagine the astonishment on his face when he heard this.

Valiant “Is it so? How I have often thanked my God for this good man and his Family. My dear brother, *Christian*, and dearest sister,

Christianna, I shall ever be grateful to God throughout all eternity for the Grace of God upon your lives which so affected my own [2 Cor.1:14]. Ah, my heart is full of joy today! Bless you, my brother, and bless you, my sister, and bless these your children.”

Great. “For all this and many more we praise the name of the Blessed One. How good of Him to allow us to meet you thus. Truly His ways are wonderful and past finding out [Rom.11:33]. But, do tell us more about your coming on Pilgrimage. Did no one oppose you?”

Valiant “No one? Ah, nearly one and all. In fact, the whole world hated me for I was no longer of it [Jn.17:14]. Some tried to bring me back by speaking of the frightening and dangerous things I’d likely meet on the Way. Why they listed off one thing after another: *Beelzebub’s* Archers, Lions, Giants, Devils, Snares, Pits, and many more besides.

“Next they warned me of the multitude of Deceivers that I would come by. They told me of false men lying in wait to delude me, namely, *Worldly Wiseman*, *Formalist* and *Hypocrisy* would beguile me along the Way. If they did not descend upon me, then surely *Talkative*, *By-Means*, or *Demas* would; not to mention *Ignorance* who would mix up my head and so ruin me.

“They further would have stumbled me by citing examples of good men (as they called them) who set out on this foolish Journey but realized what a useless endeavor it was and so came back to their senses. And they named such as *Obstinate* and *Pliable*, *Mistrust* and *Timorous*, *Turn-Away* and several more who set out and then fell back.”

Great “And did none of these things move you to discouragement?”

Valiant “No, they seemed as so many Nothings to me” [Acts 20:22-24].

Feeble. “If I may be so bold to ask, Sir, how did that come about?”

Valiant “Why, I believed what Mr. *True-Tell* had said, and that carried me beyond them all.”

Hon. “Then this was your Victory, even your Faith” [I Jn.5:4].

Valiant “This, and this alone, is the Victory over the World; and by Faith I have come thus far so that I have learned to sing:

*Who would true Valor see,
Let him come hither;
One here will constant be,
Come wind, come weather:
There’s no Discouragement
Shall make him once relent,
His first avowed intent
To be a Pilgrim.*

*Who so beset him round
With dismal stories,
Do but themselves confound,
His Strength the more is.*

*No Lion can him fright;
He’ll with a Giant fight,
But he will have a right
To be a Pilgrim.*

*Demon, nor foul Fiend
Can daunt his spirit;
He knows, he at the End
Shall Life inherit.*

*Then Fancies fly away,
He’ll fear not what men say,
He’ll labor Night and Day
To be a Pilgrim.*

Now this Brave man had sufficiently recovered by the mercies of God and through the kindness of the Brethren, and thus they renewed their Journey together. They had not gone far before they reached a spot where a way joined their own which appeared to Sight as straight as the Way they should go. Here they paused and considered which of the two

they ought to travel.

They had only just begun to discuss this when *Matthew* spoke up, “Did not *Knowledge*, the Shepherd, give us a Map so we would not miss our Way?” This they acknowledged with grateful remembrance and pulled it out which quickly lightened their Path [Ps.119:105].

As they were just passing the junction of this look-alike Lane, they saw one coming towards them, as if sorrowing over some misdeed. When he drew near they called to him to know how it fared with him and what he had met with in the Lane. Now the man, at first, seemed afraid at such a large Company until he recognized their Garments, Armor, and Swords. He then, relaxing a bit, introduced himself as a Pilgrim, by name, *Forgetful*.

Great. “How is it, my man, that you are coming from this Lane yonder?”

Forget. “To my shame, I must admit that I thought that this was the Way to the Heavenly City and so followed it.”

Hon. “Why, didn’t you receive a Map from the Shepherds?”

Forget. “This is the cause of my shame. For I indeed did, but I did not think to look at it when I came to this place.”

Valiant “I perceive, then, that you began to walk by Sight rather than Faith when you reached this spot.”

Forget. “Exactly. I was unsure which Way to take when I met a man dressed all in White who offered to conduct me personally in the Way since, as he said, he was travelling to the Heavenly City himself.

“All seemed well for a time, and I thought I was heading in the right direction. But, slowly and by degrees (though I could not perceive it at the time), he so turned me around that I was actually proceeding in the opposite direction!

“Still I kept company with him until, suddenly, he led me into the entanglement of a Net out of which I could not escape no matter how I struggled. It was when I was helplessly caught that his White cloak slipped off of him and I saw him for what he really was: A Flatterer.”

Chr. “As is the saying of the Wise man, so you discovered it to be; ‘A man who Flatters his neighbor is spreading a Net for his feet’“ [Prov.29:5].

Forget. “’Tis true, brother. As I lay there, I kept reproaching myself that I did not consult the Directives provided by our Prince. His Word continuously came to my mind, and made me all the more miserable, namely, ‘Concerning the works of men, by the Word of your Lips, I have kept me from the paths of the Destroyer’ [Ps.17:4]. This was the very thing I did not do.”

Hope. “How then did you manage at last to escape?”

Forget. “It happened unto me according to the true Word of our King, ‘Grievous punishment is for him who forsakes the Way’ [Prov.15:10]. A Shining One came to me with a Whip of cords in His hand and asked me how I came into this condition.

“With shame I told him how it happened, and He reminded me of all that He had done and said to prevent me from coming to this place, asking me why I had done so. I could only answer, and that weakly, ‘I Forgot.’

“He then simply tore the Net as if it were a thread and bid me to lie down to receive my beating [Deut.25:2; 2 Chron.6:26, 27]. As He did so, He said, ‘As many as I love, I rebuke and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent’ [Rev.3:19].

“It has truly done my soul good, though. At the moment it seemed grievous, but it has since yielded the peaceful fruit of righteousness [Heb.12:11]. As I was coming back to the Way, I was softly singing this song to myself:

*Come here, you that walk along the Way,
See how the Pilgrims fare, that go astray:
They are caught in an entangling Net,
Because good Counsel they lightly did Forget:
’Tis true, they rescued were, but yet you see
They’re sorely scourged: Let this your Caution be.*

Valiant “By this we know that you are our true brother and loved by our God. For He surely scourges every son whom He receives [Heb.12:6]. Welcome then, Friend *Forgetful*, let us be of profit to each other as we Journey together on this Highway of Holiness” [Isa.35:8].

And having said thus, they continued on together discoursing upon the things Above and lovingly helping each other along the Way. Their Progress was pleasant for sometime and they advanced a good distance towards their Goal when they saw ahead a man coming towards them with his back to Zion.

Forget. “Let us Beware, Brethren, this may be another Flatterer!”

When the man drew near he inquired where such a large Company could be going as they were upon this Road.

Hon. “We are all Pilgrims proceeding with oneness of mind to Mount Zion” [Eph.4:4].

Then the man, whose name was *Atheist*, burst into a great laughter and mocked them, saying, “What manner of ignorant and simple-minded dreamers have I met with! Ha! The place to which you are going does not exist and your Way is a delusion!” And with that, he fell into laughing again.

Great. “I can see clearly that you are an *Atheist*. The Word of God speaks against your false and arrogant presumption.”

Atheist “Ha! Word of God indeed! All things are Relative, there are no Absolutes! Every intelligent man knows this.”

Valiant “Herein do you show your folly. If what you say is true, that there are no Absolutes, then this very statement of yours is false, for it is surely an absolute statement. Thus, by your own confession, Absolute truth exists. You are greatly mistaken. God’s Word is Absolute Truth.”

Atheist “Bah! That is just your own opinion. It may be true to you but its not true to me. All truth is a matter of one’s own Perspective anyway.”

Valiant “Again you show to all men that you are a Fool. For if all truth is a matter of one’s own perspective, then even this statement of yours is in that category which necessarily makes it false. Thus it is proved once again by simple Reason, that your claims are in error and without basis.”

Atheist “One thing I can surely see is that you are a very stubborn fanatic about things you have never Seen. As for me, I’ve been looking for over twenty years now and I’ve never Seen any such Mount Zion, nor

have I ever Seen this God whom you so confidently talk about.”

Valiant “Nor is it likely that you ever will, and that for several reasons. First, the things that you have not seen cannot be seen by the natural man who walks by Sight and not by Faith [I Cor.2:9, 14; 2 Cor.5:7].

“Secondly, your twenty years of toil have been according your own understanding which necessarily exposes your folly of not being able to reach the City [Eccl.10:15].

“Thirdly, you say you have not Seen God or the City and therefore do not believe they exist. Neither have you Seen your own mind; does it not exist then? Neither have you Seen the wind; does it not exist then? But even a Fool believes in the Wind for he can both feel its operation and know its existence by its influences around him” [Jn.3:8].

Atheist “ You are certainly one of the most troublesome sort of Pests in all the World; believing Fables and worse. There is no God, and this I know without a doubt!”

Valiant “See how certain you are of what you do not know. How much of all that is able to be known do you actually know; is it up to 5%? Does this not show that you are abysmally ignorant of the remaining 95%? Nearly everything possible to be known you are ignorant of, yet you say you know that there is no God.

“Truly the Word of God is fulfilled in your case, ‘The Fool has said in his heart, “There is no God”‘ [Ps.14:1]. As for us, we will obey the command of our King and leave the presence of a Fool when we do not discern in him the words of knowledge [Prov.14:7].

“We thus leave you to yourself to walk in your self-chosen darkness [I Jn.2:11] while we who have believed and known the Truth will continue in our Way” [I Jn.2:21].

So *Atheist*, with a final scornful snort of contempt, angrily went his way back to the City of Destruction, yet he laughed no more as he went.

25

DARWIN THE GIANT & THE ENCHANTED GROUND

Not far from where they left *Atheist*, they entered a dense and overgrown Jungle where strange and mixed animal noises filtered through the green. A thick canopy of hardwood trees overshadowed their Path, casting gloom and obscurity upon their course.

Continual dripping from the tangled foliage made the Way slippery, and forced the Company to move slowly in their upward Progress as they began to ascend unto a higher level. The chattering of Monkeys filled their ears incessantly, making it difficult to concentrate on their steps due to their distracting clamor.

Channa. “O, is there nothing to listen to in this place other than the shouting of Monkeys?”

Just then a fearsome crashing of brush was heard to their left as if some monstrous and wild beast were rushing upon them. Swords were drawn as the crackling of branches continued and grew frighteningly near to where they stood, and the women trembled. With a shout of warning, while leaping backwards none too soon, *Great-Heart* barely escaped a sapling falling across their Way.

And then, emerging from the thicket and straddling their Path, stood the fearsome Giant *Darwin*.

Darwin “This is my Realm and you, I can see, are Trespassers. Prepare to meet my demands, or proceed no further.”

Great. “The only demands we obey are those of the Most High, the Creator of the ends of the earth.”

Darwin “Creator? I defy your creator, his myths, and all his useless followers. I am the Creator in this Jungle and my creation rules

over all. I will show you whom I have made, whom to fear, and whom you must serve.”

Then from the swamps came a hissing slithering sound mingled with rasping groans and belching roars. Out of the slime emerged, first crawling, then walking, a hideous Beast; seemingly a composite of all animals both imaginable and unimaginable. It was at once covered with scales and then feathers, fur and also skin, and over its vital parts were plates of armor like that of tortoise shell.

Arising to its full height, it towered over the Pilgrims, twitching its fork-like tail while clicking fearsome fangs and swinging massive deadly claws in sweeping motions at the Brethren. It resembled *Apollyon* in many ways and some say that he himself gave birth to this Monster.

Darwin “This, is my creation. Behold *Evolution* and bow and tremble. None shall reach the Heavenly City without doing homage to *Darwin* and my Beast.”

Valiant “O Giant, we do not need to give you an answer in this matter. Our God whom we serve is able to Deliver us from your hand and from this, your wretched Invention. So let it be known unto you, therefore, that none of us will acknowledge or bow to your Lying Wonder” [Dan.3:16-18].

With that, the Giant trembled with Fury that he and his Beast should be so lightly esteemed, so that the Jungles echoed with his deafening thunder, “Prepare to meet your end in this our Earth where the Fittest Survive!”

And saying this, he called upon the Monkeys to cast sticks upon their heads from the treetops while loosening the vines to entangle their feet. This they did with ear-piercing screeching from all sides and doing much abuse.

Now all this while the Giant and the Beast, *Evolution*, were not idle. Nature itself seemed to be under their sway and joined in the assault against the Pilgrims. Fiery hail began to fall thick and heavy which could only be extinguished by their Shields [Eph.6:16].

Now the Brethren behaved themselves most bravely, some flying vigorously against the Giant and his Beast while the remainder warded off the pelting missiles of the Monkeys to protect the Women and the

Weaker among them.

This fierce conflict raged for hours on end, into the heat of the day. Never had they encountered such opposition from their Enemies. And what was most curious of all was that, whenever a blow was landed from their Swords, it appeared that they soon recovered as if nothing had wounded them.

Seeing this to be so, they agreed upon a united direct assault, to make them feel the power of their Weapons together at once. This did indeed make them draw back and cause them to even offer terms of peace to the Church.

Darwin “We are willing to acknowledge your idea of a Creator if you will agree that He has used *Evolution* as His means of Creation. That is, you can say that God was involved at the Beginning, but that He then turned over the development and completion of it to my Assistant. Agree to this, and you may pass unharmed.”

Chr. “Away with your compromising Blasphemy! We would never consider for a moment associating the Glory of the one and only Creator with the wickedness of your invented Beast. Now step aside or feel the metal of our resistance!”

Darwin “So, you wish to become an Endangered Species, about to become Extinct, do you? *Evolution!* Persuade them of your might and prove who is Fittest to Survive!”

O it would have made you shudder to have heard the bellows of the Giant, the roaring of the Beast, and the screeching rage of the Monkeys as they hurled themselves against the Saints. Now the Pilgrims had gained experience from their previous assault and so had determined to charge them with full force as if they were one man.

Christianna and the Sisters raised their Petitions before the King while the Brothers lunged and slashed at the Giant and his Beast relentlessly. This had its effect and the Beast himself suffered many a wound which eventually forced him to flee into the Jungles.

Now the Giant, when he saw that the Monster withdrew and that all Swords were now against him alone, considered what he had best do. In an instant, he uprooted a small tree and swung it at the advancing Company. When they fell to the earth to avoid being crushed, he leaped

twenty-five feet at a lunge (for he was a Giant) and so escaped into the forest.

It was then that they were able to pass safely through his Domain, though the Monkeys did continually besiege them until completely out of that Jungle land. They proceeded as best they could due to the fatigue of the Battle and weariness of mind from the uninterrupted shouting of *Darwin's* Monkeys.

It so happened that when the noise of their chatter could be heard no more, they came upon a pleasant Arbor placed there by the Prince for the refreshment of His Pilgrims. Now the name of that place was Rest and there they reclined in His shade with great delight [S.of S. 2:3] and partook of the fruit that flourished throughout the year there, even in times of Drought [Jer.17:8]. And as they rested, they fell into discussion about the Jungle they had just passed through.

Mercy “We are surely debtors to Mercy alone for safely escaping the evils of that place. As fearsome and hideous as the Giant and his Beast were, it seems to my heart that the voice of the Monkeys was the most distressing of all.”

Hope. “They are at his command and do incessantly beat upon the ears of all in order to wear away any resistance to acknowledging *Evolution*. You see that they are quiet whenever any who will bow pass by.”

Valiant “This Giant would have all men believe that the Heavens and the Earth (though he would call it Universe) are the product of time plus chance, without the involvement of the Creator of all.”

Grace “Why, even a young girl like me can see the Folly of such nonsense. Even a child knows that Nothing plus No-One does not equal Everything!”

Hon. “’Tis true, my sister, yet this *Darwin* would have all believe that his creation of that Beast is Scientific Fact, rather than his own invention. And the Monkeys proclaim it so loudly and frequently, that one can scarcely think of or hear anything to the contrary.”

Chr. “But it is not Science at all. Science, by definition, deals with conclusions drawn from Observable and Repeatable phenomena. This Doctrine of the Giant and his Beast was neither observed by anyone,

nor can it be repeated so as to test its validity. It is nothing more than a wicked Philosophy to beguile the souls of men.”

Channa. “Why, I think it takes more faith to believe his fantastical creation than it does to believe the Word of the Blessed and only Creator of all.”

Feeble. “Even to my little understanding, the first proposal of his seems impossible, but what of his second, that our God employed *Evolution* as His servant?”

Great. “That is more wicked still, though many have been deceived thereby. That his Beast had no hand in the work of Creation is evident on several accounts. First, the Scriptures are quite explicit that all flesh is not the same flesh, but that there are distinct kinds; one for birds, one for fish, and another for man, etc. [I Cor.15:39]. *Darwin* would have us to believe that all flesh has developed from one by gradual change.

“Secondly, if man emerged from lower life forms, how is he any different than a mere beast? And if different, does this not mean that one believes the Word of God that man was a direct Creation of God, made in His own Image, and not that of monkeys? Does not the Scripture call *Adam*, the first man? [I Cor.15:45]. Yet this Giant would have us imagine a company of such creatures, male and female both, developing at different places at the same time. This is in direct contradiction to the Doctrine of God which plainly says that the Heavens and all their host were made by the Word of the Lord, not by gradual change from one form to another [Ps.33:6].

“This is the real reason behind *Darwin’s* Invention. It is an attempt to remove moral accountability from man. Apart from our Lord and His Word, everything becomes purely natural; and nature is neither good nor evil, it simply is. And so, according to the Giant, man can do as he pleases, for morals are Relative since he is nothing more than the product of time and chance.”

“Thirdly, if Theistic Evolution is true, it abolishes all basis of Morality. Man is then nothing more than another animal. And there are no morals among animals. There is no such thing as Fornication among Chickens. Theft is not considered a crime by Dogs. And surely Man will be judged for his sin, but not the animals.

“Fourthly, the Scriptures are quite certain that all that was made was not made out of things existing, as fashioned from materials at hand, but rather was created out of nothing by the Power of God [Heb.11:3]. This alone exposes the folly of Theistic Evolution.

“Lastly, for now at least, is the fact that the Heavens and Earth were Created in six days, not six million years. See what God has spoken to us in the Book of Moses. Man shall work six days and rest on the seventh, for in six days the Lord made the Heavens and the Earth. If these are not literal days but some long ages, is a man then to work for thousands of years before he ever rests? [Ex.31:15-17].

“Brethren, this Giant *Darwin* is a deceiver and his Monster *Evolution* is a wicked contrivance in order to cast down the Blessed and only Creator from His Majesty and Sovereignty over the men He has made.”

Ready. “My dear Brethren, I don’t know how to thank you for all your Resistance against these evils which have resulted in our Deliverance as it is this day. Your Swords, your Kindness, and Prayers have been my Comfort and Victory. May your Reward be sure from Him who judges righteously.”

Chr. “All Praise is to the Lord of Hosts whose the Battle is, and who Delivers us, for we are powerless against the Foes set against us round about [2 Chron.20:12, 15]. To Him belongs the Glory, both now and forevermore. Amen.”

With thanks to God for Rescue, Refreshment, and Rest, the Company arose unto the Journey once again. Now they soon came unto that portion mentioned to them previously by the Shepherds, where the air naturally tended to make one Drowsy. At first they supposed that their Tiredness was due to the rigors of the Journey and the Battles they had just recently engaged in, not knowing that they had entered the Enchanted Ground.

It was nearly completely overgrown with thorns and thistles excepting, here and there, where were found neatly maintained and inviting Arbors. Now some say that it is questionable whether a man will ever rise again should he sit or sleep thereon; which caused me to reflect, that not all Comforts along the Way are placed there by the King.

Seeing that the place was wild and tangled, and not knowing what may be lurking in the bush, the Brethren divided their forces among themselves, some going before and others following up the rear. Thus with Swords drawn, with the Women and Weaker ones between, they cautiously proceeded watchfully lest, perchance, they meet with some Fiend, Dragon, Giant, or Thief.

They had not gone far when a great Mist and Darkness fell upon them so that they could scarcely see one another. Therefore, they were forced for some time to feel for one another, by words; for they did not walk by Sight.

The Way here was very Wearisome with much grunting, puffing, and sighing as they struggled along. Through encouraging words, though, they continued to make Progress [Eph.4:29; Col.4:6]. While one tumbles over a root, another stuck fast in the dirt. One cries out, "I am down", and another, "Where are you?", while still another calls, "The bush has gotten hold on me and I cannot get myself loose."

So through many such difficulties compounded by the swirling Mist, they pressed on and came into a small clearing where an attractive Arbor had been set. To all appearances it was finely constructed, beautified with lush greenery, and furnished with comfortable benches, cushioned with pillows.

This, you must think considering their situation, was most tempting to some to pause here awhile. And so it was that *James*, being the youngest, ventured to suggest that a short nap would do them all well before they went on.

Chr. "Do you not remember that *Experience*, the Shepherd, warned us about Sleeping on the Enchanted Ground? Therefore, let us not sleep as others do, but let us watch and be sober" [I Thess.5:6].

Great "Your father has spoken to you and to us well. This Enchanted Ground is one of the last refuges that the Enemy has against Pilgrims. It is therefore as you can see, placed near the end of the Journey, and that by crafty strategy.

"For the Enemy reasons thus, that, 'When will these Fools be so desirous to sit down as when they are Weary? And when will they likely be most Weary except when near the end of their Journey?'

"Let us therefore not be ignorant of his Schemes [2 Cor.2:11]. For this is not the time for Sleep, for now Salvation is nearer to us than when we believed" [Rom.13:11].

James "I acknowledge myself to be in a fault. I can only thank God that I am not here alone, left to my own reasoning. I see that it is true what the Wise Man said, 'Two are better than one. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his Companion'" [Eccl.4:9, 10].

Hon. "It is true, this Brotherly conversation does our souls much good, especially in a place such as this. Let us continue in such for our own profit as we go on. Tell us, good brother *Hopeful*, how it came about that you left Vanity and took to the life of a Pilgrim."

Hope. "Well, for long I had been delighted in the things of Vanity such as are sold at the Fair. It was when your Company came to our Town that I first heard of the Way of the King. Your lives and Words strangely worked within my mind and made me see the Danger and Vanity of them all."

Despond. "Did you immediately yield to that first Conviction of Sin?"

Hope. "No, I was not willing at the beginning to admit the Evil of Sin, nor of the sure Judgment that comes from committing it. I was ignorant that this was the work of God in my soul. Besides, Sin was still sweet to my Flesh as were my old Companions whom I did not wish to part with. In short, I hardened my heart against these troubling and frightening Convictions."

Chr. "What was it that brought your Sins to mind again?"

Hope. "O, many things. If I met a Good man in the streets, I would become ashamed. Or if I heard any portion of the Bible read, or learned that one of my neighbors was sick or had suddenly died, it weighed heavily upon my heart. But especially the Conviction arose when I thought that I must surely and quickly come to Judgment for my Sins."

Feeble. "What did you think should have been the Remedy for your Guilt?"

Hope. "At first, I thought I must endeavor to improve my life by Religious Efforts, such as attending Religious Meetings, Fasting, Prayers, Tithing, and things like these."

Valiant “How did you realize the Folly of these to cleanse your Soul?”

Hope. “Truthfully, these never gave me Rest of heart though I diligently adopted them. It was particularly as I read in the Scriptures things such as, ‘All our righteousness deeds are as filthy rags’ [Isa.64:6], ‘By the Works of the Law, no man shall be justified’ [Gal.2:16], or ‘When you have done all these things, say, “We are unprofitable”’ [Lk.17:10], and many other passages like these.

“I then began to reason thus within myself: If all my Righteous acts are filthy rags; if by deeds no man can be Justified; and if when we have done all we are still unprofitable, then it was utter Foolishness to imagine Religious Efforts a means of obtaining Heaven.

“It also came into my mind that no amount of moral Reform can amend previous Crimes. If I had become indebted to a shop-keeper for some amount of money for past purchases, if I began to pay cash for all present and future purchases, that past Debt would still be outstanding against me. Furthermore, that shop-keeper could lawfully sue me to court and have me cast into Prison until that Debt be paid.

“Another thing that greatly troubled me was that, if I looked honestly at the best I had done, I could still see Sin in it, mixing itself with the best of my Efforts. I thus saw that my Efforts were worse than useless.”

Matthew “Did you see any solution then to your Conviction?”

Hope. “None at all. I was Burdened, Confounded, and Despairing, not knowing what to do now. It was then that our dear brother, *Faithful*, told me that what I needed was another type of Righteousness, even that of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“This sounded strange to my ears until he explained that He, as a Sinless Substitute, suffered the just punishment for all my sins, that God the Judge of all had accepted this Sacrifice as satisfying all His Righteous demands against sinful men, and He was willing to Forgive all on this basis [Rom.3:21-26].

“Furthermore, He convinced me from the Eternal Book that our Lord Jesus is yet Alive, having been raised from the dead [I Cor.15:3, 4], and will welcome all who come to Him by Faith [Jn.1:12]. He told me to

come to Him and see, for I was invited to Come [Mt.11:28].

“So, I prayed something like this: ‘God, be merciful to me, a Sinner [Lk.18:13], for against You and You only have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight [Ps.51:4]. I believe that Jesus Christ has come into the world to Save sinners [I Tim.1:15] and that He has borne the Punishment for my sins in His own Body on the Cross [I Pet.2:24]. Lord, I have gone astray wickedly. I am now returning to the Shepherd and Overseer of my soul, Jesus Christ my Lord [I Pet.2:25]. Accept me by Your Grace, wash me and I shall be whiter than snow, hide your face from my Sins, blot out my Iniquities, and Create in me a Clean Heart, O God [Ps.51:7-10]. O Living Christ, I come to You. Cast me not away according to Your Promise; receive me [Jn.6:37-40] and magnify Your Grace by Saving my soul, through Your Son Jesus Christ. Amen.”

Samuel “And did you receive that Cleansing and Welcome?”

Hope. “Yes, and at that very moment, I was Justified in His Blood and Righteousness [Rom.5:9], Washed and Renewed by his Spirit [Tit.3:5], and made a Partaker of His Life and Heavenly Calling [Jn.15:4, 5; Heb.3:1].

“I saw that all that is in the World is Vanity which made me greatly ashamed of the Vileness of my former life and Humbled me with a sense of my own Ignorance that I had never, until that moment, had one worthy thought of the Beauty of Jesus Christ.

“At that instant a change took place in my Heart. It made me to love a Holy Life and to do something for the honor and Glory of the name of the Lord Jesus.”

Joseph “Truly the Fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is Understanding” [Prov.9:10].

Feeble. “Yes, this conversation has done my soul good as it strengthens my feeble knees [Heb.12:12, 13] and what has been weak in my mind up until now. But do go on a bit, and expound further on the Fear of the Lord.”

Great. “It is a foundational theme, without which no Progress can be made as a Pilgrim. The Wise Man has said, ‘The Fear of the Lord is to Hate Evil’ [Prov.8:13]. Now it is this hatred of Evil that moves the heart towards Christ in order to know and Walk in the Truth of His

Word and Ways. Nothing else can properly be called Wisdom.”

Valiant “Christ Himself warned us to Fear the One who is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell [Lk.12:5]. It is with this Godly Fear that we are both to serve God acceptably [Heb.12:28] and to work out our own Salvation [Phil.2:12]. When we consider the Power of His Fury, who would not Fear Him?” [Ps.90:11].

Chr. “Indeed, the Fear of the Lord is Clean and will endure forever [Ps.19:9] as the source of knowing His Secret Counsel [Ps.25:14] and which opens the Storehouse of Goodness [Ps.31:19], Lovingkindness [Ps.103:11], Provision [Ps.111:5], and Blessing [Ps.115:13].

“We should therefore always Tremble for Fear of Him [Ps.119:120], for He takes great Pleasure in those who do” [Ps.147:11].

Channa. “O, how this good Instruction does make my soul yearn to be taught of His Ways! I can only cry aloud, ‘O Lord, unite my heart to Fear Your name!’” [Ps.86:11].

And then did the Brethren join and sing:

*He who would go as a Pilgrim down here,
Needs Tremble with caution and godly Fear.
For He who Judges and casts into Hell,
Watches if evil’s despised very well.*

And so with these and many other encouraging words they spoke to one another in order to strengthen their feet in the Way. Now the Mist moving about them became even heavier until a great Darkness was upon them and they could no longer see the Path. In such times, a man can easily lose his Way.

Therefore, the Brethren did stop in order to bring out the Lantern by which they walked until the break of Day [2 Pet.1:19]. And had they not been careful to walk by its Light, they had in all probability been smothered to death. For just before them at the end of a deceptive and clean path nearly parallel to their own, was a deep Pit full of nothing but mud placed there on purpose to destroy Pilgrims.

Thus they walked through the Darkness with His Lamp shining over their head [Job 29:3], praying all the while that Light might arise in

the Darkness for the Upright [Ps.112:4]. Shortly thereafter, the Mists began to disperse and they could see their Way more clearly.

It was then that they heard before them a Solemn noise as of one who was greatly concerned. As they drew nearer, they made out the figure of a man upon his knees, with hands and eyes uplifted to One who dwelt Above. They passed by softly so as not to intrude upon his Prayer.

After they had gone past, the man arose in haste and began to run towards the Heavenly City. When he had reached up to them, the Brethren called to him to join in their Company along the Way. Now the man’s name was *Standfast* and he was a Pilgrim indeed.

He looked over his shoulder as if not trusting them. And it was then that he recognized Mr. *Honest* among them and slowed and then smiled, saying, “I am more than glad to meet you thus upon this Road, good Companion.”

Hon. “And I as well rejoice to meet you upon your knees, Friend. You prayed as a Fervent Righteous man as I recall” [Jas.5:16].

Upon hearing this, he blushed, for he was a humble man of secret prayer, not as one who loves to be praying in public [Mt.6:5, 6]. “Well,” said he, “I had good cause; in fact, I prayed as one whose life depended upon it for I had just been assaulted by a most persuasive Temptress, Madame *Bubble*. I don’t know if you have ever encountered her?”

Hon. “Ah! There are few more alluring and dangerous than her. She, I think, is rather tall, very beautiful, who always speaks smoothly with an enticing smile while fingering the money in her great purse with much delight. Is she the one?”

Stand. “A better portrait of her could not have been given. I perceive that you know her indeed. Well, let me tell you, this woman is a Witch. While I was both weary and sleepy, she presented herself to me and offered unto me her body, her purse, and her bed.

“I repulsed her more than once, for she was very persistent, even smiling at my rebukes. She told me that if I would give myself to her, body and soul, she would provide me with Delights ‘til the end of my days, for, said she, ‘I am the Mistress of the World.’ It was just then that you met me Crying out for Help from the Throne of Grace” [Heb.4:16].

Hon. “And, blessed be the name of the Lord, Help He gave you from Above. But let me tell you more about this Harlot-Witch. It is because of her Sorcery that this place is Enchanted [Rev.18:3, 23]. Whoever lays down his head in her lap had just as well of laid down his life [Jud.16:19, 20].

“She will talk with any man, and whoever sets his eyes upon her beauty is accounted to be the enemy of God [Jas.4:4; 1 Jn.2:15-17]. She promises Pleasures, Prosperity, Promotion, and, in short, all manner of Sensual Delights in her company.

“Where you might have been taken by her it is best not to imagine other than to say that she would have drawn you into many foolish and harmful Lusts which plunge men into Ruin and Destruction [1 Tim.6:9, 10]. Therefore, good Master *Standfast*, be as your name is, and having done all, Stand” [Eph.6:13].

At this discourse, there was a mixture of joy and trembling among the Pilgrims, but at last they broke out in this song:

*What danger is the Pilgrim in?
How many are his Foes?
How many ways there are to Sin,
No living mortal knows.
Some who are shy of the ditch yet can
Lie tumbling in the mire.
Some, though they shun the frying-pan,
Do leap into the fire.*

26 IGNORANCE & THE RIVER

By then they had passed beyond the sleepy Mist and enchantments of this dangerous place and entered again into the Light of Day where they moved with great contentment in the cooling breeze. Now behind them, and unnoticed since he traveled by himself, *Ignorance* came into sight and drew near to the Company. And so it was that they were afforded yet one more chance to direct his mind in the Right Way.

Chr. “How is it now, *Ignorance*, did you manage well over this last bit of ground without mishap?”

Ignor. “O, very well, thank you. The way was Sunny and Smooth all along and most accommodating to Travelers.”

And now the Saints were somewhat in amazement, wondering if he had indeed made his Journey along the same Route. But there was, they knew, only one Path through that Enchanted Ground. So *Great-Heart* inquired of him further, saying, “Did you not become Sleepy and find the going difficult in the Mist of Darkness?”

Ignor. “Why, no, I was not drowsy in the least, and as for Darkness, I met with none but had Sunshine all the way.”

And then I came to understand that it is only those who are Awake that can become Drowsy, and those alone who know the Light that can discern the Darkness [Mt.6:23].

Stand. “But did you not meet with anyone along the Way?”

Ignor. “Only one lovely sister whom I’m sure the King had sent to comfort and refresh me along my journey. Why, she spread a feast of fineries that filled my belly with dainties from around the World under a most pleasant Arbor where I reclined in her company for some time.

Ah, a fine sister indeed!”

Then did the Pilgrims gaze at each other knowingly, perceiving that he had been entertained by none other than Madame *Bubble*, the Enemy to Pilgrims and Friend to the Ignorant in the World. They therefore had all the more urgency to impress upon him his need of true Conversion.

Chr. “How now, *Ignorance*, is it well between your soul and God?”

Ignor. “I hope so, for I am always full of good intentions that come into my mind to comfort me as I walk; like thinking of God and Heaven.”

Hope. “But even the Devil and damned souls think of the same.”

Ignor. “But I think of them and desire them, having left all to gain them.”

Hon. “So do many who will never arrive there. ‘The soul of the Sluggard desires and has nothing’ [Prov.13:4]. What makes you think you’ve left all?”

Ignor. “Why, my heart tells me so.”

Feeble “Even I know that he who trusts in his heart is a Fool [Prov.28:26] and that this heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked” [Jer.17:9].

Ignor. “O, but my heart and my life are in agreement, therefore my Hope is well grounded, for my heart assures me it is so because I have good thoughts and a good life.”

Valiant “The only good thoughts that one can have are those that agree with the Word of God. And the only good deeds that one has are those that are produced in him by the Spirit of God, for the flesh profits nothing [Jn.6:63].

“Unless you have passed the same Judgment upon yourself that the Word of God does, you have never yet had one good thought about yourself. The Scriptures tell you plainly that there is none Righteous and none that does good [Rom.3:10, 12].

“It also says that every imagination of the heart of a man is only Evil continually [Gen.6:5]. When we think thus about ourselves, our thoughts are good.”

Ignor. “I will never believe that my heart is bad like this!”

Great. “Then you shall never have even one decent and acceptable thought about yourself in your entire life. You thus have only Natural thoughts about your condition which are described by the Book of God as evil, perverse, crooked, and devious [Prov.2:14, 15]. Unless you see yourself to be in this state before God, you will never obtain the Salvation which is in Christ.”

Ignor. “O, but I already trust in Christ who will Justify me before God by graciously accepting my obedience to His Law. He makes my Religious Duties pleasing to His Father by virtue of His Merits. Thus I do my best and He makes up for the rest.”

Valiant “This is a faith which will be thrown out of the courts of Heaven. If Righteousness comes through your Religious Duties, Christ died in vain [Gal.2:21]. Now the fact that He did die proves that your Good Works are not good at all, else He never need have died to save you, if there was even one thing you could do that met with the approval of God.

“Secondly, your so-called obedience is nullified in its entirety by the sentence of the Word of God: ‘Whoever keeps the whole Law and stumbles in one point has become guilty of all’ [Jas.2:10]. Your imagined good works only therefore condemn you the more since you are decidedly not good in all points.

“Then, you have vainly imagined that your best Efforts are equally acceptable alongside the Righteousness of Christ as if they were on the same level of perfection. But even the best of your contributions are as abominable as filthy rags, which, if brought into His presence, will certainly result in you and them being cast into the place of everlasting uncleanness [Isa.64:6].

“You say that you will never believe your heart to be as Evil as the Lord Jesus says it is. You therefore make Him out to be a Liar and yourself the judge of Truth. Furthermore, Christ Jesus has told you that unless you Hate your own life, you cannot be His Disciple; which is the very thing you refuse to do [Lk.14:26]. Thus you show that by all means you will save yourself and hold onto what you esteem to be good about yourself and therefore disqualify yourself for True Salvation which only comes by losing your life” [Mk.8:35].

Ignor. “What! Would you have me trust in what Christ has done for me apart from my own Efforts? Why, this would let loose a person to live however he chose according to his own Lust!”

Chr. “Ignorance is your name, and as is your name, so are you. You are Ignorant of the Provision of Righteousness through Christ’s Redeeming work on the Cross alone. You are equally Ignorant of the Means of obtaining that Righteousness, by Grace through Faith alone and not by Works [Eph.2:8, 9]. And, you are Ignorant of the true Effects of this Saving Faith which is to win over, Transform, and Renew the heart of man by Uniting the soul with the Living Christ [2 Cor.5:15, 17]. By this I fear that you have never known the Lord Jesus Christ in truth. Have you ever had Him Revealed to your heart from Heaven?”

Ignor. “So, you are among those who are given over to Revelations! I do believe that all of what you are saying is nothing more than the fruit of sick minds, and that my faith is ever bit as good as your own.”

Stand. “How then do you propose to come to know the Son of God if He be not Revealed to your heart from Above? The words of our Lord are quite plain, ‘No one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to Reveal Him’ [Mt.11:27].

“By this answer of yours I see that the Word of God has its fulfillment in you according to what has been Written, ‘A Natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are Spiritually discerned’ [1 Cor.2:14].

“It is our Prayer that the eyes of your heart might be Enlightened so that you might see the Wretchedness of your own heart, the full Provision of Christ Jesus the Lord for Righteousness, and the exceeding greatness of His Power to Save you from both the Condemnation and Corruption of your Sins” [Eph.1:18, 19].

Ignor. “Well, I can see that I cannot keep pace with you. My heart tells me it is best that you walk in your Way while I continue to walk in mine.”

Thus it was that they separated after this final Word to his heart:

*Well, Ignorance, will you yet foolish be,
To slight good Counsel, ten times given thee?
And if you yet refuse it, you shall know,
Before long, the Evil of your doing so.
Remember, man, in time; Listen, do not fear;
Good Counsel taken well Saves; therefore hear.
But if you yet shall slight it, you will be
The Loser, Ignorance, we assure thee.*

Now I saw in my dream that shortly they came to that most Delightful of Places in the Way; Beulah land in the region of Hephzibah (this is, of course, not our native land and so the language is foreign. By translation they mean, “Married”, and, “My delight is in her”) [Isa.62:4]. This was the final Destination this side of the River that separates all things here from the Heavenly City.

Found in this land are glimpses into the City beyond, where the very Air breathed is mingled with that Above. Here they had renewed assurances of that great Bridal Covenant entered into so long ago [Isa.62:5]. From there can also be heard the Voice of the Bridegroom calling, “Say to the Daughter of Zion, Behold, your Salvation comes! Behold, His Reward is with Him!” [Isa.62:11]; and all the inhabitants of the Country called the Pilgrims, “The Holy People, the Redeemed of the Lord, Sought Out, a City not forsaken” [Isa.62:12].

Pleasant to the ear was the continual ringing of bells joining harmoniously with the golden notes of trumpets. Their chambers of rest were perfumed with the most fragrant of spices and their bodies anointed with the Best of Oils [1 Jn.2:27] to prepare them to pass through the River when the time should come.

In this Place there was also kept a Record of the names and deeds of those who had been Pilgrims of old and had gone over before them. Therein was noted how the River, at times, seemed nearly to be Dry for some, while, for others, it has Overflowed its banks. This, they were told, depended upon the deepness or shallowness of one’s Faith in the King as they crossed.

Now as they considered the River, they noted that there was no bridge wherein to cross and that the waters appeared very deep. Now those that escorted them about the Place informed them that all must pass through those waters if the Gate to the City is to be reached [I Cor.15:50].

To this news, the Pilgrims inquired if there were no other Way to the Gate; and they were told that, since the foundation of the world, only two had been received at the City without passing through that River, namely, *Enoch* and *Elijah*.

About this time, there came a Post from the Heavenly City with a matter of great importance to *Christian* and his wife, *Christianna*. The contents were as follows, "Hail, Dearly Beloved! I have sent to you to inform you that the Master calls for you, and expects that you will stand in His Presence, in clothes of Immortality, within these next ten days."

As evidence that he was a true messenger, he presented each with a Token. First, to *Christian*, he presented a small Scroll upon which was inscribed, "Fear not, for I have Redeemed you; I have called you by Name; you are Mine! When you pass through the Waters, I will be with you" [Isa.43:1, 2]. Now *Christian* was instructed to eat this though it was decidedly bitter to the tongue.

To *Christianna*, the Token was an Arrow with a point sharpened with Love upon which was written, "Having a desire to Depart and be with Christ which is far Better" [Phil.1:23]. This she was to let easily enter her heart.

And so it was that they summoned their Sons and Daughters that they might impart to them their final Blessing before crossing into that City beyond. And *Christian* thus addressed himself to his Sons in this manner,

Chr. "The Lord has shone forth from Zion in Mercy upon my Soul from the days of the City of Destruction up until now. Throughout the Journey's length my heart has cried, 'O send out Your Light and Your Truth, let them lead me; Let them bring me to your Holy Hill and to Your Dwelling Places. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding Joy' [Ps.43:3, 4].

"And now, my Sons, that longed for day has arrived: I go to Him

who has led me all the Way and is bringing me safely to His Heavenly Kingdom. Therefore, let this that I have sought and obtained also be your Desire and Portion from Him who loves you well; even from Him who loves His own as He does His own Beloved Son [Jn.17:26].

"Listen to the voice of a father; I have loved you well and taught you truly: There is none like the God of Jeshurun who rides the Heavens to your Help. He is your Dwelling place to all generations and underneath are the Everlasting Arms [Deut.33:26, 27]. Abide there! Flee for Refuge to the Shade of this Mighty Rock!

"Let your eyes be fixed straight ahead of you; turn not to the right or the left [Prov.4:25-27], but keep the Lord's commandments for your own good and that of your children. Fear the Lord your God, walk in all His Ways and Love Him and serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul [Deut.10:12]. This will be your Wisdom and this will be your Blessing in the Land to where you are going and before all men here below [Deut.4:6].

"This Word which has been commanded you shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall Meditate therein day and night; then you will have good success [Josh.1:8]. For it is not an idle Word unto you; indeed, it is your Life. And by it you shall prolong your days in the land [Deut.32:47].

"You shall therefore Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these Words shall be on your heart and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up [Deut.6:5-7].

"And now, I am going the way of all the earth, yet I know that I shall behold His face in Righteousness and be satisfied with His likeness when I awake [Ps.17:15]. Finally, my Sons, be on the Alert, stand firm in the Faith, act like Men, be Strong, and let all that you do be done in Love [I Cor.16:13, 14]. And now, I bid you farewell until we meet on that Blessed Shore."

Now you can imagine that few eyes were dry having heard this from their beloved father whom they Honored, Loved, and Obeyed. Then *Christianna* did address their Daughters thus,

Channa. “My dearest Darlings whom I love as my own soul, how can I bear to part from you, and yet, is not our Bridegroom He whom our hearts have yearned for all these years? Will I shrink from going to Him who has allured and ravished my heart all through the Wilderness of this life?

“No, my Daughters, I arise. He has bid me to come to Him upon the Mountains of spices, to look down with Him from the Summit of His Heights [S.of S.4:8] and I shall go to my Beloved in whom I greatly delight [S.of S. 2:3].

“I have schooled you to be true Daughters of Sarah [I Pet.3:6]. Remember your mother in all of your ways. Crowns of Virtue you shall be unto my Sons [Prov.12:4]; fairer than the moon in your meek and quiet adornment [I Pet.3:4]. Continue as loving keepers at home, entertain Strangers, wash the Saint’s feet, assist those in Distress; so shall you be saved, and so shall the Word of our God not be dishonored [Tit.2:4, 5; I Tim.5:10; 2:15].

“Neglect not these, your babes. From upon your lap may their little ears hear Eternal Words of Kindness of Him who is the Way. And do I need even mention the poor? Ah, no, you Love them well, what need I say? Only to Love them the more, Abound all the more, patiently endure all for Him who loves the downcast and afflicted of earth. Yes, may your Love increase and abound for one and all [I Thess.3:12].

“And now... Is that His Voice? Yes, yes, I have heard it, there is none like it! O, Glorious moment! O, rapturous embrace! I can see Him, my Dears! I can see Him!

“Yes, my King, my Groom, my God, I come! My Robes are ready. My heart is there already and now I follow to You with love.”

And these were the last words they could hear on their side of the River as she, with her husband, entered the Waters together. Now the water was cold but had to be endured in order to reach the City. Just some few steps into its flow, *Christian* began to sink in a deep hole.

Chr. “I sink in deep Waters; the Billows go over my head, all the Waves go over me!” [Jonah 2:3].

Channa. “Be of good cheer, my Dear Husband, I feel the bottom and it is good.”

Chr. “Ah, my Darling, the sorrows of Death have compassed me about [Ps.18:4, 5], I shall not see the Land to which I desire to come.”

And with that a great darkness and horror fell upon him so that he could not see before him. Also he in a great measure lost his senses, so that he could not remember nor talk coherently about any of those sweet refreshments he had met with in the Way of his Pilgrimage.

All his talk was that he would perish in the River and never see the City and his mind was filled with thoughts of the Sins he had committed. Even he would cry out in fright at evil spirits that appeared to trouble him in his distress.

Now you can only think what this did to the heart of his dear Wife who did what she could to keep his head above Water. She attempted to comfort him with Words such as, “Darling, I see the Gate, and Shining Ones standing by to receive us!”

Chr. “It is you alone they are waiting for; you have been lovingly devoted from the day you set out on Pilgrimage. If I was Right, He would rise to my Help. But as it is, I am left alone with my Sins in this River.”

Channa. “Do not say so, Dear husband, do not let His former Lovingkindness depart from your sight, for there is no man that can live and not see death or deliver his soul from the power of Hell [Ps.89:48, 49]. It is the Wicked who have no pains in their death [Ps.73:4]. Look up, my beloved, Fix your eyes on Jesus, the Author and Finisher of your Faith!” [Heb.12:2].

Chr. “O! I see Him again! I remember now what He wrote to me, ‘Fear not, for I have Redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine! When you pass through the Waters I will be with you.’ Yes! He spoke this to me! He is with me in this River! I am His! It is no more my Sins that I see but His blessed Redemption which has washed them all away!”

Thus did *Christian* find his footing on solid ground and they crossed over the rest of the River which now had become quite shallow to both of them.

Now, about this same time, many other of the Brethren also received their Summons from the King to appear before Him in His Presence. Some of the accounts of their last words on the River bank are

as follows.

Ready-to-Halt “I shall have no more need of these Crutches, since yonder are Chariots for me to ride. Welcome Life!”

Feeble-Mind “When I am gone, I do wish that you, Mr. *Valiant-for-Truth*, would take my Feeble Mind and bury it in the Dunghill that it would never be a trouble to any Pilgrim who comes after me.”

Honest “I die but make no will. As for my Honesty, it shall go with me; as it will with any who have it who come after me. I have had with me as a constant companion along my Way a Good Conscience which will assist me across this Overflowing Stream.”

Valiant-for-Truth “Though with great Difficulty I have come to this point with great hazard to life and body, yet today I shall see His Face who endured all the contradiction of sinners against Himself [Heb.12:3]. I therefore do not regret in the least all my trial for the Truth.

“I leave my Sword to him who shall follow me on Pilgrimage and my Courage and Skill to him who can get it. My Scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me, that I have fought His Battles, who will now be my exceeding great Reward.

“And now, Death, where is your sting and O Grave, your Victory?”

Thus it was that they all safely got over to the other side where they were met with Welcome from Above and escorted to their Everlasting Home.

27

THE CITY

Now I saw in my dream, that as each one crossed the River, they were met on the opposite bank by Shining Ones who saluted them, saying, “We are Ministering Spirits sent forth to minister to those who are Heirs of Salvation” [Heb.1:14]. They did therefore assist them with ease to ascend the mighty Hill upon which the City was founded though it was higher than the Clouds.

As you can well imagine, all their talk was about the Glory of the Place and Him who dwelt therein. Now some of what they discussed I can relate, for who could possibly tell all that was said or could be spoken about that City?

Shining “We are going to Mount Zion, the Heavenly Jerusalem, the innumerable Company of Angels, and to the Spirits of just men made Perfect [Heb.12:22-24]. There you will enter the Paradise of God wherein is the Tree of Life from which you shall eat its never fading Fruits [Rev.2:7; 22:2] being clothed in Robes of White [Rev.3:4].

“No more shall you see any of those things which you have known below; Sorrow, Sickness, Affliction, and Death, for the former things are passed away [Rev.21:4]. You are going now to *Abraham, Isaac,* and *Jacob* along with the Prophets [Mt.8:11], each walking in Righteousness. Every day your walk and talk will be with the King, for He will dwell among you and you shall be His people” [Rev.21:3].

Pilgrims “What must we do in that holy Place?”

Shining “You must receive Comfort for all your Toil, and have Joy for all your Sorrow; you must reap what you have sown [Gal.6:8, 9], even the Fruit of all your Prayers and Tears and Sufferings for the King along the Way. In that Place you must wear Crowns of Gold, and enjoy the perpetual sight of the Holy One, for you shall see Him as He is [1 Jn.3:2].

“There also you shall serve Him [Rev.22:3] continually with Praise and Thanksgiving far better than you did below because of the weakness of your flesh then. Your eyes will be delighted with seeing His face [Rev.22:4]. You will enjoy the Company of a great multitude of fellow Pilgrims all clothed with Glory and Majesty, fit to ride out with the King of Glory Himself [Rev.19:14].

“When He shall come with the Sound of the Trumpet in the Clouds, you shall come with Him [I Thess.4:13-17]. When He sits upon the Throne of Judgment, you shall sit with Him [Rev.3:21] and pass Sentence with Him upon all the workers of Iniquity, be they men or Angels [Dan.7:9, 10; I Cor.6:2, 3], for they were both His and your Enemies.”

*Now, now look how the holy Pilgrims ride,
Clouds are their Chariots, Angels are their Guide;
Who would not here for Him all Hazards run
That thus provides for His, when this world's done?*

Now I saw that while they were drawing near to the Gate, that one stood there knocking already, though he had no escort to accompany him. As I looked more closely, I discovered that it was *Ignorance* of whom I have written before.

It seems that upon arriving at the River, and since no Post was sent for him to appear before the King, he found a boatman named *Vain-Hope* who conveyed him over the River with not half so much trouble as the others. And, as I said, no one of the Shining Ones met him on the opposite bank.

Nevertheless, he proceeded upwards to the Gate though he had not the least encouragement to do so. Above the Gate he read in letters of Gold, “Blessed are they that do His Commandments, that they may have the right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the Gates into the City” [Rev.22:14].

Here he began to Knock, supposing that Entrance should be quickly gained by him. But he was asked by the men who looked over the

top of the Gate, “From where do you come, and what do you want?” He Ignorantly answered, “I ate and drank in the Presence of the King, and He taught in our streets” [Lk.13:26].

When they asked for his Certificate that they might show it to the King, he fumbled in his bosom and found none. Then they said, “Do you have none?” But he was unable to answer them a word [Mt.22:12].

They then reported all to the King who promptly commanded two Shining Ones to bind him hand and foot and cast him into outer Darkness where there was Weeping and Gnashing of teeth [Mt.22:13]. And then I considered that there was a Way to Hell even from the Gates of Heaven as well as from the City of Destruction.

Not like this was the reception of the Pilgrims. While they were drawing near the Gate, a whole company of the Heavenly Host came out to meet them; to whom it was said by the two Shining Ones, “These are the ones who have loved our Lord when they were in the World and have left all for His Holy Name. He has sent us to fetch them, and we have brought them thus far that they might go in and behold their Redeemer’s face with Joy.”

Then the Heavenly Host gave a great shout, saying, “Blessed are they that are called to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb” [Rev.19:9]. There came out at this time many of the King’s Trumpeters, clothed in white and shining raiment, who with loud and melodious noises, made Heaven echo with the sound. These Trumpeters saluted the Saints with ten thousand Welcomes while surrounding them on every side, continuously sounding their high harmonious notes so it seemed as if all Heaven had come out to meet them.

So Joyous was the sound, so Loving was the reception, and so exhilarating the sight of Angels that they nearly thought they were in Heaven before actually entering the Gate. As the sight of the City came within view, they could hear all the bells therein begin to ring for their welcome.

Beyond all of this was the warm and joyful thoughts that they had about their own Dwelling there in such a Place and with such a Company; and that forever and forever. O, by what tongue or pen can their glorious Joy be expressed!

Thus they came up to the Gate and read its golden text, “Blessed are they that do His Commandments, that they may have the right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the Gates into the City.” Then, as they were instructed to do, they called at the Gate. When they did, *Enoch, Moses, Elijah, Paul*, and other of the King’s notable ones looked over the Wall to whom it was said, “These Pilgrims are come from the City of Destruction, for the Love that they have to our King.” Then each of them gave their Certificates which they had received at the beginning.

These were carried to the King who commanded with a loud Voice, “Open the Gates, that the Righteous Nation which keeps the Truth may enter in!” [Isa.26:2].

Now I saw in my dream that they went in at the Gate; and behold, as they entered, they were Transfigured and had raiment put on that shone like Gold. They also had Crowns placed upon their heads in token of their Honor [Jn.12:26] and Harps placed in their hands for their everlasting Praise of their God and King.

Then all the bells rang again for joy and it was said unto them, “Well done, good and faithful Servants; enter into the Joy of your Lord” [Mt.25:21]. I also heard the Pilgrims sing with a loud voice, saying, “Blessing, Honor, Glory, and Power be to Him that sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb, forever, and ever” [Rev.5:13, 14].

Now just as the Gates were opened to let them in I looked in after them; and behold the City shone like the Sun, the streets were paved with Gold, and in them walked many men with Crowns on their heads, Palm Branches in their hands, and Golden Harps with which to sing praises.

There were also among them Living Creatures with wings who did say without interruption, “Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come” [Rev.4:8]. And after that, they shut up the Gates: which when I had seen, I wished that I myself were there among them.

THE CONCLUSION

*Now, Reader, I have told my Dream to thee,
See if you can Interpret it to me,
Or to Yourself, or Neighbor; but take heed
Of misinterpreting; for that, instead
Of doing Good, will but yourself abuse:
By misinterpreting, Evil ensues.
Take heed also that you be not extreme
To despise the Outside of my dream:
Nor let my Figure or similitude
Lead you into Laughter, or a Feud;
Leave this for Boys and Fools; but as for thee,
Do thou the Substance of my matter see.*

*Open the curtains, look within my veil,
Search out my metaphors, and do not fail;
There, if you seek them, such things you’ll find
As will be helpful to an honest mind.*

*What of my Dross you find here, be bold
To throw away, but yet preserve the Gold.
What if my Gold be wrapped up in ore?
None throws away the Apple for the Core.
But if you shall cast all away as vain,
I know not by what else your soul to gain.*

LOVE
THAT
GIVES

GODLY GIVING WITH GLADNESS

LOVE
THAT
GIVES

by
Steve Phillips

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Freely you have received, freely give [Mt.10:8]

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Steve Phillips

GIVING & LOVE

FOR GOD SO LOVED...HE GAVE
[Jn.3:16]

Nothing is greater than love. It is the necessary requirement in all of life. **Let all that you do be done in love** [I Cor.16:14]. Every thought, word, and action is to flow from love.

Love is the sure evidence of being born of God [I Jn.4:7]. It is the certain proof that we are true disciples of Christ [Jn.13:35]. Lacking this, we are no better and no different than any other sinful man [Lk.6:32].

Though you may have all faith, without love you are nothing [I Cor.13:2]. Possessing every spiritual gift will profit you nothing without love [I Cor.13:1-3]. In fact, love is the greatest commandment upon which all other commands depend [Mt.22:36-40]. To fail here is to fail in everything.

Love is what moved the Father to give His Son. **For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son** [Jn.3:16]. It is the pure motive behind all true giving.

The love that gives cannot be compelled. It is a voluntary decision of the heart to give of itself. It is a choice to be a blessing by giving to those in need with no thought of self-gain.

The love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us [Rom.5:5]. This was the reason that the first church immediately and freely gave to their brethren in need [Acts 2:44-46].

No one taught them to do so. No laws were established requiring this behavior. They were simply **taught by God to love one another** [I Thess.4:9].

It is what is needed in our own generation to restore us to a selfless life that glorifies God and benefits men; the love of God poured out within our hearts, the love that gives.

GIVING & SELF

AND NOT TO PLEASE OURSELVES

[Rom.15:1]

Love does unto men as it would wish to be treated itself [Mt.7:12]. The focus of love is upon others, not upon self.

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;

Do not merely look out for your own personal interests but also for the interests of others. Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus [Phil.2:3-5].

Concern for people's needs is possessing the mind of Christ. This is the example which He Himself has set. **For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich [2 Cor.8:9].**

He laid aside His own interests, emptied Himself, and gave of what He possessed for the everlasting good of many. This same selfless sacrificial spirit filled the hearts of the first Christians.

All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had [Acts 4:32].

A selfish man is interested in getting. A Christian man is looking to give without thought for himself. This selfless life is at the heart of true Christian living.

He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf [2 Cor.5:15]. This puts everything in its proper place. Living for self is God's description of a sinful life that one must be saved from.

All believers must deny self or they are not true disciples at all [Mt.16:24]. Serving self and serving Christ cancel each other. A man can do only one or the other but not both.

Selflessness is the principle of Christ which governs the hearts of all His people. They give with no thought of reward in this life [Lk.6:30-36]. They lend **expecting nothing in return** [Lk.6:35].

Christians are so free from thought of self-gain, that they even work so as to give to others. **He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need [Eph.4:28].**

Even the rich among true believers are not selfishly seeking their own gain. Their hearts are set, not upon riches, but on sharing with others [I Tim.6:17-19].

This type of selfless giving is a proof of the love of God within the heart of a man [2 Cor.8:8,24; 9:13]. It shows that self-seeking is not motivating their actions. They are **not affected by covetousness** [2 Cor.9:5].

Only a selfless man will do as Christ commands, **Sell your possessions and give to the poor** [Lk.12:33]. All that a Christian is and has is to be given for the blessing of others.

Self is sacrificed for the good of others. Money is viewed in terms of how it may be put to use for eternal purposes. This is what the Lord Jesus told us to do with our resources.

The parable of Lk.16:1-15 describes a self-seeking man who devoted himself for his own personal gain. He was a corrupt man who sought money for selfish and unjust ends.

Yet the man was wise according to the wisdom of this world. He looked ahead to coming days when he could no longer divert

funds from his employer into his own pocket. He acted in the present to ensure a future reward.

This is the point of the parable. It is the lesson to be learned from the unrighteous steward: Use what you have now for enduring benefits beyond this life.

Make friends for yourselves by means of the Mammon of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings [Lk.16:9]. Or, as the NIV translation says, Use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

Money is to be used as a means of blessing to the eternal well-being of men. It is not to be wasted upon self. Wealth is to be given freely and devoted to the purposes of the kingdom of God.

All that we are and have is to be for the good of others. One day, riches will have finished their purpose in this life. What will we have done with what has been entrusted into our hands?

How have we used the means at our disposal to influence men for the kingdom of heaven? Will there be anyone in the eternal dwellings who will welcome us there due to our sacrifice here on earth for their salvation? Will anyone bless the Lord forever that we gave of our wealth here on earth so that they might hear the gospel?

I think we would all be happy with such a welcoming committee.

IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN RECEIVE
[Acts 20:35]

GIVING & OTHERS

YOU SHALL FREELY OPEN YOUR HAND TO YOUR BROTHER...
NEEDY AND POOR
[Deut.15:11]

Giving is to be a purposeful and responsible act of love. We are not to just give to anyone, anyhow. We are warned about giving without proper consideration of whom we are giving to.

Those who give to the rich will only come to poverty [Prov.22:16]. We should not give to the rich. Neither are we to give to so-called gospel workers who do not teach truth about the Lord Jesus. If we do, we are participating in their evil deeds [2 Jn.7,10,11].

We are not to give to disobedient lazy people who will not work to supply their own needs. Those type of people we are not to associate with [2 Thess.3:7-15]. **If anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either** [2 Thess.3:10].

Clearly, the rich are not in need. Without a question, contributing to religious deceivers is doing nothing for the kingdom of God. Surely, supporting a lazy man is not right in God's sight.

We are to give to two types of people. They are [1] the Poor and [2] Gospel Workers.

Jesus said, **The poor you have with you always** [Jn.12:8]. These ever-present ones are to be the objects of our compassion and giving. This concern for the unfortunate is a sign of having true religion in the sight of God [Jas.1:27].

The poor have been a major concern of the most spiritually-

minded Christians of every generation. All the Apostle are in agreement with this emphasis. Listen to their statements to the Apostle Paul in Gal.2:10. **They only asked us to remember the poor – the very thing I also was eager to do.**

How we treat the poor indicates whether we love the Lord Jesus. According to His own words in Mt.25:34-46, if we shut our hearts and our hands to the poor, we have done so to Christ. When we see a real need and give to meet that need, it is as if we have given to Christ Himself.

True Christian giving is seen in sharing food, drink, clothing, and shelter with the poor. **The righteous will answer Him, “Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You?” The King will reply, “Truly I say to you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did for Me” [Mt.25:37,38,40].**

Righteous Job was a blessing to many in need. He is a worthy example for all to follow. This is his own true testimony, **I delivered the poor who cried for help, and the fatherless who had no helper. The blessing of the one ready to perish came upon me, and I made the widow’s heart to sing for joy [Job 29:12,13].**

He was obeying the Lord’s commandment about the proper and godly use of money. The Word of God directs us in this way:

If there is a poor man with you...you shall not harden your heart, nor close your hand from your poor brother; but you shall freely open your hand to him...you shall generously give to him, and your heart shall not be grieved when you give to him, because for this thing the Lord your God will bless you in all your work.

For the poor will never cease to be in the land; therefore I command you, saying, “You shall freely open your hand to your brother, to your needy and poor in your land” [Deut.15:7-11].

Meeting the needs of the poor can be done in different ways.

We may give, lend, or pay them for work they do for us. If the Lord leads you to give, it must be willingly and without complaint [Deut.15:10; 2 Cor.9:7].

God may direct you to lend in order to help the needy. Someone who borrows must surely repay when he is able to do so. **Only the wicked borrows and does not pay back, but the righteous is gracious and gives [Ps.37:21].**

Even so, the Lord Jesus says that a Christian should consider loaning to a man the same as if he had given. He commands us to **lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men [Lk.6:35].**

Or it may be that a poor man’s need can be met by providing some work for him to do. In this way he will show that he is not merely a lazy beggar, but a serious man, though having need. This method of helping the poor is seen in passages such as Lev.19:9,10.

When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard. Leave them for the poor and the stranger. I am the Lord your God.

Even if you have forgotten a bundle of grain in your field during harvest, **Do not go back to get it. Leave it for the alien, the fatherless, and the widow, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands [Deut.24:19].**

It is true that in West Africa people may not understand that forgotten grain can be taken by the poor without being thought of as theft. But the point is, that God had His people Israel provide for the poor by allowing them to work to satisfy their needs. The book of Ruth is a wonderful story of kindness to the poor in this way.

True love is evidenced by providing the needful things of life to those who lack. It is the type of giving that the Lord approves of.

Whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? [1 Jn.3:17]. If you see the need and have something to help with but do not give, you have a faith which cannot save you.

If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? [Jas.2:15,16].

To do this is nothing more than disobedience, selfishness, and unloving rejection of those we ought to love. Do not withhold good to those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it. Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come back, and tomorrow I will give it," when you have it with you [Prov.3:27,28].

In fact, the Lord is provoked to wrath if we neglect the poor, but blesses those who care for them. He who gives to the poor will never want, but he who shuts his eyes will have many curses [Prov.28:27]. He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God [Prov.14:31]. If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered [Prov.21:13].

As well as the poor, the needs of genuine gospel workers are to be supplied by loving giving. Even the Lord Jesus had the physical needs of this life provided in this way. And many others were contributing to their support out of their private means [Lk.8:3].

Those who benefit in spiritual things, are indebted to minister to them also in material things [Rom.15:27]. Paul was helped many times in this way so he could continue his good work of teaching the Word of God. You have done well to share with me in my affliction. You sent a gift more than once for my needs [Phil.4:14,16].

Believers must not neglect the work of God or those doing it. True servants of God are depending upon God alone to direct His

people to care for their needs. The laborer is worthy of his wages [Lk.10:7].

Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers, even though they are strangers to you. They have told the church about your love. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God.

For they went out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from the pagans. Therefore we ought to support such men, so that we may be fellow workers with the truth [3 Jn.5-8].

Since the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel [1 Cor.9:14], it is left for believers to supply their needs. But we must do so, not by force or unwillingly, but out of love for God, His kingdom, and His people. In this way, God is glorified and the gospel workers are encouraged and blessed by the love that gives.

GIVING & LAW

CHRIST IS THE END OF THE LAW

[Rom.10:4]

Giving is a work of mercy, compassion, and love, not of obligation by law. Love moves a man from within, filling his heart with goodwill towards others. Law only regulates from without by placing demands upon a man whether he is full of love or not.

Obligation through law can never be a worthy substitute for the delight of giving from a loving heart. True Christian giving is never by compulsion. It is a voluntary response of the heart to the love of God and out of love to men.

This principle of love governing godly giving is summarized in 2 Cor.9:7. Consider this verse well as it is stated in these Bible translations:

Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver [NIV].

Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: For God loveth a cheerful giver [KJV].

Each one must do just as he purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver [NASB].

So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver [NKJV]

Each one should give, then, as he has decided, not with

regret or out of a sense of duty; for God loves the one who gives gladly [Good News].

The words “compulsion,” “necessity,” and “duty” all result from the demands of a law requiring a man to give. Law makes no allowance for what a man may have decided in his own heart. No one who feels forced to do something does it cheerfully. Obligation can never be a reason for giving that is approved by God in a Christian.

No law can regulate love. Law rather cancels what would otherwise **overflow in the wealth of their liberality** [2 Cor.8:2]. It restricts the workings of love through the Spirit of God in a man’s heart.

Love poured out generously cannot be limited to a demand to give 10% of one’s resources. The law of tithing that obligated the nation of Israel to give a tenth to the priests of Levi is not a requirement for Christians.

When the priesthood changed from that of Aaron and the Levites to that of Christ and the church, that law was cancelled. It has no relevance for a Christian under the New Covenant. The law of tithing for Israel does not apply to the church.

For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also [Heb.7:12]. There is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness [Heb.7:18].

The law of tithing has been changed because it is unable to produce that glad giving out of love which God delights in. The laws of the Old Covenant do not apply to Christians under the New Covenant. The New has replaced the Old. **When He said, “A New Covenant,” He has made the first obsolete [Heb.8:13].**

Christians do not have an earthly temple building in Jerusalem. There exists no special priestly tribe of Levi within the church. No animal sacrifices are burned on the altar by Aaron’s sons.

Not an earthly building, but believers in the Lord Jesus

themselves are the **holy temple in the Lord, a dwelling of God in the Spirit** [Eph.2:21,22]. No special priestly tribe exists in the church because every single Christian is called a **royal priesthood...a people for God's own possession** [I Pet.2:9]. No sons of Aaron are found in the church who offer up animal sacrifices. Rather, every Christian offers up **spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ** [I Pet.2:5].

What then was the law of tithing for? Why did God require it in the OT? How could they be obligated when Christians are not? Let us consider the teaching of the Word of God about these things.

God spoke to Aaron and the tribe of Levi that, **you shall have no inheritance in their land nor own any portion among them; I am your portion and your inheritance among the sons of Israel** [Num.18:20]. The reason for this was because of the special priestly duties the Lord assigned to them among all the tribes of Israel.

The Lord set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to serve Him and to bless in His name until this day. Therefore, Levi does not have a portion or inheritance with his brothers [Deut.10:8,9].

It was because they had no land of their own as did the other eleven tribes that God made the provision of a tithe for them. They did not farm as did the rest of Israel and thus could not supply their own food.

The tithe was designed to provide food for the priests of Levi in exchange for their work in the Temple. **I give to the Levites all the tithes in Israel as their inheritance in return for the work they do while serving at the Tent of Meeting** [Num.18:21].

Tithing was to supply needed food for the Levites that they might continue to offer the required animal sacrifices in behalf of Israel. The tithe was always 10% of a person's farm produce. **You shall surely tithe all the produce from what you sow, which comes out of the field every year** [Deut.14:22].

Tithes are described as grain, new wine, and oil in Deut.14:23. Ten percent of one's oxen and sheep are mentioned as among the tithes of Israel in 2 Chron.31:6. Honey [2 Chron.31:5], ground meal and fruit [Neh.10:37], and garden herbs [Lk.11:42] were also to be tithed.

In every reference throughout the entire Word of God, tithing is always food items and nothing more. Azariah, the chief priest, rejoiced that **since the contributions began to be brought into the house of the Lord, we have had enough to eat with plenty left over** [2 Chron.31:10].

There is not even one verse in all the Scriptures where tithing was money. The people of God were never required to tithe money. God has never demanded of any man to bring 10% of his money. Tithing was always food items.

Even when Israel's self-appointed king began to rule over them, the tithe he forced them to bring was of seeds, fruit, and flocks [I Sam.8:15,17]. Tithing, even in this second demanded 10% beyond the one God required for Levites, was food items.

You may see for yourself that this is so. Tithing was never of money. All references to tithing in the Scriptures are listed here: Gen.14:20; Lev.27:30-32; Num.18:21,24,26,28; Deut.12:6,11,17; 14:22,23,28; 26:12; 2 Chron.31:5,6,12; Neh.10:37,38; 12:44; 13:5,12; Amos 4:4; Mal.3:8,10; Mt.23:23; Lk.11:42; 18:12; Heb.7:5,6,8,9.

Israel's tithe of food for the priests of Levi were to be brought to the Temple and placed in storerooms. **All Judah then brought the tithe of the grain, wine, and oil into the storehouses** [Neh.13:12]. There they were kept and distributed to the priests according to their needs [Neh.13:13].

Malachi 3:8-10, though one of the most often abused passages in the Bible on this subject, teaches nothing else than what we have already seen. Tithes are of food items required of Israel to feed the

priests in the Temple. They were that, and nothing more.

It was the nation of Israel that was obligated by Old Covenant law to bring their tithes. **You are robbing Me, the whole nation of you!** [Mal.3:9]. The tithe they were to bring was not money, but food items, **so that there might be food in My house** [Mal.3:10].

It was not to a church collection plate that tithes were brought, but into the storerooms of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. **Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house** [Mal.3:10].

Besides the obvious misuse of verses about tithing in the church, there is much confusion about how Christians are to give. In our thinking, giving has been reduced to putting money into a Sunday morning offering. But in the NT, it was not this at all.

In the Scriptures, much, if not most, of the giving took place outside of the church meeting. The NT church had no buildings or institutions to maintain and collected no money for those purposes. Their giving was directly for the poor and the work of the gospel.

Most of this giving passed directly from the hand of the giver to the hand of the receiver. We are not to send away a needy person until a later time, but are to give to him directly and immediately [Prov.3:27,28].

If you see a brother or sister in need and do not give to them, the love of God does not dwell in you [I Jn.3:17]. It is to pass from our hand to theirs directly. When a person is in need of daily food, it does no good to tell them to wait until next Sunday and ask for something from the church then.

Jesus speaks about **when you give to the poor** [Mt.6:2], not about when you drop money into a church collection. When asked about how people should show their repentance, John the Baptist said this:

The man who has two tunics is to share with him who has none; and he who has food is to do the same [Lk.3:11]. In this way

Christian giving can be with **simplicity** [Rom.12:8] and **in secret** [Mt.6:4] in contrast to our modern man-made traditions and regulations.

When the gift passes directly to the receiver, we know that we have done a good work according to the leading of the Spirit. When we place money in a church offering plate, we have no idea where that money ends up.

From your hand into another's makes giving a purposeful and responsible act. Blindly placing money in an offering is irresponsible. In that way, you have no idea whether you have done a good deed or not.

Much of the money that comes into the hands of the church is misused. It is spent on things that have little or no relation to helping the poor or of supporting gospel workers.

When we place money into another person's hands, we ought to know what that money is being used for. If we do not, then we do not know if our gifts are being used for godly purposes or not. We do not know if we have been responsible and obedient in our giving.

There are times, due to distance or convenience, that a gift can be given to a faithful man to deliver to another in our behalf. But the man must be faithful and the gift designated for a specific stated purpose. The churches did this to assist the poor brethren in Jerusalem, sending it by the hand of the Apostle Paul.

The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea. This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul [Acts 11:29,30].

A faithful servant of God may also be entrusted to deliver your gift to a gospel worker in a distant place. **But I have received everything in full, and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent** [Phil.4:18].

But note it well. He received everything in full. Funds were not diverted for another purpose other than the reason they were

given. The messenger must be faithful with what has been entrusted to him. And the believer must know that his gift is actually being used for a God-honoring purpose.

We are not to entrust the Lord's money into the hands of just anyone to be used for things we do not know about. To do so is wasteful, foolish, and disobedient on the part of the one we have trusted when it is used for other purposes. This is an evil which must not be done. Rather we should do as was done by the responsible and honorable Apostle.

We are sending along with him the brother who is praised by all the churches for his service to the gospel. What is more, he was chosen by the churches to accompany us as we carry the offering, which we administer in order to honor the Lord Himself and to show our eagerness to help.

We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this liberal gift. For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord, but also in the eyes of men [2 Cor.8:18-21].

As was the case with this gift for the needy brethren in Jerusalem, the only collections taken in the NT church were for specific designated purposes. Weekly "offerings" at church meetings were not a NT practice. The only time a group collection was mentioned was for the relief of the believers affected by famine.

Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that no collections be made when I come. Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem [I Cor.16:1-3].

From this passage, the modern church has established its own "law" of offerings by taking up collections at their meetings. But these verses clearly instruct God's people not to blindly put money into a

collection plate. Rather, they are to save their own money for the specific purpose of helping the poor and unfortunate.

If anything, this tells us that no collections should be taken at all unless they are for the express purpose of helping the poor and supporting gospel work. It shows that the believers must be agreed on the specific use of money collectively entrusted to another. It informs us that Christian giving is to be a voluntary individual matter motivated by love, not by man-made laws and procedures.

Love fills the heart of a man with good will to relieve the sufferings of men, both in this life and in the next. It gives willingly to help both the body and soul of fellow men.

Law can only threaten, intimidate, or obligate the one whose heart is lacking love. The love that gives hears no threats and is not subject to man-made regulations. It gives freely to bless others physically and spiritually apart from any law.

Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver [2 Cor.9:7].

No law can produce such a result.

GIVING & LUST

MEN OF CORRUPT MIND...THINK THAT GODLINESS

IS A MEANS TO FINANCIAL GAIN

[1 Tim.6:5]

Love has as its focus the good of others. Lust is intent only in satisfying its own unholy desires. Love wishes to give. Lust wants to gain.

Giving in the church too often has become a lustful affair to get something for self. We have turned giving into a commercial enterprise to generate funds for our own ends. Ministers threaten congregations to tithe and give very well so that money will continue to come into their own pockets. Congregations do so many times expecting that God will give them much more than they have “invested.”

The church has once again become a **house of merchandise** [Jn.2:16]. This shameless use of religion to gain for one’s self is hated still by the Lord Jesus. He overturned their money tables then and drove them out of His Father’s house. He will do the same today.

Giving has become, not a means of blessing to others, but a greedy way to enrich one’s self. Praise to Jesus is upon our lips, but we really only lust after His bread and fish while trying to use Him to get what we want [Jn.6:25-27].

There are many who **peddle the Word of God for profit** [2 Cor.2:17]. The things of God are employed in order to get wealth and prosperity in earthly things. It is no different than Balaam **who loved the wages of unrighteousness** [2 Pet.2:15].

Though he knew that the Word of God opposed his desperate

lust for riches, he continued to seek gain for himself. He wanted by all means to find a way to get Balak’s promised reward by “using” God to obtain it. Thus he was for hire and prophesied for a price.

The Scriptures speak about Balaam’s way [2 Pet.2:15], his error [Jude 11], and his doctrine [Rev.2:14]. These give us sober warnings about following in his footsteps.

The way of Balaam is that motivating greed for self-enrichment. Love of money filled his heart. He cared nothing for the Lord or the Israel of God. That God would judge fornicating Moabite women and Balak himself did not disturb him in the least. Money was his one concern.

His error was imagining that God can be manipulated by repeated religious activities. He thought that if God did not approve of his prophetic ravings today, He may yet be persuaded tomorrow.

“Noise and religious acrobatics ought to eventually gain my own desires,” was the warbled error of his thinking. Balaam believed that God could be convinced to adjust His Word to grant his own. It is error indeed.

He taught Balak and all men thereafter the doctrine which bears his name. The doctrine of Balaam is that truth can be compromised to get what I want. His message is that the end justifies the means.

“As long as my purpose is achieved, it does not matter how it is accomplished,” was his deluded teaching. Truly, a doctrine of demons **whose condemnation is just** [Rom.3:8].

Balaam has millions of disciples faithfully following in his way. Of this modern church it truthfully must be said that **they have rushed for profit into Balaam’s error** [Jude 11]. Following these shameless ways brings **the way of truth into disrepute** [2 Pet.2:2]. Even though we’ve been repeatedly warned about the **destructive heresies** [2 Pet.2:1] of these false teachers, we continue to follow.

They continue to demand and we continue to pay what they

insist on. We are as foolish and wicked as these false teachers themselves. Teachers and congregations alike walk in the way of Balaam; greed for self-enrichment.

Through covetousness they will make merchandise of you with false words [2 Pet.2:3]. Yet this could never be if we refused to pay what they require. We would never be taken advantage of by false words if we ourselves loved the truth.

But we do not. We love money and thus continue to tithe and give according to demand. We imagine that God *must* bless us with multiplied financial rewards because we gave according to the law of our self-made religion. It is not like that at all.

Rather, we fall under the condemnation of those who **think that godliness is a means to financial gain** [I Tim.6:5]. This same verse says that it is only those who are **of depraved mind and deprived of the truth** who think this way. This reproves the wayward church of today who gives in the expectation of getting.

It is what Simon the sorcerer did. He gave his money in order to spiritually benefit thereby. He saw what he wanted and brought his offering in order to get it. This is lust.

He thought that if he gave money to Men of God, he would get what he wanted in return. He imagined that if he sowed his “seed of faith,” he could get things from God. If he paid the price, he would obtain the same “prosperity” as the Apostles.

Witchcraft employs such methods, but not Christianity. The ministers of today have raised multitudes to follow Simon Magus while quite willingly receiving the money which Peter refused. Peter’s rebuke rightly falls upon these sons of Simon as they originally did upon the deluded sorcerer of Samaria.

May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! You have no part or portion in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours [Acts 8:20-23].

It is this shameless and deluded love of money which will condemn Simon and his children of today’s church. **Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful lusts which plunge men into ruin and destruction** [I Tim.6:9].

The desire for money itself is enough to send this generation of church-goers into everlasting judgment. This verse calls wanting riches, **foolish and harmful lusts**. With this longing in the heart, already one has fallen. Temptation has overcome you in the snare of **the deceitfulness of riches [which] choke the Word** [Mt.13:22]. No reward but ruin and destruction awaits you.

Love of money is the root of all evil [I Tim.6:10]. It will cause you to wander away from the faith [I Tim.6:10]. This coveting will change you into an idolater, far from being a Christian at all.

This you know with certainty, that no covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God [Eph.5:5].

Lust for money masquerades as giving in the church of our generation. We pretend that we are giving for the glory of God and good of others, but it is really for our own benefit.

Greed has deceived us into thinking that we can give to God as a means of having Him repay us for our “service.” The Word of God absolutely reproves this misguided thinking. **Who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to him again?** [Rom.11:35].

We want it to be true that God will reward us with treasures upon earth. But Jesus has already warned us to not store up treasures upon earth or fix our eyes upon it [Mt.6:19-24]. **You cannot serve God and Mammon [wealth]** [Mt.6:24].

Nevertheless, we pursue riches as if this was our God-given heritage. But only **a man with an evil eye hastens after wealth** [Prov.28:22]. And thus we show who we really are; idolaters [Col.3:5] who serve **the Mammon of unrighteousness** [Lk.16:11], but not the

God of heaven.

Jesus' own words rebuke our lustful giving in order to gain. **Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" [Acts 20:35].**

SUMMARY

THEY BEGAN SELLING THEIR PROPERTY AND POSSESSIONS AND WERE SHARING THEM WITH ALL AS ANYONE MIGHT HAVE NEED [Acts 2:45]

Love does what no system or law can do. It makes self-centered men gladly abandon their own interests and comforts for the good of others. Love leads to selflessness. Nothing but love can produce such results.

Now brethren we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their generosity.

For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, they gave of their own accord, begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints.

And this, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God [2 Cor.8:1-5].

Several things are to be noted about these loving brethren. First, it was the work of God's grace in their hearts that made them give as they did. Paul himself was amazed at this gracious work of love which went beyond his own expectations.

Secondly, they did not give out of a sense of obligation. No law prompted their actions. No command from the Apostle compelled them with a sense of duty.

Thirdly, tithing had nothing to do with their generosity. Ten

percent of their deep poverty would never have even approached the amount that they freely gave. If tithing were their standard, they would have given far less than they did.

Fourthly, their love could not be discouraged or turned aside. Love made them insistent on giving from their own accord.

Fifthly, they did not give because the economy was good. Neither the amount of money in their hand nor their own level of comfort determined how they gave.

Sixth, gladness and joy flowed from their heart for the great privilege of helping others. It was the kind of giving that God loves.

Seventh, complete devotion to the Lord Jesus and His people was the underlying source of their sacrifice. Love motivated all.

The Macedonians were full of the love that gives. The people of God were blessed because of it. They themselves were blessed and the Father in heaven was delighted and glorified. It is how it should be.

We are tested by our use of money. God watches to see how we use what has been entrusted into our hands. If we are faithful to use it for godly purposes, the Lord will see that we are trustworthy. And if we are faithful in this very little thing, we will be faithful also in much.

**So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth,
who will trust you with true riches?**

[Lk.16:11]

IF YOU KNOW THESE THINGS,
YOU ARE BLESSED IF YOU DO THEM

[Jn.13:17]

BROKEN FRAGMENTS

GATHER UP THE FRAGMENTS THAT REMAIN
SO THAT NOTHING IS LOST
Jn.6:13

BLACK BUT LOVELY
THOUGHTS ON THE SONG OF SONGS

BROKEN FRAGMENTS
GATHER UP THE FRAGMENTS THAT REMAIN
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BLACK BUT LOVELY
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Freely you have received, freely give [Mt.10:8]

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INTRODUCTION

God speaks in images of the commonplace. Through lowly parables, sublime truths emerge by employing the things of earth to unveil those of heaven. Concealed to the casual glance are storehouses of undisclosed wealth in the Word of God. Gold is not gathered on the surface. Hidden treasures must be searched out ere their riches are discovered and possessed by the seeker. Shadowed in the narratives of Scripture are portraits of Christ and saving grace that the Spirit of God illumines radiantly to refresh and invigorate every seeking soul.

Peculiar among the sacred writings of the Scriptures are the books of Esther and the Song of Songs. In neither one is the name of the Lord to be found, yet both illustrate the ways and work of God among His people. Esther's extended parable portrays that of the Holy Spirit within the individual believer, while the Song paints a portrait of Christ's love for His church and of hers for Him.

Solomon penned an inspired trilogy that chronicles the journey of the soul from utter vanity in the world to utmost rapture in glory. Spiritually, the sequence moves first from Ecclesiastes, then to Proverbs, and finally climaxes in the Song of Songs.

Ecclesiastes traces the discovery of the absolute vanity of all things under the sun and the conclusion of the matter having considered all: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all. Proverbs takes up where Ecclesiastes leaves off. It commences in chapter one with the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of knowledge, and concludes its discourse on the way of wisdom by recounting the excellence of the virtuous wife.

From that eulogy of this noble wife, we are led in his third book to a portrait of intimacy and union between the Divine Husband and His espoused Bride. Proverbs thirty one recounts with admiration the commendable care and loving service of that devoted woman. But this faithful labor of love is not the end of our being brought into oneness with our Bridegroom on high.

Here in the Song under the motif of Bride and Bridegroom is revealed the pinnacle of the ways of the Lord in seeking and saving that which is lost. Beyond the fear of the Lord enjoined in Ecclesiastes, and surpassing that of servanthood commended at the conclusion of Proverbs, is the intimate dignity of bridal union. It is this that Solomon's Song brings before us.

This theme has often been alluded to in the Scriptures but here is unveiled in its most glorious and rapturous fullness. "As the Bridegroom rejoices over his Bride, so shall the Lord our God rejoice over you" [Isa.6:25]. The tender words of Ezekiel 16:8 describe the Lord spreading His skirt over Israel at the time of love so that she became His. Christ is Husband indeed to His beautiful and loving Bride, the church [Ephesians 5:23,27], who awaits the longed for day of marital bliss at the marriage supper of the Lamb [Revelation 19:7-9].

But before that glad day, love must bud and blossom ere such a fragrance wafts upwards to His, and our, delight. Solomon's poem traces the spiritual movements of the soul from longings to realization, from prospect to possession, aspiration to consummation, from hesitancy to confidence, immaturity to fullness, and from vacillating affection to love's vehement and inextinguishable flame.

The Bride must progress from her consciousness of being blackened and coarse [1:6] to being altogether beautiful and without blemish in His sight [4:17]. From needing restoration from by-paths of barrenness she moves to reclining in His loving embrace [8:3]. Pastures of nurture must give way to mountain heights of fragrance in rarefied heavenly realms [8:14]. It is necessary that her neglected vineyard [1:6] yet would prolifically yield 1,000 shekels for her Beloved [8:12].

Winter's repast [2:11] must burst forth in bounteous precious fruits both new and old stored up for His delight [7:13]. Self-seeking ease [3:2,3] needs to be cast aside in order to leap with Him on Hermon's peaks [4:8]. From hearkening to competing voices [1:6; 2:15] to attending to her Beloved alone is the certain end of the movements of grace [8:13]. Willful neglect and discipline's scourge [5:3-7] must be replaced by love's willing union and caressing embraces [7:10-13].

Thus from a variety of considerations, the Song narrates the progressive development of love's ever deepening stream. Though she is the Bride, her growing affections are matured into a consistent and fervent constancy as she responds to the intimacy of His love. And thus does her shallow apprehension become expanded into a broad and delightful comprehension, both of what He is to her, and what she is to Him.

The soul of an individual and that of the church must necessarily pass through successive stages in its maturation. It is impossible that transformation by the renewing of the mind could ever take place while the

body is defiled in carnal lusts. And correspondingly, neither can a luxuriant ecstasy of spiritual union be known while the understanding is infantile and stunted.

Of concern in the Song is not that of repentance from corrupting carnality. She can hardly be deemed a Bride who wantonly pours out her lust in fornicating passion. Languishing in drunken vomit renders her unfit to drink His chalice of love surpassing that of wine. A compromised conscience engaged in dubious and devious dealings and dripping with the acid of contention and strife, disqualify from even approaching the Beloved, much less partaking of love's intimacy.

These are the worldly lusts and fleshly snares of death that must be conquered by repentance's grace in the initial and early stages of the spiritual journey as noted in Ecclesiastes. Unless that wholesome hatred of evil born out of the fear of the Lord has captured the heart, the deeds of the flesh will not be denied or put to death. And apart from this, one is incapable of spiritual progress in any capacity; conversion has not yet taken place. Simply stated, the soul that has not repented of the vanities of this corrupt world can never experience the love of Christ.

But once the external, hateful, enfeebling, and corrupting deeds of the flesh have been forsaken and mortified, the soul is then prepared to enter wisdom's school of mental renewal. Proverbs is the classroom where this instruction is gained, the soul enlightened and enlarged, and the former defiled bodily members become harnessed by truth's transforming power into instruments of righteousness.

Truth liberates the bound soul from the graveclothes of sin and death, while strengthening it to walk in newness of life, and enliven its progress unto fruitful service. Thus when the soul's fallow field has been broken up by the plowshare of truth, its stones removed, and its noxious weeds have been uprooted and burned, there then are prepared a fertile bed for love to flourish.

Love cannot be cultivated in the soil of corruption and ignorance whose thorns and thistles are permitted to remain and choke the sprouting of love's bloom. It is this blossoming of devoted affection that Solomon's Song depicts in its successive stages; first the blade, then the bud, followed by the matured grain in the head at the season of love's in gathered harvest [Mk.4:28,29].

This progression from conversion's inception to love's culmination is noted in 2 Peter 1:5-7. The platform upon which the spiritual life stands is that initial introduction of faith and moral excellence apart from which the journey has not yet begun. Fearing God and keeping His commandments according to Ecclesiastes' final assessment of everything under the sun, sets the steps in paths of faith and moral excellence.

Peter goes on to say that to this, knowledge must be added. With this, Proverbs wholeheartedly concurs. It is the truth of heavenly wisdom imparted that leads to the development of the soul in self-control, perseverance, godliness, and brotherly kindness.

The crowning virtue of this blessed progression is that of love, that splendid consummation of the ways of the Lord's fashioning grace. It is the grandest pinnacle of blessedness, both at the conclusion of Peter's progressive outline and of this capstone of Solomon's trilogy, the Song of Songs.

But the movement towards that union of bliss so desired by the Lover of our souls is all too often neglected and retarded by the very church of His espousals. O how fickle and vacillating is the devotion of even the Bride of Christ's desire! How intermittent is her repose upon the Beloved, how often distracted and stupefied by complacency and sluggishness of heart! What extremes of intimacy and estrangement are recounted in this moving saga of love!

She at once pours forth the warmth of fervent desires for a holy union with her Beloved [1:2-4]. Yet cascading from those same lips so soon thereafter is the lamentable confession of a shameful fruitlessness [1:5-6] along with the embarrassing admission that the way of restoration is unknown to her [1:7,8].

Nevertheless, He loves her still. She is brought to His table and then tenderly escorted to their bed whose overarching banner is love, where His left hand is under her head and His right hand embraces the darling of His bosom [1:12-16; 2:6].

But once again, we discover Him without, moving upon the heights, leaping upon the hills, while a wall, a window, and lattice separate the devoted pair. Even yet He calls for her to arise and join Him in concert amidst the things above [2:8-15]. Though her womanly heart is stirred, rather than arising in response to His voice, she urges Him to turn back to join her where she was comforting herself [2:16,17].

She is alone there in bed; no embrace, no delight in loves, and no word from His mouth or kisses from His lips to meet hers [3:1]. O how pathetic the noble and delightful Bride has become! Now alone, wandering in the blackness of midnight, she roams city streets seeking Him who can only be encountered where He is in heavenly places [3:1-3].

Once again, however, communion of purest marital bliss was restored to their mutual satisfaction [3:4 - 5:1]. But how inconsistent is our devotion to Him who loves to the uttermost! Delay of response to the

expressed longing of the Bridegroom, leads to His grieved withdrawal from her unwilling breast [5:2-6]. She must then learn through discipline's rod and shameful exposure that His love cannot be slighted and ignored [5:7].

But, thank God, the love of the Lord Jesus does not wax and wane as does our own. He is found by her seeking heart and love is restored when she recounts the excellence of her Beloved with sober, penitent, and affectionate remembrance [5:10 - 6:9]. It is then that they enter that union of love's unending ecstasy that no torrent of earth can quench [7:1 - 8:14].

Come; let us now reverently glimpse the details of this most sacred and rapturous union between God and man. This is a Song that can only be sung by those whose fervent desires to love the Lord Jesus compel them to pour out their hearts unreservedly unto the honor of Christ alone. None others will join in this chorus. And so may we note well the movements of the soul leading to an increasing intimacy with Him who has loved us so, that we might attain to the spiritual bliss of Christ's pleasure in the Bride of His endearment.

Each verse of the Song will be written out preceding the comments following. The speaker will be identified at the beginning of the quote indicated by a bold abbreviation. **BG** = Bridegroom, **B** = Bride, **C** = Companions, and **HS** = the Holy Spirit.

The translation itself appears in *italic script* and is a composite of English versions and literal renderings from the Hebrew in order to most clearly convey the meaning of the text. The English meaning of the Hebrew names will follow in brackets [].

A Glossary of the principal spiritual meanings of the terms used in the Song is found at the conclusion.

CHAPTER ONE

Summary: Awakened desires for an affectionate intimate union with Christ, her Beloved, prompt His church to solicit kisses from His mouth. Though painfully conscious of unworthiness and neglecting to attend to her own fruitfulness, He nonetheless does not despise, but directs her to pastures of restoration. It is then that they abide together in dwellings of mutual delight.

[1-2]

The Song of Songs which is Solomon's.

B *May He kiss me with the kisses of His mouth!
For Your love is better than wine.*

There is no higher song that may be sung than this of the fervency of Christ's love for His church and the affectionate response of His Bride for Him alone. It is one thing to be guided by the hand to walk in company with Him along the way; it is another altogether to be ardently embraced. Performing useful service dutifully and responsibly cannot be compared to being kissed with the kisses of His lips.

Her desire for kisses is not a lusting of burning passions such as those of the harlot who seizes and presses her mouth to the lips of any male she encounters [Prov.7:13]. Far from it! Hers is rather the expression of a purified and trembling hope that He may likewise wish to kiss her.

Will He desire and delight in me as I do Him? He indeed does and kiss her He will, but not as an impulsive imposition of affection by a Jacob upon a Rachel, attracted by what met his eye and apart from her consent [Gen.29:11,17]. Both must be willing, for it is mutual delight alone that nourishes love.

Love's kiss is not that of a servile subject prostrating before Omnipotence [Ps.2:12], nor that from the lips of a wayward wench, now penitent with tears [Lk.7:38]. The kiss longed for surpasses that upon the neck to restore the prodigal from the slop of swine and mire of wanton women [Lk.15:20]. All of these have their proper place, but that is not what is longed for or could be fitting here.

To experience the intimacy of Divine affection, to be encircled by everlasting arms in a loving embrace is her ardent and consuming thought. Can any joy on earth be compared to this? Never; all earthly delights fade as hollow imitations, as temporary stimulants that can only inflame for a season [Ps.104:15]. There is no love like that of Christ for His Bride, a love to the uttermost, the very flame of the Lord.

[3]

B *Your oils have a pleasing fragrance,
Your Name is like ointment poured forth;
Therefore the virgins love You.*

What rival perfumes of earth can compete with the delightful fragrance of Christ Himself [Eph.5:2]? It is this fragrance of Christ unto God that is the aroma of life unto life [2 Cor.2:14-16] and enamors the heart. Poured out and alluring, all purified souls become captivated with the sensitive inhaling of His oils. It is the excellence of His Name that is a bouquet of spice to the soul.

The Name encapsulates in a single designation the essence of Christ's moral perfections. Compressed in that Name above all names is the strength of a boundless nature that unfolds its sweetness when poured forth. Such attractiveness can only be produced by the multiplied blend of rare spices mixed with the oil of the Holy Spirit [Ex.30:22-33] cascading upon His head and releasing their compelling scent to the sensitive of soul.

Has this fragrance ravished your heart? Are you drawn and aroused to seek out the source of this unique perfume of Divine excellence in Christ? What are we truly seeking amidst the downward pull of life's distractions? May Christ's beauty arrest and attract our hearts to enter into the satisfaction of love's fullness.

[4]

B Draw me!

C We will run after You!

B The King has brought me into His chambers.

C We will rejoice in you and be glad
We will remember Your love more than wine.

B Rightly do they love You!

Let us now introduce the characters presented before us in this Divine drama of love. In the text of the Song, the different speakers are often identified by the use of male or female pronouns in the narrative. There is, of course, the Beloved Bridegroom who portrays the Lord Jesus Christ. His Bride, the Shulammitte, illustrates the church in her honored and privileged glorious consummation. Associated with her are her Companions, the Daughters of Jerusalem, those who are attracted to the excellence of the Groom, but further removed in apprehension and affection than she who is the Bride indeed.

These are the primary characters throughout the unfolding scenes of the Song. The following paraphrase will clarify the interchange that takes place here in verse four:

B - Draw me, my Beloved!

C - We will also run after Him!

B - The King has brought me into His chambers.

C - We will rejoice in you, the Bride, and be glad; we will extol His love more than wine.

B - Rightly do they love You, my Beloved.

O let us cry out with her to be drawn into blissful chambers of the Lover of our souls! She was indeed drawn by cords of love into His chambers, not as a potential candidate undergoing interview, but as the delightful one of His heart.

Daughters of Jerusalem gaze on with joy, but with distant detachment, from entering that intimate scene. Enthusiastic but ignorant, they admire with approval and a measure of appreciation, though they have not tasted of the ecstasy themselves. These Companions are those true virgins who are inclined towards Christ and spiritual things, yet who need to grow in knowledge and understanding before the Lord Jesus becomes their sole worthy object of devotion.

Let us not be content to abide in their company, pleasant as it may be. Let us fervently desire to enter as the Bride and not merely satisfied to remain as spectators, only seeing Him from afar without reposing in His embrace.

[5]

B I am black but lovely, O Daughters of Jerusalem,
Like the tents of Kedar, like the curtains of Solomon.

But such an entrance into closest proximity awakens at once the profound contrast between what she is outwardly and how she is bedecked within. Blackened by a scorching sun under the withering dryness of this desert world, there appears no comeliness to those who judge by appearance and not by Divine assessment. Without is seen the darkened and coarse tents of Kedar [Darkness] by blind beholders who lack insight due to spiritual dullness, Companions though they may be.

But within, seen by Him who looks upon the heart, are the beauties of Solomon's very own tapestries, arrayed in splendor and adorned by grace. Such wondrous knowledge is pleasant to her soul and thus she is emboldened to call to Him and draw near to His bosom, conscious as she is of utter unworthiness.

O delightful Bride, let us not shrink back from pressing on to know His love which surpasses mortal knowledge! Despite our painfully obvious imperfections, we will surely find a kindly reception from Him who loved the church and gave Himself up for her.

[6]

B *Do not stare at me because I am black,
For the sun has burned me.
My mother's sons were angry with me;
They made me caretaker of the vineyards,
But my own vineyard I have not kept.*

The passive and spiritually slothful among the brethren will always criticize inward progress of a worshipping soul that they remain ignorant of. To them, the Bride is to serve their ends though it is to her own demise and neglect of her Beloved. Anger wells up at any rebuke of their own lack of fervor and suggestion that their unwilling hands assume responsibility for their own spiritual progress.

It was even so with Christ's very own disciples. Indignantly they demanded, "Why this waste?" [Mt.26:8,9], when that precious ointment was "squandered" by Mary in anointing her Bridegroom beforehand for burial. But the Lord Jesus' rebuke remains one and the same for all such would-be servants, "Let her alone."

Devoted love poured out in worshipful abandon is ever the highest attainment and greatest delight to the heart of Christ. Do not allow even well meaning Companions to dissuade you from loving the Lord Jesus with all your heart, soul, and mind.

The woman of Proverbs thirty one may be legitimately engaged as "caretaker of the vineyard," evidenced by her diligent provision for household members. But here, she who desires the kisses of His mouth, who esteems His love above the most exhilarating joy that earth affords, cannot be thus engaged.

Martha was a caretaker of the vineyards while neglecting her own [Lk.10:38-42]. How subtly does service draw our hearts away from our One worthy object of devotion! Is it not so? Distracting occupation with heavenly tasks has sapped many a soul from communion with Christ Himself. May we gain instruction from Mary who truly attended to her own vineyard and thus bore a hundredfold, fruit which will not be taken away from her.

In the Song, the vineyard is examined frequently to discern its progress towards fruitfulness. Fruitfulness precedes intimacy and must be jealousy guarded and attended to. Without it, there is nothing desirable and alluring to the Beloved if He encounters barren and withered branches. O may we bear fruit, yea, much fruit, and that abiding fruit of goodness, righteousness, and truth [Eph.5:9] so that He may be glorified and come to partake of its bounty!

[7]

B *Tell me, O You whom my soul loves,
Where do You feed Your flock,
Where do You make it rest at noon?
Why should I be like one who veils herself
By the flocks of Your companions?*

Whenever something arrests, retards, or spoils this bounteous process, in the immediate context of the chapters, there is mention made of His pasture. Food from His shepherd heart is what restores and enlivens the fruitful process. Being bereft of that fruitful end is sure evidence of having neglected the means afforded along the way. She senses the unproductiveness of her soul's endeavors, yet she must admit ignorance of where and how to come under His shepherd's leading.

How shall the soul be restored to paths of righteousness, pastures green, and still waters of repose? By seeking His shepherd care in His meadows of rest and reposing unalarmed in His delightful shade even during the shimmering swelter of noonday's scorching rays.

O why should we attach ourselves to the flock of others even though that of His Companions? Is it for earthly shepherds that we veil ourselves so that we might associate with their fold? Far from it! The longing of the Bride is to abide under His watchful eye, be led by that tender hand, and be carried in the bosom of Him who lays down His life for the sheep.

May the church of His possession turn from its barrenness to earnestly seek the richness of His lavish fields of abundance! There the Great Shepherd of the sheep will complete in her every good grace, working in her what is well pleasing in His sight, even unto the glory of endless day.

[8]

BG *If you do not know, O fairest among women,
Follow in the footsteps of the flock,
And feed your little goats beside the shepherd's tents.*

Surely the way of restoration lies in walking in the ancient paths, those well worn ruts of righteousness, by following the trail that the godly of every generation have trod. There, in His Word and there alone, do we find food from our Beloved's pasture, rest beside untroubled refreshing springs, and drink to the revitalizing of our wearied souls. There we may receive from His own shepherds who, knowing the verdant richness of Immanuel's land, will lead us to feed therein. This truly is caring for our own vineyard; feeding from His Word and reclining in His shade which produces comely fruit for His pleasure.

[9]

BG *To Me, My love, you are like My mare
Among the chariots of Pharaoh.*

See how He now praises her! Amidst the warring multitudes of this world with Satan at its head, she, in power, beauty, and grace, bears Him throughout the land in victorious dignity. Pure of breed and of vibrant sculptured form, she is outstanding among all the maidens and alone qualified as the single object of His heart.

How do we bear Him aloft, how is He lifted up as King by us, His church? Can He rightly describe us as His Bride in this way? May it ever be so that there might be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations.

[10,11]

BG *Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments,
your neck with chains of gold.
C We will make you ornaments of gold
with beads of silver.*

What adornment captures the admiration of the Beloved and endears her to His heart? Golden ornaments with strands of silver beads grace her cheeks and decorate her neck. He beholds that flashing sparkle of golden glory, the very glory of God caressing the loveliness of her face. Silver's redemption purchase price encircles with beauty her graceful neck, which supports every worthy thought and affectionate gaze.

This is what thrills the heart of Christ, to behold the glory of God and redemption's results in the face of His darling. This is the high calling of the Bride for whom He laid down His life. May He find in us what that greater than Solomon longs for, and so may He behold the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

Yet such attractiveness falls short of the ultimate outcome that love's bounty will produce. Her Companions cannot beautify the hidden person of the heart which is what the Bridegroom deems as precious. External adornment is the best that they can offer; true comeliness must be cultivated within.

In the culmination of love's progression, external ornaments are left aside altogether. What the Bride has become in and of herself is then His whole heart's delight, apart from any contributing attractiveness [7:1-9].

The descriptions of the qualities, excellence of character, and desirability of each other are expressed in the Song when they become manifest and are apprehended. Her character and appreciation are emerging and developing; His are constant and abounding. He commends when hers blossom forth, no more as a hidden potential, but as an evident realization. She praises Him when that which has been present all the while in the Beloved, is at last recognized by her increasing affectionate faculty of perception.

[12]

B *While the King is at His table,
My spikenard sends forth its fragrance.*

What fragrance of Christ unto God wafts heavenward to the delight and allurement of our Beloved King of Glory? When we recline with Him at His table of remembrance, does our perfume ravish His heart? Like Mary of Bethany, do we pour forth this precious ointment upon His feet in deepest humility of devotion so that His house is filled with the fragrance [Jn.12:3]?

Does the sweet scent of ardent affection rise to enrapture the Lord Jesus with His Bride when gathered to break bread? Surely if this be so, He will seek the source of such sweetness that He may draw near in enjoyment of the darling of His good pleasure.

[13,14]

B *My Beloved is to me a bundle of myrrh
which lies all night between my breasts.
My Beloved is to me a cluster of henna blossoms
in the vineyards of Engedi.*

He, to her, is as the delightful fragrance of crushed myrrh which only releases its odor when beaten and bruised. It is Christ's suffering love in being wounded for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities that she cherishes in the ardency of full affection. This she clasps close to her heart, kept by enamored devoted love throughout the night of His rejection here in this darkened evil age. He Himself is her hidden, private, and secret rapture, treasured upon breasts of fond affection.

Outwardly, His loveliness is her beauty and adornment. Clusters of pungent pure white henna blooms are her glory. He is this to her, a fragrant glory of purity. This is to be found at Engedi, the stronghold of the King [I Sam.23:29] in the region of flowing streams of abundant life [Ezek.47:10]. May Christ be so to us, our glory, beauty of holiness, and refuge from whence abundance of life overflows!

[15]

BG *Behold, you are fair, My love!
Behold, you are beautiful!
Your eyes are like doves.*

Her attractive beauty initially, as it always must be, is her gentle and peaceful eyes like those of doves. This is what from the onset He longs to gaze into, eyes that are pure and steadfast in their singleness of desire [Mt.6:22]. These are the inner lamps of the soul, clear and unclouded, focused and attentive. O may there not be discovered dimness, or much less darkness, when the Beloved turns His penetrating yet loving gaze upon us. What does He behold when looking into the eyes of His Bride? And what does she see when peering out upon Him?

[16]

B *Behold, You are handsome, my Beloved!
Yes, and pleasant! Also, our bed is green.*

The bridal bed of love is verdant with life, decked out with all that is suitable for the habitation of God [Isa.60:13]. The bed is green – full of life flowing sap to sustain fruitfulness even in days of drought, vibrant and productive, quite unlike that dry tree of the eunuch who has no spouse of love [Isa.56:3]. Thus does Christ's love for His Bride culminate in the union of life in mutual rapture. It is this that the soul of the church is being prepared for during days of separation here below in this world. May we be found to be so in that glad coming day.

[17]

B *The beams of our houses are cedars,
Our rafters are firs.*

We occupy with our Beloved, not a single dwelling alone, but rather houses crafted of cedar beams [I K.6:9; 7:12]. The church abides both in a glorious temple as well as in the private inner chambers of His domicile. We move with our Great Solomon as a Queen in the temple of His majesty while equally embracing Him as His devoted lover within His own abode; outwardly holy and glorious, inwardly fervent in affection.

CHAPTER TWO

Summary: Love must arise spontaneously without artificial incentives, being aroused by a deepening knowledge and desire for Christ. Though a distance still separates us from our Beloved, He yet with gracious longing, calls His church to blossom forth from a barren bleakness and join Him in the things above. But magnificent as is His offer, sadly self is still evident in her appeal for Him to turn aside and join her, rather than arising to ascend at His loving appeal.

[1,2]

B *I am the rose of Sharon, the lily of the valley.*
BG *Like a lily among thorns,*
So is My love among the daughters.

She derives her assessment of herself from His valuation in His sight. This is the true apprehension; what the Bride is to the heart of Christ, not what we esteem ourselves to be. Self esteem is that most wretched of all estimations, proceeding as it does from deceitful hearts inflated by their own conceits. Let us abide with joy in all that Christ Himself has declared His church to be and shun as worthless the bankrupt valuation of men and of self.

[3]

B *Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest,*
So is my Beloved among the sons.
I sat down in His shade with great delight,
And His fruit was sweet to my taste.

O what is Christ to His Bride? He is incomparable among the sons of men! Where else can we repose in a shade that affords relief from the scorching rays of withering discomfort and the sweating toil of this cursed creation? Nothing but partaking of the crisp saturated nectar of Christ's prolific fullness refreshes and invigorates the longing soul! Let us arise and taste and not simply admire. Admiration stirs the emotion, partaking nourishes and delights the inner man with love's sweetness.

[4-6]

B *He brought me to His banqueting house,*
And His banner over me is love.
Sustain me with raisin cakes, refresh me with apples,
For I am lovesick.
His left hand is under my head,
And His right hand embraces me.

What a haven this description affords the soul of the church as she passes through this wearisome world! In Christ there is a private environment, a place of secret and sacred refuge. Come and partake of a joy in His house of wine that exceeds any delight upon earth while reposed under His overarching banner of love!

There we may abide unmolested, invigorated by His stored up raisins of sweetness. These are the preserved and concentrated delicacies derived from Christ, the True Vine. Unspoiled, unfermented, and apart from fleshly dissipation is the fruit stemming from our Beloved that abides to gratify the soul in vitality and joy.

Christ is the refreshing portion of every longing soul. Truly, His fruit sustains love, and there is none other that nourishes and satisfies like the love apples of the Lord Jesus. Yes, let His Bride recline here, caressed by His fondest embrace within His chambers of love. This is life, yea, and life abundant indeed!

[7]

BG *I charge you, O Daughters of Jerusalem,
By the gazelles or by the hinds of the field,
Do not arouse or awaken love until it pleases.*

At this juncture, when fully yielded to the advances of Christ's love, the Daughters of Jerusalem are charged: If, like the gazelles, you truly love with purest affectionate breasts [4:5; 7:8] and if you are moving nimbly as the hinds in step with things above [Ps.18:33], then do not arouse love until it pleases.

Love, if genuine, must be the spontaneous affection of heart that is aroused by no artificial enticements and certainly not by coercion. Above all, the Lord values that voluntary delight in His person and the ardent desire to know and love Him. True love springs up from the pure fount of appreciation of His excellence apart from considerations of self and void of unworthy motives.

It is the prerogative of the Bridegroom alone to awaken love [8:5]. Any other source is a polluted spring and a trampled well, muddied and spoiled by the efforts of men. Love for Christ must arise without pretense and intimidation, being a free and guiltless response to the loveliness of His peerless person alone.

[8,9]

B *The voice of my Beloved! Behold, He comes,
Leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.
My Beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag.
Behold, He stands behind our wall;
He is looking through the windows,
He is gazing through the lattice.*

O how quickly the scene of our soul's landscape can be altered! What petty carelessness shifts the scenes from rapturous embrace within chambers of love to the distant call of her Beloved echoing on hills of separation! Behold Him now on the heights; swift in movement as the gazelle [2 Sam.2:18] and full of ardent longing as a hart ascending to lofty water brooks [Ps.42:1].

He is without in fullest liberty and movement in the heights while she abides alone groveling in the things below. No more is His left hand under her head with love's right hand embracing, here He is now outside the wall looking in, seen only in part through shifting shadows filtered through the concealing lattice. But, bless the Lord, though separated from the desire of His heart, He yet sees and calls.

[10-13]

B *My Beloved spoke and said to me:
BG Arise, My love, My beautiful one, and come away.
For behold, winter is past, the rain is over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth;
The time of singing has come,
And the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.
The fig tree forms its early fruit,
And the vines in blossom have given forth their fragrance.
Arise, My love, My beautiful one, and come away!*

Warmth of desires [1:4] may cool. What once was an all consuming passion can equally decline into low ebb of complacency exposing the mire of neglect where there once was a springing stream of devotion. It is from this dull and disinterested valley of unresponsiveness that Christ's word echoes from the surrounding hills, "Arise, My love, and come away!"

When the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in His wings, will we awake from hibernation and also arise, pushing through earth's imprisoning soil to stretch forth tendrils of expectant new life? O what can we say to our Beloved to justify continuing in winter's stark apparent lifelessness? Yes, life may be present hidden beneath our rough outer bark, but it lies unmoved within as a cold dormant sap that no more courses in budding bloom.

Too often has the church been silhouetted against the slate of a cheerless grey horizon. Wind swept barren twigs, naked of leaves; have risen heavenward with trembling gnarled fingers void of fruit, only to be met with a dark winter's frigid stare. The dreary gloom of the soul's season of fruitlessness has drawn to a close; Spring has dawned with its joyous singing.

Bride of the Beloved, the time is past; the voice of the Heavenly Dove is calling you to arise and come along: Abandon the cold barrenness of your hardened soil, yield to Christ's embrace, and enter His fragrant fields of fruitfulness.

All of nature instinctively arises from its hibernation into the freshness of new life in response to the summer's advent. Will you, My love, do the same at the beckoning of your Beloved? The question is for us.

[14]

BG *O My dove, in the clefts of the rock,
In the secret place of the cliff, let Me see your countenance,
Let Me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet,
And your countenance is lovely.*

Public display is not what Christ desires. Loveliness beheld in private is what He earnestly seeks. O what are we to Christ in the secret place? What does He behold there, what tones grace His ears? Are we comely to Him in form and sweet of voice?

Let us enter the clefts of the rock even as Moses was hidden there and behold the glory of the Lord [Ex.33:22]. Surely we shall catch a glimpse of that same glory when, as a Bride, we unveil ourselves before His loving gaze, and He in turn rests His eyes upon that glorious countenance of the prize of His heart.

[15]

Brothers *Catch the foxes for us,
The little foxes that spoil the vines,
For our vineyards are in bloom.*

Whose voice will we give heed to? Shall we arise and proceed in loving fellowship with our Heavenly Groom, or shall we hearken to the voice of men, even our brethren, who would solicit us to turn aside unto their concerns? Let us remember soberly that tending the vineyards of her brothers was a snare to her spiritual vitality [1:6]. O Bride of the Lamb, do not allow the pleas of men to turn you aside from tending your own vineyard and going out after Christ with obedient steps of ardent desire!

Little foxes do indeed spoil the blossoming vines, and they must be eliminated from the vineyard with diligent militancy. They ruin the fruit by destroying the early signs of new life. Development into a harvest of joy is cancelled because its initial progress has been cut off by that crafty fox of old that first spoiled Eden's bounty.

It is not against elephants of carnality that we need to keep vigil; those were cast out in the soul's early history during the Ecclesiastes stage. Rather, it is against the wiles of the little foxes that will ravage the now fruitful progress; little foxes of neglect, irritation, sloth, and uncharitable thoughts.

It is the seemingly insignificant troubled waters of the inner man that frustrate progress in intimate oneness with Christ. He who is faithful in a very little thing will be faithful also in much; and the converse is also all too true. And if fruit will reach maturity's fullness, each must attend to his own vineyard. None else can keep it for us.

[16,17]

B *My Beloved is mine, and I am His.
He feeds His flock among the lilies,
until the day dawns and the shadows flee away.
Turn, my Beloved, and be like a gazelle
Or a young stag on the mountains of Bether.*

As thrilling to the heart as is the thought that My Beloved is mine, there is something greater far than that. Such expressions of delight yet have a scent of self about them. Her focus is upon what He is to her and not what she is to Him.

Witness the progress of soul when she exclaims in 6:3, "I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine." Here He has the first place, but not the exclusive place; space is still afforded for herself. But compare these with that of her final settled confession in 7:10, "I am my Beloved's and His desire is for me."

Here is the final outcome of the development of grace in the Bride of His desire: Self is lost sight of altogether as He has become all and all to her. May the Lord Jesus fill such a place in the affections of His Bride that He might indeed have "preeminence in all things" [Col.1:18].

Truly Shepherd care and food from His rich pasture is needed to restore the soul. But how often we partake to no profit! She now knows the way of restoration that she was ignorant of in 1:7,8, yet even the Word of Christ does not suffice to renew communion if His church does not arise and come.

O Bride of the Lamb, opportunity is afforded to you as long as it is still called today. But when the shadows flee away and darkness steals over the fields, she herself will be plunged into gross darkness if she has not arisen to join Him in the light of day.

Arising swiftly, obediently, and gladly, is our only option to reestablish affection's fellowship. Let us not craft compromising alternatives of our own benighted invention. May we ever beware of that wretched demand from an estranged heart that would require Him to turn from His course and come to walk in our way!

Will He turn aside at our beck and call? Do we actually expect that He will hearken to our voice while we have disdained to respond to His own? It could never be! Such a Bride must abide alone upon her self conceived mountains of Bether [Separation/Division]. He will not join her there.

CHAPTER THREE

Summary: Communion with Christ will never be realized while we seek our own desires in neglect of His good will. Christ will not be encountered roaming through the alleys of man's city. The church must seek Christ where He may be found, though it be through discipline. May we not let Him go! Cling to the King of Glory, waiting the coming glad day of marital bliss!

[1]

B *On my bed in the nights I sought the One I love;
I sought Him, but I did not find Him.*

She ought to have been running with arms intertwined with those of her Beloved in the daysprings of heavenly communion. Instead, she is settled alone upon her bed, nor more green as in 1:16, but one of willful neglect – no embrace, no delight in loves, and no word from His mouth or kisses from His lips. Truly this is a soul abiding in darkness and futile longings.

He will never be encountered on our terms in a self-conceived search, vainly seeking Him where He cannot be found. Is this not the empty claim of a pharisaical charade? “O, how I long to know the Lord; I really want to please Him!” Then arise from your self-deceived bed of hypocrisy and seek Him where He may be found. We discover to our shame and rebuke that the Lord of glory is not at our beck and call as some dutiful lackey. Failing to hearken to His voice results in His refusal to respond to ours.

[2]

B *I will rise now and go about the city;
In the streets and broadways, I will seek the One I love.
I sought Him, but did not find Him.*

O how that frigid and hateful pronoun, “I,” surfaces repeatedly at this juncture! Her arising now was in self-will, not in response to His voice in the slightest. And did her guilty seeking lead to recovering the Beloved's abiding presence? It did not.

Christ is not to be found in the streets and broadways of our self-appointed course. He is moving in the things above, not wending His way through man-made byways and back alleys of human invention.

[3]

B *The watchmen who go about the city found me –
Have you seen Him whom my soul loves?*

Why is a Bride wandering in the blackness of midnight, roving through city streets seeking Him whose call was to arise and run with Him in the light of day and among the things above? Truly the watchmen will find her. It is not without discipline that He is encountered when once we have slighted and refused His beckoning call to move in company with Him.

The watchmen guard against improprieties in the night, to accost, convict, arrest, and punish waywardness in the darkness. It is a humbling and shameful thing to come to the attention of the watchmen. Her expectation in soliciting their assistance was vain; the Bridegroom does not roam in the darkness through the streets of man's city. Watchmen will never encounter Him there, much less a Bride.

[4]

B Scarcely had I passed by them, when I found the One I love.
I held Him and would not let Him go,
until I had brought Him into my mother's house,
And into the room of her who conceived me.

Separation may result from a number of causes. The subtle coolness of the Bride's self occupation is sufficient to estrange ever as much as a Jacob's fierce resistance in self will. Hers was not a wrestling of contention and fleshly belligerence as was his, but arose out of an unconcerned reluctance to respond to the expressed desires of His heart. In the end, both clung to their Lord; Jacob, in order to gain blessing for himself, and the Bride in order to bring her Beloved to the chamber of love's bestowal. Hers was the better and nobler portion.

[5]

BG I charge you, O Daughters of Jerusalem,
By the gazelles or by the hinds of the field,
Do not arouse or awaken love until it pleases.

Clinging leads to communion restored and a caution renewed [2:7]. Let there be no artificial manipulative influences or motives to arouse My Bride's love and longing. It is for Me alone to awaken purity's desires.

[6-8]

HS Who is this coming up from the wilderness
Like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
With all the merchant's fragrant powders?
Behold, it is Solomon's couch,
With sixty mighty men around it,
Of the mighty men of Israel.
They all hold swords, expert in war;
Each man has his sword upon his thigh
Because of terror in the nights.

Can there be a more arresting sight than the King of grace Himself approaching majestically with girded mighty sword in victorious procession with garments exuding fragrant myrrh and all scented powders [Ps.45:1-8]? He marches in the triumph of redeeming grace with smoking clouds of fragrant incense [Rev.8:4] ascending to cover the mercy seat [Lev.16:12,13] and comes forth to speak peace to the Bride of His espousals.

[9,10]

HS Of the wood of Lebanon
King Solomon made for himself a carriage.
He made its pillars of silver, its support of gold,
its seat of purple, its interior paved with love,
By the Daughters of Jerusalem.

The Greater Solomon moves through the world in the Divine glory of redeeming grace. His carriage in which He rides is crafted of aromatic planks that flourish in the pure snows of Lebanon [Whiteness]. So too was a noble vessel prepared for our Lord Jesus to come into this world with the fragrance of a consecrated pure humanity grown to majestic proportions, lofty in grandeur, and magnificent to behold.

He Himself is the unshakable support that upholds the glory of Solomon's temple, and that in a two-fold manner. Those dual pillars that all in His house rest upon are Jachin [He shall establish] and Boaz [In Him is strength] [I K.7:21], both mighty columns of silver's redemption purchase price.

He rests against the golden back of an untarnished and undimmed Divine glory. The King of glory is seated upon a throne of purpled royal splendor and its entire interior is devotedly paved with love's luxuriance. This is His environment and grand deportment as He passes among men: glory, redemption's purchase price, majestic sovereignty to establish in might all who join Him in the train of His love. And He is coming thus to meet His awaiting Bride. O may we keep our garments unspotted for that glorious day!

[11]

HS *Go forth, O daughters of Zion,
And see King Solomon with the crown
With which his mother crowned him
On the day of his wedding,
The day of the gladness of his heart.*

Can you see the tiara of glory resting upon His brow of majesty? It is none other than His crowning virtuous wife [Prov.12:4] who rejoices His heart and redounds to His renown. Truly this is the doing of the Lord by crowning Him thus with so excellent a diadem [Prov.19:14; 18:22], one fashioned by His mother; that true Sarah, the Jerusalem above [Gal.4:26], who graciously fitted her to be the glorious Bride of His nuptials.

CHAPTER FOUR

Summary: The true estimate of what the Bride is can only be discovered through Christ's Word who beholds what He alone can perceive. May the church ever respond with welcome reception for her Beloved, who comes to partake of her choice fruits.

[1]

BG *Behold, you are fair, My love!
Behold, you are beautiful!
Your eyes are like doves behind your veil.
Your hair is like a flock of goats
Descending from Mount Gilead.*

How beautiful is the devoted Bride refusing to let go of her Beloved! Her eyes again, as they did initially in 1:15, are what arrest His heart with delight. These are no wanton eyes [Isa.3:16] of brazen flashing to seduce and captivate [Prov.6:25], but are pristinely pure, gentle, and godly which are kept in modesty for Him alone discreetly concealed behind her veil.

And behold the glorious locks of her hair [I Cor.11:15] a living outward evidence of the testimony obtained flowing down from Gilead's [Heap of witness] heights.

[2]

BG *Your teeth are like a flock of shorn sheep
Which have come up from their washing,
Every one of which bears twins,*

And none is barren among them.

Pristinely white and fully formed with none missing, she has a strong capacity to assimilate His food. By reason of consistent feeding she has grown to a stature to receive and digest meat with godly discernment [Heb.5:14]. Lips of the infantile may be capable of receiving milk, but that is all. Strong meat is for a fully formed and mature Bride who delights in His ever deepening nourishment contained in His Word. Such capacity renders her beautiful to behold.

[3]

BG *Your lips are like a scarlet thread,
And your mouth is lovely.
Your temples are like a slice of a pomegranate behind your veil.*

Here are purity's lips marked by redeeming grace with which to affectionately press to those of her Beloved's, fully prepared to receive His reciprocating kiss of endearment. That lovely mouth whose voice has been so often longed to be known [2:14] is now opened uttering words of love that caress His ears with delight. And on the right and the left of her lovely face are temples of prolific meditation, beds of fruitful thoughts behind her veil; a mind that is stayed upon her Beloved and kept for Him alone.

[4]

BG *Your neck is like the tower of David, built for an armory
On which hang a thousand shields, all shields of mighty men.*

O precious tower, armory, and shield of a neck that remains upright and steadfast to defend from all assaults to wander to the right or the left and turn her aside from her Beloved!

[5]

BG *Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle
which feed among the lilies.*

O how breasts of devotion ravage the heart of Christ! Behold those identically formed twins coming forth with that uniformity of love's pregnant affectionate fullness! These are not twins of diverse and antagonistic natures such as Esau and Jacob, but ones with a complementary testimony of united ardent tenderness that swiftly respond to love's advances as does the gazelle [2 Sam. 2:18]. Turn to the left or gaze upon the right, an identical flame of pure desire burns within her bounteous bosom for the Beloved of her soul.

But such affection must be nourished in purity's fields of lilies ere it increases into fullness of love at the dawn of eternal Day. Breasts of devoted ardor do not grace the infantile and immature [8:8], but must be nurtured by habitual feeding upon the richness of Christ's fertile field of love. May we not neglect the Word of our Good Shepherd found in this lily pastureland, but perpetually partake of the loveliness of the Lord Jesus encountered therein that will ensure development unto an intimacy of satisfaction.

[6-8]

BG *until the day breaks and the shadows flee away,
I will go My way to the mountain of myrrh
And to the hill of frankincense.
You are all fair, My love, and there is no blemish in you.
Come with Me from Lebanon, My bride,
With Me from Lebanon. Look from the top of Amanah,
From the top of Senir and Hermon,
From the lion's den, from the mountains of the leopards.*

His realm is in the heights of heavenly places: His call is to that most pleasing of all odors, that of excellence of character, to drink in the refreshing purity of Lebanon's snows [Jer.18:14], where she will become rooted and fragrant [Hos.14:5,6], both lofty and glorious [Isa.2:13], and to abide in Amana [Constancy], the abode of a sure and settled provision.

Come, Bride of the Lamb, and ascend embraced in everlasting arms unto the peak of Hermon [Devoted] from whence you can gaze down with Him in expanded vistas from His vantage point above [Col.3:1-3]. This is where He desires us to be without fear, where the kings of the kingdoms are subdued.

Yes, you can pass before the den of lions while treading through the leopard's lair. All have been subjugated by the Lord on high [Isa.11:6], on whose mountain nothing shall hurt or destroy, even forevermore [Isa.11:9].

[9,10]

BG *You have ravished My heart, My sister, My bride;
You have ravished My heart with one look of your eyes,
With one chain of your necklace.
How fair is your love, My sister, My bride!
How much better than wine is your love,
And the scent of your perfume than all spices!*

There is a decided unearthliness about a heart that flows with the well-springs of love for Christ. Nothing on earth can approximate such love that transcends the natural, having its source in the everlasting hills of a Divine fount.

His heart is ravished as He but glimpses in her what He Himself has kindled within her breast, even love for Him which proceeds from Himself. And thus the mystery of love's unseen impulses are laid bare; love is from God [I Jn.4:7] so that we thus love, because He first loved us [I Jn.4:19].

[11]

BG *Your lips, My bride, drip as the honeycomb,
Honey and milk are under your tongue,
And the fragrance of your garments
Is like the fragrance of Lebanon.*

What can compare to the supreme blessing of love's fragrant and fruitful abundance descending from heaven and filling our mouths with its sweetness [Deut.26:15]? All that the Lord has promised as an inheritance in the fatness of His Canaan is found upon the lips of Christ's Bride. And truly, the mouth speaks forth that which fills the heart. Church of His delight, may the richness of His milk and honeycomb abide within that this may be the testimony upon our lips.

[12,15]

BG *A garden locked is My sister, My bride,
A spring shut up, a fountain sealed.
A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters,
And streams from Lebanon.*

O may we keep our springs of love ever fresh and undefiled from the contaminating death swirling about in earth's polluted atmosphere [Num.19:15]! See to it that the wells of affectionate refreshment are secured from the noxious fumes of this world! Let us resist intrusion into the sacred chambers of our hearts as stoutly as a

castle's stony bulwark. And may He alone who has the key of David [Rev.3:7] be admitted within its enclosure to imbibe what has been stored up for Him alone, even love's reservoir of crystalline purity.

[13,14]

BG *Your plants are an orchard of pomegranates
With pleasant fruits, fragrant henna with spikenard,
Spikenard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon,
With all trees of frankincense, myrrh and aloes,
With all the finest spices.*

A variegated bouquet of garden incense wafts their delectable sweetness heavenward. Some emit their scent when dampened with distilling dews. Others radiate their pungent nectar under the excitement of the sun's caressing beams. And then there are those whose perfume is only awakened when pierced and crushed, releasing their sap's sorrowing aroma.

In any and every condition of life, there is afforded the grace of emitting the fragrance of Christ unto God. The greater the variety of flowers and fruits cultivated therein will only adorn and enhance the desirability of the Beloved for His garden of delights. Yes, even sufferings' blooms arise with their own compelling sweetness.

[15]

BG *A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters,
And streams from Lebanon.*

From the lofty realms upon Lebanon's snowcapped slopes of Hermon, descend purity's refreshing and revitalizing streams, saturating the verdant meadows of the plains and springing up in pools of perpetual freshness. So does the life and grace of that living water from the Holy Spirit, ever well up to everlasting life in the soul of Christ's Bride, descending from on high to His thirsty lowlands below.

[16]

B *Awake, O north wind, and come, O south!
Blow upon my garden, that its spices may flow out.
Let my Beloved come to His garden
And eat its choice fruits!*

A calm warming breath from the south wafts its comforting zephyr amidst the fragrant blossomed delights that comprise the Bride's fertile enclosed field. A bouquet of delicious aromas floats alluringly over those secluded walls, being borne aloft by the south wind's gentle messenger. Those spices will permeate the atmosphere of love and compel the Lover of her soul to enter and imbibe what has been stored up for Him there.

But there are two winds that are spoken of here. Though it is the chilling and buffeting gales from icy northern regions that whip and torment the fragile succulents within her private garden, she yet welcomes them. Whatever may be the impelling cause for fragrance to attract her Bridegroom to come and eat of its choice fruits, let it come. Indeed, "the Lord has His way in the whirlwind and in the storm" [Nah.1:3]. Shrink not from the north wind's severe mercy; it only serves to hasten the Beloved's willing steps to flee into His garden of love.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary: He comes in to her and joyously tastes of her delights. But, alas, how self can so soon spoil our communion with Christ! Failing to respond to His loving voice leaves us bereft of His nearness which can only be restored through discipline's stern scourge. Recounting to our souls the perfections of Christ, rekindles holy desires for the spiritual breach to be mended.

[1]

BG *I have come to My garden, My sister, My bride;
I have gathered My myrrh with My spice.
I have eaten My honeycomb and My honey;
I have drunk My wine with My milk.*
HS *Eat, O friends! Drink, yes, drink deeply,
O beloved ones!*

He comes in to her and partakes of the sweetness and delights found in her; myrrh [4:14], honey, wine, and milk [4:10,11]. The Holy Spirit says: "Eat, friends; drink, yes drink abundantly, beloved ones!" May the produce of our hearts be for His pleasure and delight alone as we recline in this Divine affectionate fellowship!

[2]

B *I slept, but my heart is awake. A voice!
My Beloved knocks -*
BG *Open for Me, My sister, My love,
My dove, My perfect one;
For My head is drenched with dew,
My locks with the drops of the night.*

She sleeps, yet is awake. As dull and self-complacent as we may be, as unconscious of the activities of life in the light of day, and however muddled our minds may be with distorted imaginations and unreal dreams during our seasons of lying in the dark, nevertheless, there is an irresistible faculty in the heart of Christ's true Bride that thrills at the sound of His voice and stirs her inward parts with longing, though the feet may yet be tardy in rising to open to the Beloved of her soul.

Are you still sleeping? Arise, the betrayer is at hand [Mt.26:45,46]. Let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober [I Thess.5:6]. Indeed, the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak [Mt.26:41].

He is outside seeking entrance, knocking to solicit her loving embrace. She here resembles the church of Laodicea; rich, comfortable, needing and desiring nothing in her own self-occupied ease and assessment, thoroughly callously careless of Christ's concerns.

[3]

B *I have taken off my dress, how can I put it on again?
I have washed my feet; how can I defile them?*

O wretched self-occupation! How grievous is the disregard of our Beloved's desire! All loving words of appeal were sucked into the black hole of self's bottomless abyss. Christ had become an inconvenience to her.

Love had burned down to an ash heap of smoldering stinging smoke, refusing to be refueled by her own disdainful hands.

The charge to not awaken or arouse love till it pleases, finds its chilling counterpart in the willful lethargy of a Bride whose love for self was aroused which effectively quenched what many waters cannot. O let us not be deceived! Love does not seek its own [I Cor.13:5]. Seeking one's own interests and not those of Christ Jesus evaporates the well springs of love, leaving only dried cracked cisterns upon the sun baked shifting sands of self.

[4-6]

B My Beloved put His hand by the latch of the door,
And my heart yearned for Him.
I arose to open for my Beloved,
And my hands dripped with myrrh,
my fingers with liquid myrrh on the handles of the lock.
I opened for my Beloved,
But my Beloved had turned away and had gone!
My heart went forth when He spoke.
I sought Him, but I could not find Him;
I called Him, but He gave me no answer.

She who was to Him as a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon [4:15], has become a mocking mirage; no warmth of welcome, no joyful entrance, much less a fond embrace and kiss of love. Grief stricken, He withdraws from the coolness of her unconcern back into the dew drenched darkness, leaving her in silence's solitude.

Tardiness of response to the longing of the Bridegroom is a breach of love itself. O Bride of Christ, let us soberly rehearse and gain instruction from the chilling progression attending all self-willed neglect: Dullness leads to distance, departure, darkness, and discipline.

[7]

B The watchmen who went about the city found me.
They struck me, they wounded me;
The keepers of the walls took my veil away from me.

Can there be a more solemn scene than that of a Bride encountering the watchmen in the dead of night? They are not mild as before [3:3], for when a degree of intimacy has been enjoyed and known, discipline becomes more severe if the heart once again regresses into self-occupation. Wounds to the flesh are inflicted, for it is the flesh that needs rebuke and restoration. Her veil is torn from her as it had become only a vain external show of exclusive devotion which had since waned and vanished. Bruised by His scourge and stripped naked of all pretense, she is exposed to the eye of all in that coldness of estranged love.

[8,9]

B I charge you, O Daughters of Jerusalem,
If you find my Beloved,
That you tell Him that I am lovesick!
C What is your Beloved more than another beloved,
O fairest among women?
What is your Beloved more than another beloved,
That you so charge us?

Do not be deceived. No assistance from others can restore the heart to leaning upon her Beloved. It is she who must arise and pursue and ardently seek. Recourse to others, pure as they may be, in our search for Him whom we have spurned, is worse than vain as it solicits the arm of the flesh to aid the Spirit.

How can those who are not the Bride join her to find a Bridegroom that they do not know? These Daughters of Jerusalem had not even apprehended His supremacy of character in unrivaled distinction among the sons of men. Ignorance of Christ renders us useless, both to ourselves, and to others.

Let our own souls join with her as she recounts the excellence of her Beloved as surpassing that of all others.

[10]

B *My Beloved is white and ruddy,
Outstanding among ten thousand.*

He indeed is white: To behold Him is to encounter purity's perfection incarnate, majestic as the Ancient of Days Himself [Dan.7:9] and exalted in unstained glory [Rev.1:14]. Behold Him, vibrant in health and flushed with that coursing flow of unseen life within [Lev.17:11] that is revealed in the radiant ruddiness of His face!

[11]

B *His head is like the finest gold;
His locks are like clusters of dates, and black as a raven.*

Every contemplation and expression, all desires and decisions proceeding from His fitly proportioned head, radiate with gold's untarnished Divine glory. And His locks remain sweetly full and black as midnight with no evidence of graying decline; abiding unchanged yesterday, today, and yea, forevermore.

[12]

B *His eyes are like doves by the rivers of waters,
Bathed in milk and fitly set.*

When bridal eyes are turned towards those of her Beloved's, they appear as bathed with milk. Truly, all of His perceptions are undefiled and clear having passed through the washing of the milk of the Word [I Pet.2:2]. Behold those piercing eyes, fitly set displaying no dimness and penetrating even to the hidden chambers of the heart.

Yet they infiltrate as doves, gentle in compassion and tender in mercy: Yes, so He is to the darling of His bosom. Yet to His enemies who would not have Him reign over them, His eyes flash with a flame of fire which will consume His adversaries [Rev.1:14; Heb.10:27]. May we not shrink from His all-searching gaze, it is only to discern and reveal what is within which He alone is capable of beholding [Ps.139:23,24].

[13]

B *His cheeks are a bed of spices, banks of scented herbs.
His lips are lilies, dripping with liquid myrrh.*

O Bride of Christ, recall to your heart those sweetly scented cheeks that tenderly give expression to His wholly desirable countenance that you might be stirred with longing to behold His face! What will it be when the lips of our Beloved overflowing in suffering love are pressed to His Bride's in the unending embrace of eternal Day?

[14]

B His hands are rods of gold set with beryl;
His abdomen is carved ivory inlaid with sapphires.

All of His skillful works, the uplifting kindness of supporting care, and those gentle caressing intimacies are performed by glorious hands of Divine love. Everything He touches and fashions is done so to the glory of God.

His belly encloses delicate inner parts, bowels of mercy, tenderhearted compassions, and affectionate longing desires. All are preserved in the unwavering solidity of pure ivory's smoothly polished whiteness, laced with the precious treasure of protecting love.

[15,16]

B His legs are pillars of marble
Set on pedestals of fine gold;
His countenance is like Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.
His mouth is full of sweetness. Yes, He is altogether lovely.
This is my Beloved, and this is my friend,
O Daughters of Jerusalem!

He stands immovable in unshakable stature, never weakening or faltering in His glorious and magnificent stance, even unto eternity's continual timeless Day where He shall stand truly as the Last [Job 19:25]. Every Word proceeding from His mouth is full of sweetly nourishing delight [Deut.8:3; Jer.15:16].

This is the testimony of the Bride concerning her Beloved. Is this how we perceive Him? How will we respond to the inquiry, "What is your Beloved more than another beloved, that you so charge us?" May our own hearts be filled with such a reply.

CHAPTER SIX

Summary: The church must resort once again to feeding in His green pastures which alone can reinstate the soul. Then her Beloved will reunite their bond of love which exalts her far above all who are noble upon earth. Thus favored, no more will she hearken to other voices and be turned aside into a camp separate from the love of Christ.

[1]

C *Where has your Beloved gone, O fairest among women?
Where has your Beloved turned aside,
That we may seek Him with you?*

How can they find Him if they do not search where He may be found? Ignorance of the ways of the Lord will prevent the soul from encountering Him, much less from loving Him. There is a decided difference between moving in concert with the Bride and following her directives and seeking the Bridegroom Himself. Abraham walked with God while Lot merely walked with Abraham, and the Daughters of Jerusalem follow in Lot's steps.

[2,3]

B *My Beloved has gone to His garden,
To the beds of spices, to feed His flock in the gardens
And to gather lilies.
I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine.
He feeds His flock among the lilies.*

It is one thing to know where Christ can be found, it is another to arise, seek, and meet with Him there. O how many there are whose knowledge is not complemented by a corresponding communion! Feeding amidst His lilies is the certain means of encountering Him who delights to restore the soul of His erring flock and set their feet once again in paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

She is the garden [4:12-16 and 5:1] and knows it very well.

[4]

BG *O My love, you are as beautiful as Tirzah,
As lovely as Jerusalem, awesome as an army with banners!*

Despite her tardiness, He looks beyond the momentary breach of her customary endearing devotion and lauds her beauty, as magnificent as Tirzah [Pleasure/Beauty] itself. Truly this is a love that covers a multitude of sins [Prov.10:12] that magnifies His glory in overlooking transgressions [Prov.19:11]. Yes, in His sight she is as gorgeous as beauty itself and as lovely as the tabernacles of His dwelling, the very longing of His heart [Ps.84:1,2].

[5-7]

BG *Turn your eyes away from Me, for they have disturbed Me.
Your hair is like a flock of goats
Going down from Gilead. Your teeth are like a flock of sheep*

*Which have come up from the washing;
Every one bears twins, and none is barren among them.
Your temples are like a slice of pomegranate behind your veil.*

Though commended for her unrivaled beauty, nothing is satisfyingly delightful and comely when self interest casts its grey shadows upon the heart. She is not castigated by Him as wayward and wanton, nor rejected as reprobate and disgusting, yet a breach has surely taken place between her soul and that of Christ.

She has not lost her moral excellence, for her hair, her glory [I Cor.11:15], is yet noted with admiration. Her teeth are still strong and white to feed upon the food of life. The temples of her meditative and fruitful reflections are lauded for their constancy.

But what has interrupted her communion and overcome the Beloved with alarm and confusion, was her clouded vision that had lost its focus. Her eye was no more single; that lamp had dwindled to a dim glow so that devotion's light no longer flooded the recesses of her soul. When we lose love's perspective, estrangement must necessarily enter. Correspondingly, her beauty had become tarnished and greatly diminished in His estimation due to the intrusion of self-occupation. Though she is approved in measure, it is not as in the adoring adulation expressed in 4:3-5.

Here He cannot now extol those lips that once yearned for the kisses of His mouth. Neither can He praise her graceful neck that had since turned aside her gaze from beholding the face of her Beloved. And certainly those breasts of His delight that had coolly waned in affection do not even merit His notice.

○ Bride of the Lamb, guard against the soul's decline in devotion by the subtle, though real, shifting of focus prompted by self-interest. Though you will not be cast away as a worthless stranger, but all of life's activities will sink down to the low level of the tedious and tasteless. A grieved Christ is a terrible burden to be born in the bosom of the desirable Bride of His espousals.

[8,9]

BG *There are sixty queens and eighty concubines,
And virgins without number.
My dove, My perfect one, is the only one,
She is the only one of her mother,
The choice one of her who bore her.
The daughters saw her and called her blessed,
The queens and concubines, and they praised her.*

Whether they may be Queens, concubines, or virgins, she admits of no rivals. The Bride stands alone as peerless among the most exalted, most intimate, and purified maidens of earth. All are in agreement; she is blessed by the daughters and praised by queens and concubines alike.

The Bride is the unique child of that true Sarah, the Jerusalem above, who is mother to all of her offspring who are born by grace [Gal.4:26].

[10]

C *Who is this that looks down like the dawn,
As beautiful as the moon, clear as the sun,
As awesome as an army with banners?*

Once again, the Daughters of Jerusalem display their superficial acquaintance, not only of the Bridegroom [5:9], but even of the Bride herself. The things of the light, a dawn's new day, a moon's shimmering illumination, and the full orb'd blazing Sun of Righteousness, they do not yet comprehend. A distant association renders the soul incapable of beholding what the Beloved sees in the pleasant Bride of His espousals.

[11,12]

B *I went down to the garden of nut trees
To see the fruits of the valley,*

*To see whether the vine had budded
And the pomegranates had bloomed.
Before I was even aware, my soul set me
Upon the chariots of my noble people.*

Seeking fruitfulness with diligent concern gains a victory as awesome as a bannered army. Unconsciously, without recognition of self, or by comparison with others, and apart from ambition, the fruitful soul is launched into the highest sphere of renown. Truly, humility and self-forgetfulness are the lowly paths to exaltation.

It is then that He recounts in chapter seven, the fullest and most rapturous rehearsal of her magnificence and of His delight in this most excellent among the maidens.

[13]

C *Return, return, O Shulammité;
Return, return, that we may look upon you!*
BG *What would you see in the Shulammité -
as it were, the dance of two companies?*

She no more has ears for distractions and demands of others. Forevermore only One voice will she heed, only one sweet note will impel her feet.

Will she enjoy a dance apart from her Beloved? Can she endure being parted from His graceful arms that guide her in love's embrace to the delights of a perfect oneness? Never again shall she turn aside from His voice, His desire, His love to the uttermost.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Summary: It is then that the church is unveiled in all her glory at the time of consummation and ecstasy of Christ's heart to which she eagerly yields with wholehearted abandon.

Here there is no mention of the lips; the kiss was but an introduction to what is now before Him. Teeth are not noted, as the time of feeding upon His Word has already sufficed to develop her into the darling of His heart's desire. Those temples of fruitful understanding have contributed their portion in maturing love's fullness and are therefore not now the focus of His pleasure.

The time of the consummation with its ravishing delights has arrived and she is unveiled unadorned before Him. Disrobed of all external allurements, she herself is ravishing in her own unrivaled beauty kept apart for Him alone.

What could possibly be added to her comeliness by perfumed allurements, embroidered gilded garments, or dangling gems on costly chains [4:9-11]? It is the inner preciousness of fully proportioned character and exclusive devotedness in love's fervency that enraptures His heart.

[1]

BG *How beautiful are your footsteps in sandals,
O prince's daughter!
The curves of your thighs are like jewels,
The work of the hands of a skillful workman.*

O how those once reluctant yet undefiled feet of disinterest in the dreary bedchamber of neglect [5:3] have now become the objects of His delight. How beautiful on the mountains [Isa.52:7] now are her feet which have led her to this climatic union of love's purest pleasure!

What a polarity of contrast with that wayward wench of Israel in whom was found, from the sole of her foot to the crown of her head, nothing but wounds, bruises, and festering sores [Isa.1:5,6]! Christ's Bride, may this sobering comparison impel us to arise with faithful steps [Eph.6:15] to present ourselves with glad abandon into the embrace of Christ.

The Bridegroom beholds in her what none other is privy to; the curves of her thighs like jewels. Uncovered to Christ's eye alone, they are a treasure exposed prepared by His own master craftsmanship unto His good pleasure. Here, unveiled and unashamed, she yields herself unto that enraptured consummation so often longed for.

To her Beloved Groom, disrobed from all external adornments [1:10; 4:9], the Bride presents herself to Him in all her glory, having no spot, blemish, or any such thing [Eph.5:27]. She is wholly His, completely for His satisfaction in an unreserved willing abandon to love's luxuriance.

[2]

BG *Your navel is a rounded goblet;
Which never lacks mixed wine.
Your belly is like a heap of wheat
Fenced about with lilies.*

Her sculptured navel, which once connected her to life's sustaining source during the season of her development, now is a cup of varied delights brimming over in the days of her prime. Life received, nurtured,

and matured, leads to unbounded delights to the Beloved of our souls. There is nothing barren about her beautifully adorned and fruitfully abundant belly. All is fully formed to receive her Beloved and recline in His delight.

[3]

BG *Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle.*

There is no hesitancy remaining within her breast, but rather swiftness in flight to lovingly press her bounteous affections into the bosom of her Beloved [4:5].

[4]

BG *Your neck is like a tower of ivory,
Your eyes like the pools in Heshbon
By the gate of Bath Rabbim.
Your nose is like the tower of Lebanon
Which looks toward Damascus.*

A pure fortified tower of strength supports every loving thought and all fervent desires with a steadiness of clear perception to remain immovable in love's constancy of devotion to her Beloved.

The untroubled pools of her eyes mirror the azure expanse of heavenly realms, reflecting the things above. Though a multitude of daughters traverse to and from through Bath Rabbim's gate [Daughter of a multitude], she remains placid, unmoved by the restless masses whose own reflective waters are scattered by wind-swept considerations below.

And O how that elegantly proportioned nose breathes in the atmosphere of Lebanon's heights of purity and fragrance, refusing to be choked with the dust and smoke along the concourse of man's city here below! Here for the first time is she described thus.

No more is she to be found wandering through the darkness of the habitation of men and under discipline's rod. She has now joined Him on the peaks of heavenly breezes, now as a tower of strength. None can assail her to be dragged captive from there to descend to the polluted air of earth.

[5,6]

BG *Your head crowns you like Carmel,
And the flowing locks of your head are like purple threads;
The King is captivated by your tresses.*

The magnificence of her beautifully formed head is recounted here for the first time. Not merely the glory of her hair as in 4:1, but praised are now all of her faculties of perception. She hears His voice, breathes His air, sees His face, and tastes of His sweetness. Such comeliness is truly a crown of glory that captivates the heart of the Beloved with amorous affection.

Once lowly in descent from Gilead's hill of witness [4:1], those flowing locks have now ascended to become a captivating purple royalty; truly a crowning renown of queenly delight, having been patiently cultivated in Carmel's [Fruitful field].

Surely the woman is the glory of the man [I Cor.11:7] and her hair her crowing magnificence [I Cor.11:15]. And so her glorious and excellent character, grown into full and flowing tresses, has exalted her as the honorable crown to His head [Prov.12:4].

[7,8]

BG *Your stature is like a palm tree,
And your breasts like its clusters.
I said, "I will climb the palm tree,
I will take hold of its fruit."*

*Let now your breasts be like clusters of the vine,
The fragrance of your breath like apples,*

Behold her beauty, graceful as the towering palm, upright and embracing the skies [Jer.10:5]. No dwarfed and withering fruits are to be found in her; No, not at all. She flourishes in bounteous fruitfulness in the courts of the Lord; ever bearing, full of sap and spiritual vitality [Ps.92:12-14]. And this is not all, she is all glorious within having a multiplied testimony of fruitful uprightness within the temple of Solomon himself [I K.6:29-35].

Can He resist a union with such a devoted darling of His delights? Will He not rather ascend and partake in purity's satisfaction of all that she has reserved for Him alone in the glad day of eternity's consummation? O who can describe the rapture of the wedding of the Lamb when the Bride has made herself ready through love's ever increasing affectionate longing?

[9]

BG *and the roof of your mouth like the best wine.*

B *It goes down smoothly for my Beloved,
Flowing gently through the lips of those who fall asleep.*

Here is love's completed union; resting in a consummated embrace with a mutual exchange of devoted delights. His love that exceeds all earthly joys [1:2] flows gently into her willing awaiting lips. While her own, the best that earth affords, passes tenderly into His satisfied mouth in a gladdened interchange of love.

[10]

B *I am my Beloved's and His desire is for me.*

John's terse confession, "He must increase but I must decrease" [Jn.3:30], here finds its culmination in the Bride's adoring utterance that she has become the exclusive object of His loving pleasure. The Beloved, His thoughts and satisfying His good pleasure, is now her chief and exclusive delight. Self is forgotten in a cup of love running over that has gladly acquiesced not to seek its own.

[11-13]

B *Come, my Beloved, let us go forth to the field;
Let us spend the night in the villages.
Let us rise up early to go to the vineyards;
Let us see if the vine has budded
And if its blossoms are open,
And whether the pomegranates are in bloom.
There I will give You my love.
The mandrakes have given forth fragrance,
And at our gates are all pleasant fruits, both new and old,
Which I have laid up for You, my Beloved.*

Fruit is both new and old. The old doesn't spoil while the new always brings forth fresh varieties unto His increasing delight. The old abides in an accumulated storehouse of sweetness as ever abounding varieties are added to their bounty. O to be full of what delights the heart of Christ!

CHAPTER EIGHT

Summary: Supported and embraced in love's purest expression, Christ and His church abide in the unmolested union of love's enduring bond. The church has fully developed in affectionate devotion and ever moves in concert with Christ in heavenly realms, even forevermore.

[1-3]

B *Oh that You were like a brother to me
Who nursed at my mother's breasts!
If I found You outside, I would kiss You;
I would not be despised.
I would lead You and bring You into the house of my mother,
She who used to instruct me.
I would cause You to drink of spiced wine,
Of the juice of my pomegranates.
His left hand is under my head
And His right hand embraces me.*

Oneness in life from that identical womb of the heavenly Jerusalem [Gal.4:26] leads to a bold and unashamed display of the worthiness and desirability of so excellent a Bridegroom. Her love had expanded to a pure and all-consuming passion; I found, I kiss, I lead, and I will give.

Profoundly, all that He had been and done to her, she now reciprocates and is to Him. He had found her, kissed her upon the mouth, led her upon mountain heights, and ascended the palm of His desire and partaken of her fruit. This is the grand and glorious climax of the maturation of love's enlargement; that she would be like Him in the abundance of overflowing love.

And shall He be willing to so be found and led to partake of her spiced delights? Yes, behold Him there with left hand resting under her head while enfolding her in His enamored caress.

[4]

BG *I charge you, O Daughters of Jerusalem,
Do not arouse or awaken love until it pleases.*

Truly, love has been pleased to be aroused to this pinnacle of prolific increase [2:7].

[5]

C *Who is this coming up from the wilderness,
Leaning upon her Beloved?
BG I awakened you under the apple tree.
There your mother brought you forth;
There she who bore you brought you forth.*

See her now swiftly moving on love's heights, leaning for support, ardently embraced, and cherished by Her Beloved.

It is the Lord's doing to awaken the heart under the apple tree [2:3]. It is there that we first glimpse Christ as the desirable fruit; One in whose shade the soul can recline in full satisfaction. To be awakened is to be born and brought forth in life.

[6]

B *Set me like a seal upon Your heart,
As a seal upon Your arm;
For love is as strong as death,
Jealousy as cruel as the grave,
Its flames are flames of fire,
A most vehement flame.*

The love of Christ is as permanent as death. His righteous jealousy will countenance no rivals, share no affection. Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus the Lord. Truly we love because He first loved us.

Fasten this seal upon Your heart, my Beloved, as a pledge of unbroken fidelity, both in fervent devoted affection and by way of strongly supporting Your every move in might and, as well, in those gracious acts of kindness. Jealousy is indeed a flaming fire to guard the soul from being seduced from the simplicity that is in Christ [2 Cor.12:1-3].

[7]

B *Many waters cannot quench love,
Nor can the floods overflow it;
If a man were to give all the riches of his house for love,
It would be utterly despised.*

No raging squalls and assaulting tempests can overpower love and quench its tenacious flame. The external raging of the world's buffeting pressures cannot cancel that which has not arisen from below but has descended from heaven's purest heights into the devoted soul.

What God has implanted neither height nor depth nor any other created thing can separate from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord [Rom.8:39]. Can such love be obtained by treasures of earth? Is there something that may be exchanged in order to experience this love? Only prostitutes enter into such despicable arrangements; a chaste Bride, never.

[8-10]

BG and B *We have a little sister, and she has no breasts.
What shall we do for our sister
In the day when she is spoken for?
If she is a wall, we will build upon her towers of silver;
And if she is a door, we will enclose her
With boards of cedar.
B *I am a wall, and my breasts are like towers;
Then I became in His eyes like one who finds peace.**

Walls are protected by towers of silver. It is these varied watch posts of devoted affection that prevent any successful barrage against the walled stronghold of truth's defense of the heart. It is the wall that forms the line of separation from what is outside from that which is within [Ezek.42:20].

A wall consists of individual stones, tightly fitted in orderly fashion and joined according to a master plan which rises upward from a sure foundation. Thus the individual truths of God's Word must be placed one upon another according to His mind before defense and separation are secured.

She is a wall and her breasts are like towers. The Word treasured guards against sin [Ps.119:11]. Delight in wisdom ensures possession [Prov.2:1-11]. The Word eaten leads to joy [Jer.15:16]. Indeed, without breasts formed, she is accursed [I Cor.16:22]. Only with breasts like towers will we find peace in His sight.

[11,12]

B *Solomon had a vineyard at Baal Hamon;
He leased the vineyard to caretakers;
Everyone was to bring for its fruit a thousand shekels of silver.
My own vineyard is before me.
The thousand shekels are for You, O Solomon,
And two hundred for those who tend its fruit.*

O what a startling contrast there is when considering the vineyard of the Well-Beloved in Isa.5:1-7 with her prolific harvest in these verses! Hear the heart rending cries of the Lord Himself recorded by Isaiah, "What more could have been done for My vineyard that I have not done? How then does it bear wild bitter grapes, a worthless yield from all the labor of love bestowed?"

An adulteress will wantonly produce nothing for the pleasure of the Divine Husbandman. Not so the true Bride of His espousals. The fullness of Solomon's fruitful harvest has become hers in like measure [Jn.1:16; Eph.1:23; 3:16; 4:14; 5:18], whose thousand vines yield to its full increase and in no way cursed with briars and thorns [Isa.7:23].

[13,14]

BG *You who dwell in the gardens,
The Companions listen for your voice -
Let Me hear it!*
B *Make haste, my Beloved,
And be like a gazelle or a young stag
On the mountains of spices!*

The call and the wishes expressed by other voices no longer distract her. She is now fully one with Him in His desire and joins Him leaping upon the heights; yea, she is eager to move with Him, no more for Him to turn to her on the Mt. of Division [2:17]. Now nothing can part her from that blissful union and deepest communion that only love can afford.

The end of love's advances is to know Christ fully even as we have been fully known. It is a fullness of knowledge - intimately experienced, no more by sight alone, nor by the hearing of the ear, but in a holy union and entire ecstasy of ardent desire and enraptured embrace, even as Adam knew his wife [Gen.4:1].

He knew Eve, no more as a companion, a helper, admired and desired, but as known fully in that most sacred and intimate of all relations, in the endearing yielded willingness in the act of love that is stronger than death. It is this knowledge that surpasses all knowledge that the Lord Jesus is preparing His blessed Bride to experience in His boundless love throughout the countless ages of eternal day.

And for this, the Bride must make herself ready.
Lovest thou Me?

GLOSSARY

Often in the Scriptures, people, places, and things are utilized by the Spirit of God to illustrate spiritual truths. They become symbolic as a type of abbreviated parable. Some of these are quite obvious to us, such as, Light picturing righteousness and illumination while Darkness portrays sin and ignorance. Others may not be as readily discerned.

The following are the main figurative images employed in Solomon's Song.

Breasts - Affectionate devotion [Prov.5:19]

Bride - The church [Eph.5:23,25; 2 Cor.11:2]

Bridegroom - The Lord Jesus [Jn.3:29; Eph.5:23,25]

Does - See **Hinds**

Eyes - Clarity of singleness of devotion [Mt.6:22,23]

Fragrance - The pleasing perfection of Christ [Eph.5:2; 2 Cor.2:14]

Fruit - Sweetness of godly character [Eph.5:9; Gal.5:22,23]

Gazelle - Swiftness [2 Sam.2:18]

Gold - The glory of God [Job 22:25; Rev.21:11,18]

Hair - Glory [1 Cor.11:15]

Hart - Fervent longing [Ps.42:1]

Hinds - Skillful movement in the things above [Ps.18:33]

Incense - See **Fragrance**

Milk and Honey - Fullness of blessing [Deut.26:15]

Mountains - Heavenly things above [Eph.1:3; Col.3:1-3]

Oil - Holy Spirit [1 Jn.2:27; Zech.4:6]

Pasture - The Word of God [Jer.3:15]

Perfume See **Fragrance**

Pomegranate - A red skinned fruit full of hundreds of clear blood-red juicy seeds portraying Abundant fruitfulness

Purple - Royalty [Esth.8:10]

Roes - See **Hinds**

Shepherd - Christ [Jn.10:14; Heb.13:20]

Silver - Redemption price [Ex.30:11-16]

Spikenard - Fragrance of a precious devoted love [Jn.12:3]

Spring of Water - Refreshing life from God [Jn.4:14]

Stag - See **Hart**

Veil - Exclusive devotion [Gen.24:65; 1 Cor.11:6,10]

Vineyard - Fruitfulness in Christ [Jn.15:5]

Wall - Separation [Ezek.22:30; 42:20]

Wine - Joy [Judg.9:13]

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THE NEW WORLD ORDER - PART I

Part 3 of 7 part presentation

I. Introduction

- A. The Biblical Warning of World-Wide Deception
- B. The [Universal Vision](#) of a Rebellious Mankind
- C. [The Human Potential Movement](#)
- D. [The Rulers of this World](#)
- E. [Truth](#) or [Idolatry](#)

II. Global Management

- A. [The Evil Human Heart](#)
- B. PLANNING, Not Conspiracy Theories

"Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing?
The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take
counsel together, against the LORD and against His
Anointed, saying, "Let us break Their bonds in pieces and
cast away Their cords from us." He who sits in the heavens
shall laugh; the LORD shall hold them in derision."

Psalm 2:1-4

1. [The Open Conspiracy](#), H.G Wells - 1928

"The character of the Open Conspiracy will now be plainly
displayed. It will have become a great world movement as
widespread and evident as socialism or communism. It will

largely have taken the place of these movements. It will be more, it will be a world religion. This large loose assimilatory mass of groups and societies will be definitely and obviously attempting to swallow up the entire population of the world and become the new human community. "

2. Deception from the top, down

C. "The World Perspectives" Book Series - 1950s

"Man is in the process of developing a new consciousness...A fresh vision of reality...An intellectual and spiritual movement...Man has intervened in the evolutionary process...Our growing World Age"

Some of the books in the series: World Indivisible, Konrad Adenauer; [The Transformation of Man](#), Lewis Mumford; The Art of Loving, Erich Fromm; Dynamics of Faith, Paul Tillich; Mysticism: Christian and Buddhist, Teitaro Suzuki; Hinduism: Its Meaning for the Liberation of the Spirit, Swami Nikhilananda; Physics and Philosophy, Werner Heisenberg; Man Unfolding, Jonas Salk

D. The Global Financial Structure

1. Global Corporations
2. Foundations
3. Federal Reserve System
4. Central Banks
5. A Lockheed Advertisement: The Tower of Babel and Systems Integration

E. [Carroll Quigley, Georgetown Professor](#)

1. Bill Clinton's Acceptance Speech

For the Democratic nomination:

Refers to Carroll Quigley, his Georgetown University professor, as having "clarified" his vision.

2. Tragedy and Hope, 1966

The Round Table Groups, J.P. Morgan and Cecil Rhodes, The Powers of Financial Capitalism, The Council on Foreign Relations.

"The New Age" :

"Planning will largely take the place of the industrial tycoon and the democratic voter.

Hopefully, the elements of choice and freedom may survive for the ordinary individual...

But, in general, his freedom and choice will be controlled within very narrow alternatives by the fact that he will be numbered from birth and followed, as a number, through his educational training, his required military or other public service, his tax contributions, his health and medical requirements, and his final retirement and death benefits."

F. Between Two Ages, 1970

1. Zbigniew Brzezinski

Professor at Columbia University, Jimmy Carter's National Security Advisor

2. Old Age - New Age, Toward a Planetary Consciousness: transnational elites, global planning: government and economics, The Quest for a Universal Vision, ...Marxism represents a further vital and creative stage in the maturing of man's universal vision. The Universal Religions, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

3. Trilateral Commission, David Rockefeller, Jimmy Carter, George Bush

G. The Trilateral Commission

1. Founded in 1973, Founding Chairman: David Rockefeller, Executive Director: Zbigniew Brzezinski

2. A private elitist club with membership from North America, Japan, and Western Europe

3. Between Two Ages, was the blueprint.

[The TC website](#)

H. The Council on Foreign Relations

1. Founded in 1921
2. Dominated at its founding by J.P. Morgan & Company
3. Founded by people involved with the Round Table Groups. CFR people in turn were involved with the founding of the Trilateral Commission and are involved with other elitist organizations such as the Bilderbergers and the Royal Institute of International Affairs.
4. Foreign Affairs, The CFR s quarterly journal

[The CFR website](#)

III. [Education for the New World Order](#)

A. National Education Association - 1976 Bicentennial Program

A Declaration of Interdependence: Education for a Global Community

...mobilizing world education for development of a world community.

B. Schools for the 21st Century, DUSO, Positive Action, DARE, I AM Somebody , Natural Helpers, Tactics for Thinking, Strategy 2020

IV. [Freemasonry, the Occult Brotherhoods, and Secret Societies](#)

A. Morals and Dogma, Albert Pike; New Age Magazine, 33rd Masons; The Royal Arch, George H. Steinmetz

B. The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man; Unity of all Religions; Mystery Religions of Babylon and Egypt - Occult; Morality and Good Works; Ever to Conceal, Never to Reveal ; Political, Economic, and Religious Agendas

C. [The Deadly Deception](#), Jim Shaw

Jim Shaw's initiation to the 33^o: Two former U.S. Presidents, a Scandinavian King, An internationally prominent Evangelist, Two other internationally prominent Clergymen, and a very high federal official

D. [The Order of Skull and Bones](#)

1. Since 1833, based at Yale University
2. Prescott Sheldon Bush, George Bush, George W. Bush, John Kerry, David Boren, William F. Buckley, Henry Sloane Coffin Sr. and Jr., Henry Luce, Henry Lewis Stimson, William Howard Taft, McGeorge Bundy, Archibald MacLeish

E. Other Occult Brotherhoods

Rosicrucians, Knights of Malta, Jesuits, Wicca, Latter Day Saints, Opus Dei, Mafia, KKK, skinheads, Crips, Bloods, Triads, and many many others

F. The Founding Fathers

George Washington: Freemason, Benjamin Franklin: Freemason, Thomas Jefferson: Rosicrucian

G. [U.S. One Dollar Bill and the Great Seal](#)

Pyramid, Equilateral Triangle, [All Seeing Eye](#) (Osiris)

Novus Ordo Seclorum - New Order for the Ages

In God We Trust

V. Closing

1. No hope in this World System.
 2. "I am the **Alpha and the Omega**, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." Rev 1:8
 3. [Next part: The New World Order part II](#)
-

[Counterfeit Christianity, The World Religion, and The New World Order](#)

[Proclamation Home Page](#)

[Return to Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

<http://procinwarn.com>

The "New Age" Religion: In General

[The Aquarian Conspiracy](#) - [New Age Activists](#) - [Transcendental Management](#) - [Share and Network](#) - [Global Transformation](#) - [High Touch Need](#) - [Look "Within"](#) - [Deep Breathing and Visualization](#) - ["Explain How the Subconscious Mind Works!"](#) - ["Your Subconscious Mind is Programmed in Two Ways"](#)

7. The "New Age" Religion: in general

a. The seriousness of the problems at PSNS cannot be appreciated unless they are understood in the context of the New Age Religious Movement as a whole.

b. The Aquarian Conspiracy

"A great shuddering, irrevocable shift is overtaking us. It is not a new political, religious, or economic system. It is a new mind -- a turnabout in consciousness in critical numbers of individual, a network powerful enough to bring about radical change in our culture.

"This network -- the Aquarian Conspiracy -- has already enlisted the minds, hearts, and resources of some of our most advanced thinkers and steadily growing numbers from every corner of American society.

"In this immensely powerful and wide-ranging charter of human possibility, Marilyn Ferguson describes how this underground network is working to create a different kind of society based on a vastly enlarged concept of human potential.

"The author speaks to those who are experiencing a growing capacity for change in themselves and know that it is possible for others. This book gives heart to the tens of millions who sense the ripeness of our society for renewal and to those who despair but are willing to look at the evidence for hope."

The above is taken from the back cover of THE AQUARIAN CONSPIRACY: PERSONAL AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION IN THE 1980'S, by Marilyn

Ferguson. Even though it claims that this movement is not religious, it actually hits at the very heart of every religious concept.

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c. New Age Activists

"Destiny now presents us with a karmic test, and if we have forgotten the past, we condemn ourselves to repeat it. It's time for all New Agers to get involved and return to the passion and idealism we once knew. It's time to share, alert and network: share our metaphysical awareness. Alert others of the efforts to block peaceful planetary transformation. Network our awareness into society and New Age media and organizations for targeted response programs when required. I seek your support and ask you to stand with me."

"We've all read volumes of esoteric wisdom, we've meditated, we've been regressed and rebirthed, and we've explored our human potential. A degree of self-awareness is assumed. Now, let's do something with our awareness!

"As I have been telling seminar audiences for the past eleven years, 'You can create any reality you desire to experience once you know exactly what you want and what you are willing to pay to get it. Everything has a price and it will always be one or more of the following: effort, money, or sacrifice.'

"The 'Law of Gratitude' is Universal Law. It said, 'the more you give, the more you get.' The more you assist others, the more you assist yourself -- and being of service to the planet is a positive, evolutionary pathway. It is especially important now as the work is struggling to become something new.

"For those of us who accept reincarnation and karma, the evolution of the planet takes on even greater significance. The world we have a part in forming today is the world we will be reborn into tomorrow."

The above was taken from an article called "Welcome to 'What Is'" by Dick Sutphen, President of Reincarnationists, Inc. as published in the Summer 1986 issue of "New Age Activists: What Is."

Also in that "What Is" issue are "The 4 Assumptions"

"Underlying metaphysical/New Age themes are now appearing in music, education contemporary science, business, finance, politics, economics, the arts, and psychology. New Age awareness is showing up as the root premise of many important trends in today's

Western society. The thinking is found under many names: Yoga, magic, alchemy, astrology, kabbalah, Taoism, tantra, Zen, Buddhism, mysticism, Vedanta, occult philosophy, pantheism, monism, human potential, cosmic humanism ... to name a few."

"Classical systems of occult/metaphysical philosophy and the new variants are based upon the following assumptions:

"All Is One: the external world and consciousness are one and the same.

"Man Is A Divine Being: We are all part of God, so we are God.

"Life Is For Evolutionary Purposes: Karma and reincarnation.

"Self-Actualization: Awareness of the True Self within leads to mastery of your own reality."

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d. Transcendental Management

Mr. Richard Watring, Director of Personnel for Budget Rent-a-Car Corporation, has done extensive scholarly research into this movement's infiltration of the Human Resources Development profession of corporate America. In his master's thesis entitled "Transcendental Management: A Study of the Emergence of New Age Concepts in Human Resource Development", he writes:

"There is a contemporary social movement underway which seems to embrace an unusually divergent group of ideas and concepts, and it is extremely difficult to draw boundaries around. This movement has been referred to as the "New Age" movement, the "Higher Consciousness" movement, Neo-transcendentalism and various other terms. However, for my purposes in describing this movement, I will generally refer to the New Age movement.

"This movement has been described by a number of different authors, among them, Lewis Mumford. In his book, THE TRANSFORMATION OF MAN, he wrote, "In the fullness of time, a unified self will bring a world culture into existence, and that world culture will in turn sustain and bring to a higher pitch of development this new self." (**1.Mumford, Lewis: THE TRANSFORMATION OF MAN (New York: Harper and Row, 1956) pp. 241-2. **)

"More recently still, Marilyn Ferguson wrote the bestseller, **THE AQUARIAN CONSPIRACY - PERSONAL AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION IN THE 1980'S**. Even though I will rely heavily on this most recent work as a reference point in describing the predominant features and assumptions of this New Age movement, these authors and a number of others are all describing the same idea.

"The primary assumption of the New Age movement is that Humankind is about to experience a dramatic shift in Consciousness. This shift is thought to be part of the normal evolutionary process. This shift is first individual, then collective - involving all humans.

"The state of Consciousness that mankind is shifting towards is generally describe in mystical terms.

"For instance, Hinduism and Buddhism, which grew out of Hinduism, both teach a view of reality technically referred to as "monism". Monism holds to the belief that there is only one universal substance, and that all things are made of the same substance. Eventually, we are taught, everything will "become one" in an endless sea of this substance. We are differentiated from each other now, but we are only different the way one wave is different from another wave in the ocean. In Eastern religious teaching, this New Age shift is referred to as "Enlightenment". The term presumes that we are unaware of our unity with the divinity of the universe. Once we acknowledge our true nature, we can then work toward "at-one-ment" with the universal deity.

"All Eastern philosophies share this monistic view; and, persons who grew up under this teaching would be most receptive to this notion of the New Age shift. However, this underlying world view is not limited to the East. A good number of movements here in the West exist under similar belief systems.

"For instance, Christian Science, New Thought, Unity and Baha'i are religious movements that share this view of reality.

"The second assumption of the movement is that, since the shift in consciousness leads to a "Higher" self, often called the "divine-within", then we should strive to accelerate this process of transformation by altering consciousness. (**Newsweek April 21, 1986**)

"More often than not, an individual's initial experience with an altered state

of Consciousness comes about accidentally or unintentionally, which then whets his interest toward continual exploration of different Consciousness experiences. Many of these initial experiences sometimes called "peak experiences", are brought about through what Marilyn Ferguson refers to as "psychotechnologies - systems for a deliberate change in Consciousness. (** 2.Ferguson, Marilyn: [THE AQUARIAN CONSPIRACY](#) (Los Angeles: J.P. Tarcher, Inc., 1980) p. 87 **)

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"The list of psychotechnologies that Ferguson includes is quite exhaustive. It includes:

'sensory isolation and sensory overload ... biofeedback ... music ... chanting ... psychodrama ... contemplation ... Consciousness-raising strategies ... self-help and mutual-help networks ... hypnosis and self-hypnosis ... Christian, Kabbalist, Kundalini, Raja Yoga, Tantric Yoga, etc. ... Psychosynthesis ... Sufi stories, koans, and dervish dancing ... various Shamanic and magical techniques ... seminars like est, Silva Mind control, Actualization, and Lifespring ... dream journals ... Arica, Theosophy and Gurdjieffian systems ... contemporary psychotherapies (Frankl's Logotherapy, Primal Therapy, the Fischer-Hoffman process, Gestalt therapy) ... Science of Mind ... A Course in Miracles ... countless body disciplines and therapies (hatha yoga, Reichian, T'ai chi Ch'uan, aikido, Rolfing, Bioenergetics, Feldenkrais, Alexander, Applied Kinesiology) ... intense experiences of personal and collective change (i.e., National exhilarating activities, which cause a qualitative shifting the sense of being alive ... wilderness retreats or solitary flying or sailing which foster self-discovery and sense of timelessness.' (** 3. Ibid., p. 86-7 **)

"It is easy to see, that with many people involved in the programs and activities that Ferguson refers to as psychotechnologies, how easily individuals can accidentally venture into this realm of Altered Consciousness. However, Ferguson and her contemporaries in the New Age movement go one step further. Since they believe that Man's shift to a higher or altered state of consciousness is part of an evolutionary process, it is therefore an inevitable shift. If, in fact, it cannot be prevented, and since the final destination (Altered Consciousness) is a largely desirable state, proponents of this movement feel that this evolutionary process should be accelerated by those who are familiar with it. Since it is through these psychotechnologies that Consciousness is altered, proponents of this movement encourage those who are not yet part of the "enlightened" to

experiment with these psychotechnologies. (One obvious exclusion from the list of psychotechnologies is mind-altering drugs. Many of those currently in the forefront of this movement became interested in Consciousness research because of the finding and experiences of those who experimented with LSD and other psychedelics.)

"Another assumption of the proponents of this New Age movement is that the potentials of the mind will be greatly expanded or enhanced as a result of this transformational process. The research being conducted concerning the functions of the two hemispheres of the brain is very much a focal point of this assumption. Marilyn Ferguson herself authored the book, *THE BRAIN REVOLUTION: THE FRONTIERS OF MIND RESEARCH* and is the editor of both *BRAIN/MIND BULLETIN* and *LEADING EDGE: A BULLETIN OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION*. Her contention is that Man, without intending to, use only half of his brain, namely the left brain. She asserts that: "The left brain dominates awareness in most of us and even takes over those tasks as which the right brain is superior. " (** 4.Ibid., pp. 78-9 **)

"However, there are ways that the right and left brains can be bridged so that the left brain is more aware of the right. She states: 'Meditation, chanting, and similar techniques increase the coherence and harmony in the brain wave patterns; they bring about greater synchrony between the hemispheres, which suggests that higher order is achieved ... Whatever lowers the barrier and lets the unclaimed material emerge is transformative. Recognition ... occurs when the analytical brain ... admits the wisdom of its other half into full awareness ... Language releases the unknown from limbo, expressing it in a way that the whole brain can know it. Incantations, mantras, poetry and secret, sacred words are all bridges that join the two brains.'

"She concludes by saying, 'The escape from the prison of the two minds -- (is) the task of transformation.' (** 6. Ibid., p. 82 **)

"One has to ask, when confronted with a proposal claiming that a given exercise will enhance mental processes, what exactly the proponent's motive is. for instance, Ferguson says that meditation will result in "whole-brained" thinking. But, as stated earlier, meditation will also alter consciousness, and is recommended to accelerate the process of transformation. Since meditation will do both, I have to wonder which outcome the proponents are trying to bring about. I believe that some are promoting mind-expanding techniques and exercises under the guise of expanding mental capacity, when their real motive is bringing about the

transformation shift that they feel is inevitable.

"Another feature of this New Age movement is that it is essentially liberal, that is, it embraces most, if not all, of the political agenda of the liberal element of our society. Perhaps this is because many at the forefront of the movement were also involved in the counter-culture of the Sixties. In *THE AQUARIAN CONSPIRACY*, Ferguson explains how this transformation process would affect our relationship to our government, health care, education and religion. The movement sees the conservative element of our society as inhibiting individual and social transformation.

"New Age thinkers are aware of the fact that certain traditional values stand in the way of this personal and social transformation they seek. Here I am speaking mainly of traditional religious values, and specifically those of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

"A pivotal assumption of this movement is that "Human nature is neither good nor bad, but open to continuous transformation and transcendence." (** 9. Ferguson, pp.cit.,p.29. **) This results in a philosophy of relativism which denies the existence of any moral absolutes, but would suggest that the appropriate course of moral action is purely dependent on the situation at hand. In educational circles, this is sometimes referred to as values clarification; in philosophical circles, situational ethics. This belief that human nature is neither good nor bad is a central doctrine of Humanistic Psychology. Followers of this school believe that Man is intrinsically good (or at worst, neutral), and that his propensity toward evil is purely his response to external or environmental conditions. I will elaborate more on both Humanistic and Transpersonal Psychologies in later chapters.

"This acceptance of and the encouragement of individual autonomy is a necessary requirement in order for individuals to open themselves up to experimenting with the psychotechnologies referenced earlier. It is my belief, however, that the Humanistic school has failed to prove its basic underlying tenet: That Man's nature is not flawed. And, if it is, then this philosophy of relying on one's "inner-focus" so authority can -- and does -- lead to undesirable consequences.

"The final underlying premise of this movement is the belief in a monistic philosophy or world view. Monism, as stated earlier, is the philosophic doctrine that "all is one", or that all things are constituted of a single reality. New Age writers place heavy emphasis on "Eastern teaching, theoretical

quantum physics, meditation, and planetary Consciousness ... explicable by the component common to them all; the pre-supposition that "all is one." (**12. Fement, Eric: "The New Age Movement: Consensus or Conspiracy?" CORNERSTONE, Vol II, (Issue 64, 1983) p.1. **) Many New Age writers and thinkers openly embrace Eastern religion, philosophy, and in some cases, Eastern forms of body-centered therapies such as yoga, aikido, etc. Whether or not the leaning toward Eastern philosophies developed an openness to the other facets of the New Age movement, or whether an interest in and exploration of the movement caused the explorer to accept and embrace an Eastern world view is an important question. I will attempt to show that experimentation with many of the psychotechnologies, especially Meditation, will inevitably result in a monistic world view.

"These, then are the key precepts of this movement. And, even though much of the philosophy being promoted pre-dates Christianity, the movement owes much to two historical developments of major import. The first of these is the Revolt against Dualism."

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e. Infiltrating the New Age into Society

As an example of how New Agers themselves explain their desire and methods for the subtle introduction of their religious concepts into society, I have included excerpts from "Infiltrating the New Age Into Society" by Dick Sutphen (Summer 1986 issue of "What Is.")

"New Agers don't twist arms to convert people to our way of thinking. but we should use all available opportunities to gently introduce others to ideas we know serve the planet. It's time to step up the networking process.

Share and Network

"Twenty-eight professional New Age practitioners gathered with my staff and me for a five-day seminar in April, 1986. the subject of discussion was how to raise their profiles and become more successful in their individual careers. "And one of the most interesting things to come out of the sharing was that each of them, in their own way, was 'infiltrating' general society in addition to serving their clientele.

"A Southern California Ph.D., director of a successful hypnosis center, is also employed by two of California's largest publicly held companies to teach 'success and positive

thinking' to their employees. She never mentions the words 'metaphysics' or 'New Age', but the ideas are nothing else. And we all know the ideas work. Because the individuals will experience positive changes in their lives, they will be open to additional New Age concepts as they surface.

"Once she helps them, they comeback and also tell others. 'Do they go on to become involved in metaphysics?' I asked hopefully. 'Of course they do,' she replied, smiling.

"Another participant has a woodstove store as a side business and he offers a large selection of self-help tapes as door openers to expanding New Age awareness. A young woman from a wealthy tourist town in Florida works through exclusive hotels to provide 'anti-stress visualization sessions' to the guests. Several of those attending my seminar plan to combine their vacation time by infiltrating cruise ships on a barter basis, getting free cruises in return for daily hour-long seminars.

"One of the biggest advantages we have as New Agers is, once the occult, metaphysical and New Age terminology is removed, we have concepts and techniques that are very acceptable to the general public. So we can change the names and demonstrate the power. In so doing, we open the New Age door to millions who normally would not be receptive.

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Global Transformation

"Author H.G. Wells may have foreseen some of what was to come when he wrote his book about a potential world revolution.

"...as a consisting of a great multitude and variety of overlapping groups, but now all organized for collective political, social and educational as well as propagandist action. They will recognize each other much more clearly than they did at first and they will have acquired a common name.

"The character of the Open conspiracy will now be plainly displayed. It will have become a great world movement as widespread and evident as socialism or communism. It will largely have taken the place of these movements. It will be more, it will be a world religion. The large loose assimilatory mass of groups and societies will be definitely and obviously attempting to swallow up the entire population of the world and become the new human community.'

"Can a New Age world revolution take place peacefully? It has to, or it would be alien to everything the New Age stands for. Some see it as evolving out of a terrible war, or cataclysmic earth changes, because they can't imagine a New Age being possible without

first having a 'cleansing.'

High Touch Need

"The strength of traditional networks such as family, church, and neighborhoods is dissipating in American society. The gap is being filled with new networks functioning, as Marilyn Ferguson puts it, as the spontaneous modern-day equivalent of the ancient tribe. Networks fulfill the high-touch need for belonging.'

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Look "Within"

"For centuries, Eastern religions have guided their followers to "look within", but it wasn't until the 1960's that masses of Americans began turning inward for answers. Maxwell Maltz, M.D., turned people on with his book PSYCHOCYBERNETICS, and drugs turned on a lot of others. Transcendental Meditation moved in and Zen-based human-potential organizations proved that pop psychology could often get better results than extended therapy.

"there is nothing to seek and nothing to find. You are already enlightened, and all the words in the world will not give you what you already have. The wise seeker, therefore, is concerned with one thing only: to become aware of what he already is, of the True Self within." --Zen.

"I feel that your True Self is already a fully self-actualized Master of Life. You just don't know it because you are so enveloped in fear-based programming, from lifetime after lifetime of negative experiences. To get down to the True Self, you have to begin looking within and removing the layers of old programming ... the guilt, hate, selfishness, jealousy, greed, envy, anger, possessiveness, desire for revenge, need to control ... the list goes on and on.

"The reason we have reincarnated upon the earth at this time is to continue the process of rising above fear -- to remove the layers of programming and become aware of the beautiful souls we already are.

"When you begin to "look within" yourself for the source of conflicts, you take a giant step along the path of spiritual transformation.

"So experiential exploration and programming are among the most powerful ways to introduce the general public to New Age awareness. And when the technique works once, an individual is likely to explore other potentials. The more frequently someone looks

within, the more likely they are to discover their own God-self, and open the doors to spirituality.

"It is no wonder that troubled or confused people turn to Born-Again Christianity, until they become stronger, it is much easier to allow others to control them, over-simplifying everything into a set of commandments so no decisions or thought are required.

"Once converts regain their strength, many begin to question the simplistic negativity of their inconsistent beliefs. When they begin to look within, it is often the beginning of the end of the conversion.

"Your subconscious mind is programmed two ways: Karmic programming and Conscious programming.

"With adults, when you use New Age jargon or inject spirituality or metaphysical concepts, you turn many people off. You already knew that, of course. but the New Age movement is growing so rapidly because we don't have churches on street corners and because we do not use fear to attract new people. The metaphysical way has always been to gently demonstrate a more positive and peaceful way of being.

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Deep Breathing and Visualization

"So how do we demonstrate a more positive and peaceful way that people will be open to explore? Again, experiential techniques are ideal door openers.

"Deep breathing can be an introduction or preparation for meditation or self-hypnosis. If you encounter an individual or a group that needs to relax or release tension, direct them to close their eyes and take a very deep breath in-n-n-n and hold it as long as they can then let the breath out very slowly through slightly parted lips. Explain that this allows them to retain moisture in their mouth and thus they'll be more comfortable. And when they have let the breath all the way out, instruct them to contract their stomach muscles and push the breath even further out and further out, then to repeat the process over and over. This is diaphragm breathing and within a few minutes, they will be very, very relaxed.

"Once they see how incredibly effective the technique is for unwinding, relaxing and letting go, you can probably carry the process to its next logical step.

"Direct them to visualize themselves in a situation that is the most peaceful and relaxing that they can possibly imagine. 'Recall a real situation or make one up. Make it real, visualize everything about the situation and what it feels like to be there.' Next, following

a quiet period, ask them to give themselves a positive suggestion, such as, 'In a moment, I am going to open my eyes, and when I do, I will feel more relaxed and at ease than I have ever felt before.'

"This simple process is an introduction to meditation and in itself might open doors to further questions or discussion. Show them how easy it is to give themselves suggestions ranging from something as simple as relaxing or visualizing colors for healing to vanquishing a headache or programming a goal.

"And, if they are open to hearing it, explain how the subconscious mind works, and the value of monitoring their thoughts for negativity.

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Explain How the Subconscious Mind Works!

"Your subconscious mind has been active from the moment you were born, and from a reincarnational perspective, from the beginning of your physical explorations. It is your subconscious mind that has made you what you are today. Your talents and abilities, your problems and afflictions are the result of the intuitive guidance of the subconscious. It has been directing you and will continue to direct you, often in opposition to your conscious desires. Why? The subconscious has little or no reasoning power ... It simply operates like a computer, functioning as the result of programming. I call this 'karma'. Very simply explained, karma is nothing more than the programming you have created in other lives (and your life up until now) and fed into your mind -- your own programming of your own computer.

"Now, as a medical fact, and this is important: The subconscious creates only according to programming. It will help to bring into actuality the reality it is programmed for. Call the programming 'karma' ... and there is nothing occult or mystical about it. Karma is simply what is. If the subconscious received no new programming, it would continue to operate on all the prior programming of this life and your other lives. This, of course, cannot happen, for you are constantly feeding new data or programming into your computer ... your subconscious mind. Every thought programs the computer. You may be thinking every thought and action, but you have to think something before you do it, so we are really speaking of your thoughts. If you never conceived a negative thought, you couldn't perform a negative deed.

"Every negative or fear thought programs you the other way. So, if you are thinking negatively more than positively, you are programming your computer in the wrong way. You create your own reality (karma) with your thoughts.

"Your thoughts from other lives and your present life up until now have created your 'today'. If you don't like your today and desire to change it, it is simply time to change your programming ... your input to the subconscious computer. To look at it another way, it is time to change your karma.

"There is no instant/magic way to achieve this, but there are ancient and totally effective methodologies for those willing to put forth a consistent effort. What mind has created, mind can change! You must have self-discipline and consciously direct and reprogram your subconscious mind to overcome the negative programming of the past.

"If your negative and fear thoughts are resulting in the wrong kind of programming, the first step is quite obvious. You must begin to eliminate all such thoughts from your mind. Easily said and hard to do? Of course it is; but if you want a positive, happy and successful tomorrow, you must start today to make this most important of all changes. In reality, this is the ultimate wisdom -- the answer of all answers and the Truth of the Universe. It is so simple that most people can't accept it.

Until you begin to monitor your thoughts for negativity, you will have no idea how negative your thoughts actually are. Try it for a day. Examine every thought and every verbal utterance. How are you programming your computer?

"Your thoughts, imaginings and fantasies have programmed your karma up until now. If you don't like the results, you must fully realize that you and you alone are responsible for them. The subconscious cannot tell the difference between fact and fantasy ... between real experiences and imagined experiences. So, if you are allowing fear thoughts to run rampant through your mind, you are certainly moving toward a fearful reality. If you say to yourself, 'This marriage is never going to work, I don't see how we'll ever make it,' then your subconscious is absorbing in that input into the 'relationship category' of the computer and it is being received -- 'Marriage can't work -- won't make it.' When this computer category is filled to capacity, it will be quite effective in causing the programmed marital failure. The more programming you give it and the faster you provide it, the quicker it will create the reality. Happily for us, positive programming is equally effective.

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Your Subconscious Mind is Programmed in Two Ways

"1. Karmic programming: This is the matter of simply living your life as if you had no cosmic control -- slowly learning by your mistakes or through your failures. If you had to touch a hot stove 10 time before you learned that it was undesirable to do so, you simply needed 10 painful experiences to reprogram yourself. You may need 10 bad marital

relationships, over numerous lifetimes, before you learn to rise above such negative experiences by rejecting negative input.

"2. Conscious programming: This is a matter of deciding what you want and programming the subconscious mind to help you achieve it.

"You have the ability to let go of the past and rise above your negative karma now! Change does take time, but now is the time to start. Ask yourself, 'Do I really want to let go of my negative karma?' 'Am I willing to really work toward this goal or is it easier to just go on living my life the way it unfolds?'

"If you are sincerely willing to work hard toward creating a new reality, you can do it. If you answered the above questions affirmatively and you do not follow through, don't ever complain again about the burdens life has laid on you. You've laid them on yourself and you've made the decision that it is easier to accept your lot than to expend the energy needed to create change.

"You are mind, which is energy; and through expanded awareness, you can attract and create whatever you want. Things are not given to you, even from a karmic perspective. You are given the power to achieve for yourself the conditions and situations you desire. Who gave you this power? You gave it to yourself through the positive subconscious computer programming in your past. You might say happy and successful people have 'good karma'. I think of it a little differently. They have carried the intuitive understanding of the power of positive programming from their other lives into their present life. They learned somewhere along the line of reincarnational lineage that 'I can't' thinking doesn't work, and 'I can and I am' thinking does work.

"Remember, the first step is to begin, from this moment on, to eliminate negative-fear thoughts and replace them with positive-love thoughts. As soon as you recognize the negative thought -- stop it and cancel it out with a love thought. This way, it should never become subconscious computer input. If the thought is about a particular individual, say to yourself, 'I love you -- I send you love.' Even if you hate them -- do it! Soon it will be natural, and the positive input will override the old relationship with all its karmic implications.

"If you can get someone to understand all this and incorporate the awareness into their life, their life will change for the better. It's guaranteed. And once they experience positive change, they will be open to further awareness. Each issue of 'What Is' will include another chapter on awareness and techniques to network the New Age into our society."

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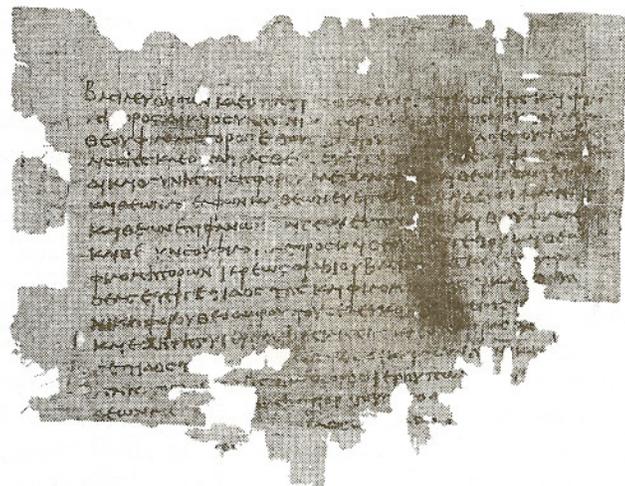
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The Bible Versions Debate

Part 2B: MAGNITUDE OF PROBLEM

By Dusty Peterson



INTRODUCTION

By Albert James Dager

Following is the excellent concluding section of Part 2 in this important series. The article is very clearly and graciously argued, and is illustrated with superb examples. It is shorter than the previous piece, and readers should also find it demands much less effort of thought. (In Part 2a, the section entitled “Step 2” unavoidably required a good deal of concentration, although the rest of the document was comparatively straightforward.)

Readers should have read Part 1 before proceeding, but please note that the same is not nearly so true of Part 2a unless you have looked into the topic of Bible versions before now. Here is a very quick summary of the latter article:

The “New Testament” portion of Bibles today is based on one or the other of two “families” of Greek manuscripts. For simplicity Dusty called these families “A” and “B.” Members of family B can differ from family A by as much as 10,000 words, but they differ in all sorts of other respects also. Consider these four features of the text of family B that are not true of A:

- It was not copied in great quantity;
- It was not copied widely around the world;
- It was quoted in almost no lectionaries;
- It went out of use for many centuries.

All four facts indicate it was not blessed by God. Now consider two other features of family B that are not true of A:

- Its members frequently vary substantially in content between *each other*, suggesting a lack of reverence for God’s Word by their creators.
- Significant numbers of people have been *martyred* for refusing to replace their Bibles based on family A with those using family B.

Both points suggest B is the product of false brothers.

This suggestion is bolstered by the truth that no true disciple of Jesus would ever change Scripture. That such change was effected in family B is evidenced by two facts: (i) family B invariably gives the shorter readings where the text differs between families (deletion is harder to spot than addition and would thus be the much more popular route for people wanting to quietly corrupt the Bible) and (ii) family B has the “harder” readings (exactly what would be expected from people seeking to corrupt the Bible as subtly as possible).

Family B becomes the preferred text over family A only if we view the Bible like *any other* book. God would never bless such a faithless approach to His Word, for without faith it is impossible to please Him (Hebrews 11:3,6). Instead, He is likely to give faithless people over to their foolish ideas. For example, approaching the Bible like any other book means placing overwhelming weight on the oldest surviving manuscripts. When talking about *whole* manuscripts (rather than just fragments), family B is the “winner” here because two of its members comprise the oldest ones known. These two manuscripts (or “MSS”) have survived from the first half of the 4th century. But applying the “oldest is best” rule ignores the truth that their very survival means these copies couldn’t have been used much. This strongly implies that they are unsound.

Sure enough, the manuscripts in question each contain non-canonical “New Testament”-era books plus many typographical errors and other mistakes, all of which suggest they were not written by people who venerated God’s Word. Both of them also exhibit hundreds of readings not found in any other manuscripts, including each other!

The only sensible conclusion from all this is that family A is where the true text resides, and family B is the product of individuals opposed to God’s truth. In the following article we will learn not only the real significance of the differences between these families, but we will also discover extra reasons to reject family B.

I thoroughly commend this work. *ajd*

The rubber has officially hit the road. It's time we came to the nitty-gritty where I repay the investment in time and effort the reader made with Part 2a. Let's finally look at the specific differences in content between the two Greek families underlying Bibles today, and the practical differences they make to the Body of Christ.

In the previous piece we learned that some English translations of the Bible are largely based on family "B" while others are rooted in family "A". We also learned certain very troubling facts about family B. Nevertheless, people often argue that the differences between these families can safely be ignored, particularly when it comes to the published Greek texts behind actual Bible versions available today. Here are seven common justifications folks offer for this position, along with some observations about them.

"The Differences Are Trivial"

In spite of the pure and interwoven nature of God's Word as we noted in Part 1, it is sometimes claimed that the readings in dispute are trivial in nature. However, if that is so then why did both John Burgon and Fenton Hort make use of such strong language in their denunciations of the respective Greek texts? Why did Hort go to such great lengths to overturn the traditional Greek? And why did his close colleague, B.F. Westcott, say "[I] am most anxious to provide something to replace [it]"?¹ Readers may respond that it is important to refine Scripture, but it must follow from this that it is important these refinements be correct.

In this article we shall see that a number of the differences in dispute cannot possibly be considered trivial. But what about the many differences that do, indeed, seem inconsequential at first glance? Hort himself said of them, "I do not think the significance of their existence is generally understood ... It is quite impossible to judge of the value of what appears to be trifling alterations merely by reading them one after another. Taken together [however], they have often important bearings...."²

"Doctrine Is Unaffected"

Most people who are familiar with the points raised in the last installment of this article would accept that the textual differences cannot all be genuinely trivial. Nevertheless, some of these folks still insist that the differences "do not affect a single doctrine."

The first comment to make is this: Such a notion was certainly not the view of scholars around the time of the 1871 KJV revision committee. Allow me to give quotes from recognized authorities on both sides of the fence. One member of the revision committee was a man named G. Vance Smith. He was a supporter of family B, and his response to the claim that the differences being argued over are of "little im-



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portance from a doctrinal point of view" was that "any such statement [is] ... **contrary to the facts.**"³ Meanwhile Edward Miller, who supported family A, declared that "many of ... [the differences] are of **great importance.**"⁴

Next, let us recall that we are talking about nearly *ten thousand* words being added, deleted or changed. That's sure to affect doctrine to one degree or another. Bear in mind also that we are not addressing the whole Bible here. These ten thousand or so changed words refer only to the "New Testament," that portion of Scripture which, among other things, acts as the spiritual *key* to God's Word, and whose accuracy is therefore especially vital. Lastly, a number of biblical passages which we will mention in this article have been changed in ways which unarguably affect Christian teachings.

(Incidentally, if any reader believes "doctrine" to be a *bad* thing, please remember that this word largely just means "teaching," and that the Bible makes it crystal clear that the beliefs and teachings of God's People have real consequences. 1 Timothy 4:6,13,16 and Romans 6:17-18 should be enough on their own to convince us of this. And if we also consider Titus 2:7 and 1 Timothy 5:17 there should be no room left for any doubt. But if all these passages do not persuade the reader, they are urged to see this footnote.⁵)

1 Arthur Westcott, *The Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott, Vol. I* (Macmillan, 1903), p. 229. (All emphases in quotes in this article are my own unless otherwise stated.)

2 Arthur F. Hort, *The Life and Letters of Fenton John Anthony Hort, Vol. II* (Macmillan, 1896), p. 102.

3 George Vance Smith, *Texts and Margins of the Revised New Testament Affecting Theological Doctrine Briefly Reviewed* (London, 1881), p. 45.

4 Edward Miller, *A Guide to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament* (Dean Burgon Society, Orig. 1886), p. 1.

5 For reasoned proof that sound doctrine is vital to the Body of Christ, see Part 4 of a book I have co-authored entitled *Alpha – the Unofficial Guide: Church*. This volume is stocked by Sword Publishers. Additional outlet details for the rest of the world are available from the "Rubies" section of the website for which I write (i.e., www.bayith.org).

"No Cardinal Doctrines Are Affected"

There are folks who acknowledge that *some* doctrines of the Bible are affected but who still insist we can safely disregard the multitude of differences in the Greek on the basis that no "cardinal" (i.e., chief or principal) doctrines are impacted. This is a surprising position to hold. Apart from the fact that major doctrines *are* affected—as we shall see later—and that the Bible doesn't call *any* doctrine unimportant, how can fallen men have the audacity to claim that we don't need to be concerned about real damage to teachings the Lord has given us in His Word, just because those teachings don't happen to be "cardinal" ones? Certainly this attitude presents a low view of Scripture.

God made us. He knows how we function and what we need. He knows exactly what truths the Bible ought to comprise. How can men dare to question this? How can a person state that any teaching God chose for Holy Writ is expendable? Is this not tantamount to thinking we can do a better job than our Creator? I really wish such folks would ask themselves, "What on earth am I playing at, showing such disrespect for the statements and whole teachings the Lord wanted in His sacred Word?"

"Every Doctrine Is Still Supportable"

Some people who realize that "cardinal" doctrines are indeed impacted still continue to tolerate differences in the Greek because every doctrine is still supportable in family B. In other words, even if a proportion of the "New Testament" statements on a given doctrine have been weakened (or even nullified altogether) in family B, nevertheless we are told that this is acceptable on the basis that there always remains at least one passage that makes the same point.

No-one making this claim seems to notice the obvious problems associated with it. For a start, losing some references to a particular matter surely means we are less likely to reach the correct conclusion on that matter. (Such loss certainly makes it more difficult to be "Berean"—i.e., to check teachings we have received, as per Acts 17:11.) Next, it becomes tougher to justify our stance on a given doctrine in conversation with folks who do not agree with us, especially if other errors have been introduced to the Bible text so as to impugn the doctrine in question. Put simply, Scripture's God-ordained balance is lost.

Even a firm supporter of family B admits, "The Bible may have to say [something] several different times, and perhaps in different ways, for us to understand unambiguously and precisely what truth is being taught."⁶ But let's put all these problems to one side. As we shall see later, those souls who rely on the

principle that "every doctrine is still supportable" are missing the point for a variety of *further* reasons. The reality is that our enemy is subtle. He would very seldom be so obvious as to remove every single passage on a given truth, else no Christian would ever have been fooled into using such a text. As we shall discover, our adversary has taken a somewhat craftier approach to undermining biblical teaching.

"There Is Only 1% Variation"

Certain people try to argue that only 1% of the New Testament is affected and that this means the differences can be disregarded. The true proportion is actually about eight times this amount,⁷ but for the sake of argument let us assume that 1% is indeed the correct figure. We need to remember a couple of things. Firstly, when did God ever say "As long as you deliberately corrupt only a small percentage of My words it's not a problem?" And secondly, if you place a knife through the middle of someone's heart you will destroy much less than 1% of the person. In fact you will destroy less than 1% of their heart alone. But you'll kill them just as surely as if you'd run them over with a steamroller.

"The Differences Don't Stop People Being Saved"

People regularly turn to the argument that the differences in the Greek don't reduce the number of Christian conversions, although quite how it is possible to gauge this never seems to be explained. The differences do seem to have hampered the following piece of evangelism: "I shall always remember the look of glee on the [cultist's] face when, as I was in the course of [demonstrating something about Jesus] from a Bible verse ... my friend who was with me interrupted and said that that was not what it said in his Bible."⁸ Promoting a Greek text reliant on family B doesn't appear to have done much for the Church of England either, which is today just a shadow of what it was prior to Westcott and Hort's efforts.

But regardless, there are other serious flaws with this line of reasoning. To begin with, God is indeed merciful and can assuredly save people in less than ideal circumstances (e.g., while they are attached to apostate groups), but this doesn't mean He wants them to *remain* in those circumstances. God does not call us to make converts, but rather disciples, and the article you are reading will make it evident that family B categorically hinders this process (which actually threatens the evangelistic effectiveness in the lives of these converts anyway).

Even if the reader is adamant that conversions are not reduced, either directly or indirectly, by family B, this cannot be made the *conclusive* test of that family because otherwise we would have to believe "the end justifies the means" which is the very opposite of what the Bible teaches (Romans 3:8; 12:21; 3

6 D.A. Carson, *The King James Version Debate*, (Baker Book House, 1979), p. 65.

7 "The discrepancy ... is around 8% (involving 8% of the words). In a Greek text with 600 pages, that represents 48 solid pages worth" (Pickering, quoted in Jay P. Green Sr., ed., *Unholy Hands on the Bible*, [Sovereign Grace Trust Fund, 1992], p. 555).

8 John Cooper, *Vanguard* magazine, Issue 4, Jul 1997, p. 20. (Italics in original)

John 1:11; 1 Peter 3:10-11; 1 Samuel 15:22b, etc.). Although we can know a *person* by their fruit (i.e. do they show the fruit of the Holy Spirit in their character as per Gal. 5:22-23?), we must not make fruit the conclusive test of an *action*. As I have noted elsewhere, if conversions had been made the conclusive test of Noah's ministry during his 120 years of preaching (i.e. zero souls saved!), none of his family would ever have gone into the Ark. King Saul lost not only his throne but his very life for believing that the end justifies the means (see 1 Sam. 13:5-13; 15:1-28; and 28:7-19). God's ways, once again, are not man's ways, and we must come to terms with this fact if we are to share God's perspective on the Bible versions debate.

"The Alternative Is Unthinkable"

If all else fails, some people claim that anyone who opposes family B must automatically hold to some illogical position at the other extreme. But even a few basic checks would quickly prove this assertion to be wrong. As is the case for most, if not all, other aspects of Christianity, the fact is that a wide spectrum of positions exists among those folks who reject family B.

The Bible calls us to be devoted to the truth and, for every matter, to find the balanced position that explains all the relevant data. Taking the balanced position never means turning a blind eye to deliberate corruption.

(Some readers may be curious as to why I haven't yet distanced myself from those people who have taken an unbalanced position at the *other* end of the spectrum. It needs to be recognized that these articles are not only designed to warn supporters of family B but to bring the truth to *everyone* whose standpoint doesn't fit the facts, regardless of where they are on the spectrum. Just as I have striven to avoid challenging folks on the side of family B until it was necessary, I am dealing with those who hold to other viewpoints in like manner.)

Section Conclusion

If the Bible were like any other book, it might be possible to argue that the differences between versions can be ignored. The truth of the matter is that the Bible isn't like any other book and we must not treat it as if it is. The next article demonstrates this point from a variety of different angles, but for now let us at least acknowledge that both God and Satan have a unique interest in the text of the Bible—a fact which makes the Bible itself unique. For this reason alone it cannot sensibly be approached like any other.

THE ASSAULTS ON RELIABILITY

The section following this one will prove that doctrine is indeed affected by the different Greek readings, but this isn't actually the primary problem with the corrupt Greek text. In his very first appearance in Scripture, Satan's initial attack was not on the *doctrine* of a particular statement but on the reliability of the state-

ment itself—i.e., whether or not God had truly said it. Only after Satan had instilled such doubt did he assail the doctrine in question. Similarly, our enemy's primary aim with regard to Bible corruption is to stop people from *trusting* their Bibles. This makes his assaults on doctrine incomparably easier to achieve, for the following reasons:

- If people do not trust their Bible properly, they will not respect it much. They will certainly not respect it enough to read it prayerfully and reverently, yet both are important if God is to truly bless their reading and to write His Word on their hearts (Psalms 119:27, 125).
- If people do not trust their Bible properly, they won't read it in faith. But this is another prerequisite for God to open our spiritual eyes to His Word so that we can divide it aright (Psalms 119:66).
- If people do not trust their Bible properly, they will waver regarding those passages within it that fight hardest against their fleshly side, yet we must earnestly seek to obey God's Word if we are to be given more light by the Lord (Psalms 119:100).
- If people do not trust their Bible properly, they won't delight in it and hence won't meditate much on it and won't memorize much of it—things which will again limit our ability to understand God's Word (Psalms 119:99).
- If people do not trust their Bible properly, they are less motivated to seriously pursue an understanding of it (and even if they do, they are likely to get their understanding from those individuals who share their lack of trust for the Word).

As the Bible references above indicate, Psalm 119 is very instructive regarding these things, thus it comes as little surprise to find this psalm missing from the "Old Testament" portion of Hort's favorite manuscript (usually called "B"). It is not just *reading* the Bible that matters, but *heeding* the Bible. All the problems cited above obstruct right understanding of the Bible. This in turn makes Satan's task of promoting false doctrine (e.g., via false teachers) infinitely easier. It's the same ultimate goal, but achieved in a much craftier way. Satan and his followers do not mind us studying the Bible so long as we don't obey what it says.

Some may complain that such strong commitment to the Bible is Pharisical. But according to our Savior, the problem with the Pharisees was not that they were too committed to their Bibles, but that they instead held to the traditions of men (Mark 7:5-13). In terms of Scripture, the Pharisees adhered only to certain lesser issues and exploited these to nullify the weightier matters in God's Word (Matthew 23:23).⁹ In a similar way, Satan is

9 The first chapter of a book I have co-authored, called, *Alpha—the Unofficial Guide: World*, goes into this in much more depth and also shows how Christ Himself urged us to know and obey the Scriptures. This book is available from Sword Publishers.

quite content for people to read the Bible if they don't fully believe what they are reading. That way, they can pick and choose which bits to accept. Unfortunately, this will frequently mean they accept those bits with which their fallen nature is most comfortable. These parts are then used as an excuse to ignore the rest of the Bible—the very problem with the Pharisees. This arrangement has the benefit for Satan of making people appear to be sound Christians because they read their Bible.

Let's now see how false brothers create this distrust of Holy Scripture.

Important Note

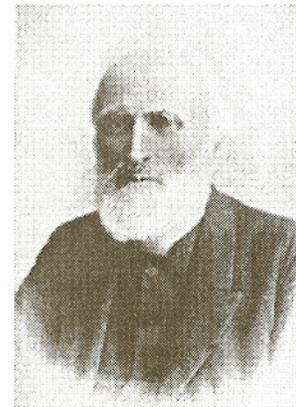
In order to illustrate this problem, I need to identify some specific passages corrupted in family B. Since the members of that "family" vary so much between them,¹⁰ I can't always refer to a particular verse being wrong across the entire group. I shall therefore move from comments about *family B* to instead focus on *manuscript B*. It is entirely reasonable to do so, since Manuscript B was Hort's overwhelming first choice. According to him, even when "[Manuscript] B stands quite alone, its readings must NEVER be lightly rejected."¹¹

From now on in this series of articles, all references merely to "B" pertain to the single manuscript of that name. Students of this subject often refer to that document as "Codex B", and I shall sometimes do likewise. (The word "codex" usually just denotes that the manuscript exists in book form rather than as a scroll.)

Contradicts Truth

To weaken faith in God's Word, Hort's favorite manuscript casts doubt on the verbal inspiration of the Bible in a range of ways. We will need to look at several of these, but the particular issue I cover in this section is the way in which manuscript B places definite contradictions into the text. Manuscript B not only contradicts family A, but it also contradicts itself. It even contradicts reality.

A powerful way to damage faith in Holy Writ (and seriously impair our ability to convince others of its trustworthiness) is by introducing numerous logical impossibilities into the text. Codex B does exactly this. As others have noted, it incorporates "plain errors of fact and contradictions such that any claim that the New Testament is divinely inspired becomes relative ... If the authority of the New Testament is undermined, all its teachings are likewise affected."¹² Burgon was aware of this danger and was therefore alert to any "readings which are grammatically, logically, geographically, or scientifically impossible."¹³ Quite a number of examples could be given,¹⁴ but for space I have limited myself to eight here—four of which I have placed in a footnote—which should prove adequate to make the point.¹⁵



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(Obviously, *grammatical* impossibilities are usually, although not always, removed during translation, so I have not cited any of these in this article, but they nevertheless help to demonstrate further the unreliability of B as a source. For specific examples, see this footnote.¹⁶)

- B states, in Luke 4:44, that Jesus was in Judea when, according to verses 14 and 31 (as well as the parallel passage in Mark 1:35-39), He was not in Judea at all but in *Galilee*.
- B pretends, in 1 Corinthians 5:1, that no Gentile (i.e., pagan) man ever fornicates with his father's wife, yet this type of fornication patently does sometimes occur within the Gentile world.

10 As we discovered in Part 2a, family B is not really a family. Rather, it is a compilation of products from different sections of the false church.

11 Quoted in Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

12 Pickering, as quoted in Green, *op. cit.*, p. 556. Pickering was specifically addressing here a Greek text called "UBS^{3m}" but the Westcott and Hort revision "was taken as the basis" for the UBS Greek—and this revision, as we have already seen, was founded on manuscript B.

13 Wilbur Norman Pickering, *Contribution of John William Burgon to New Testament Textual Criticism*, (A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of the Department of New Testament Literature and Exegesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, May 1968), p. 84.

14 Pickering, quoted in Green, *op. cit.*, p. 569.

15 Other logically impossible readings in Codex B include: **John 18:24** (Annas couldn't send Jesus to Caiaphas *then*, since it is clear from Matthew 26:57-58 that Peter did his denying at Caiaphas' house, and from Luke 22:61 that Jesus was *already there*); **John 6:11** (according to Matthew 14:19, Mark 6:41, and Luke 9:16 the *disciples* did the distributing, not Jesus Himself); **Matthew 11:19** (wisdom is justified by her *children*, as Luke 7:35 declares, but replacing "children" with "deeds" or "works" results in a nonsensical statement); and **Mark 1:2** (the words in the second half of that verse are from Malachi (i.e., 3:1) not from Isaiah).

16 For details of further impossible readings in B, including a number of grammatically impossible ones, see Green, *op. cit.*, pp. 557-567, or Miller, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-29, 57-59.

- B claims, in Matthew 14:30,¹⁷ that it is possible to see wind itself (rather than merely the *strength* of a wind). A person can obviously see particles carried by the wind, but wind itself is just a force, not an object, and forces cannot be seen.
- B insists, in Matthew 10:10, that the Lord Jesus told His disciples not to take any staffs at all with them (rather than merely telling them not to take *multiple* staffs), but this would fly directly in the face of the parallel passage in Mark 6:8 which says they were to take *nothing but* a staff!

Pickering rightly observes, “the effect of [all] these [contradictions] ... is cumulative. It may be possible to circumvent [some] ... of them, but with each attempted circumvention the strain on our credulity increases many-fold.”¹⁸ This all serves to promote doubt in the authority of Scripture which results in the problems described earlier. (As readers may recall, the previous article noted that some people ask, “How do you explain the presence of such a strange reading if it isn’t authentic?” The answer is that such readings are from false brothers, since they make it much harder to have faith in the inspiration of the Bible and they thus play into our enemy’s hands.)

As an aside, please don’t imagine that textual critics necessarily avoid these problems with Codex B. That document is still central to modern followers of Hort’s basic principles, and every single one of the verse corruptions listed in this article has found its way into more than one Bible version sold today.

Contradicts Family A With Opposite Readings

Readings in Codex B not only disagree with family A on a huge number of occasions, but the differences in a given passage are even mutually exclusive at times. We will see some instances in a moment. This, too, is a situation which damages faith in the Bible, as well as causing confusion generally. Imagine a young Christian buying two different Bible versions in order to compare readings so as to get a deeper grasp of the Scriptures, only to discover that these readings irreconcilably disagree with each other. Will this not cause real doubt about the degree of inspiration of the Bible?

To illustrate the point, here are four examples of blatant contradiction. Again, four more are provided in the footnotes.¹⁹

- In Colossians 2:18, family A refers to things a man has “not seen,” whereas Codex B says, “he has seen” them.

- In Romans 4:19, the traditional text says that Abraham did not consider his body when it came to the promise of siring a child, whereas B says he did, indeed, face the state of his body.
- In Colossians 4:15, family A mentions “his house” whereas Codex B claims the passage should refer to “her house.”
- In Luke 14:5 the traditional text uses the phrase, “an ass or an ox” but the word “ass” is eccentrically replaced in B with the word “son.”

(Incidentally, if the reader is wondering whether it might not be family A that is in error, it should be noted that it is often plain that Codex B is the text in the wrong—either because the reading it gives upsets the grammar (e.g., the tense or gender), or because it is the only known manuscript in the world to give the reading in question.

Contradicts Family A With Major Deletions

Additionally, there are the colossal number of occasions when sections of text are simply omitted in Family B. These omissions sometimes involve the loss of entire verses. Hort’s rule that “the shorter reading is to be preferred” means that, if the whole verse is missing, it inevitably qualifies as the shortest reading and therefore gets preferred. Imagine a group of believers trying to have a Bible study where each attendee has to read one verse in turn from any of the dozens of passages in the “New Testament” where a whole verse has disappeared. Let’s say your group is reading the twelve verses between Mark 9:38 and the end of the chapter. You get to verse 44 only to find that the person supposed to be reading that verse doesn’t have it in their Bible. You manage to recover from this, only to find the same thing happening just two verses later. Consider the doubt about the purity of God’s Word which results from this sort of situation.

Although certain English translations which exhibit omissions (plus other contradictions) don’t have *whole* verses missing, that’s not the point. The point is that Codex B is so patently unsound that Bible translators shouldn’t rely on it at all, any more than they should the Gnostic “gospels.” Indeed, if the translators of such Bibles think the verses omitted by B ought to be present then that itself should cause these people a good deal of doubt about B as a healthy source. On the other hand, if these translators don’t believe the verses are original then they should have the courage of their convictions and remove them from the text altogether. Either way they are showing themselves to be un-

17 This reading was the product of a “corrector” of B, but was still taken as the true reading by Westcott and Hort.

18 Quoted in Green, *op. cit.*, p. 562. (See also page 559 of that document.)

19 Other discrepancies between family A and Codex B that are very hard to reconcile include: **Acts 13:42** (was it the Jews, or actually Barnabas and Paul, who were leaving?); **1 John 5:18** (who is being kept, and who does the keeping?); **Matthew 5:22** (the qualifier “without a cause” makes a vast difference); and **Romans 10:9** (confessing the Lord Jesus obviously involves rather more than just saying the words “Jesus is Lord” as 2 Corinthians 11:4 shows).

wise. (Note that these translators are often inconsistent in that they don't remove whole verses, but they seem happy to remove large parts of verses. This is an illogical approach though, since the Bible was not originally separated into verses. Verse numbering began only as late as 1551 when Stephanus used it. Furthermore, some deletions within verses are longer than whole verses which are retained! For instance, Luke 23:17 is only ten words long but is kept in because it is a whole "verse," whereas 1 Peter 4:14 suffers a deletion of fourteen words in a row. According to this arbitrary rule, the latter passage would have been retained in the Bible had Stephanus made a slightly different choice here and given these fourteen words their own verse.)

Just a few of the verses missing wholesale from B are: Matthew 17:21; 23:14; Mark 15:28; Luke 17:36; 23:17; John 5:4; Acts 24:7; 28:29; and Romans 16:24. I'm not insisting such verses have any *direct* doctrinal impact (although other deleted verses certainly do, including Matthew 18:11; Mark 11:26; Acts 8:37; and both of the Mark 9 verses cited earlier). What I am saying is that it is very disconcerting for a Christian to find an entire verse missing from their supposedly infallible Bible and that this inevitably impoverishes their faith in God's Word. Even if a translation incorporates the verses left out of the underlying Greek, such versions often include footnotes worded in such a way as to cast serious doubt on the passage and to make people ask, "If this verse was part of English Bibles for hundreds of years but actually shouldn't have been included, what guarantee is there that my more recent version doesn't have some extraneous material in it?" The full significance of this will be revealed shortly.

Alongside the disappearance of whole "verses," there are numerous occasions when substantial *parts* of a verse are omitted. For instance, see Matthew 20:16 (seven words); Mark 6:11 (fifteen words); Luke 8:43 (six words); and Acts 18:21 (eleven words). Deletions can be conspicuous for reasons other than just length though. See for example Galatians 5:21 (loss of the word "murders"!); and 1 Peter 1:22 (two deletions in one verse, i.e., loss of "through the Spirit," and loss of "pure" from the phrase, "pure heart"). Once again, I'm not requiring the reader to suppose that all such deletions have a direct effect on doctrine (although, again, some patently do, such as those from Matthew 5:44; Mark 9:45; Acts 15:24; and Romans 14:6). I simply ask the reader to recognize that it could weaken a Christian's faith in his Bible if he compared translations based on these two different Greek texts and found such big discrepancies.

If a person has been brought up for years with a sound Bible, then he may be able to mentally "fill in the gaps." But what about someone who hasn't had the benefit of such a background? Even if a man decides his own version is reliable, he is bound to conclude that some brothers (to whom he may one day need to entrust his life) are using corrupt Bibles. Won't he question the wisdom of a fellowship that happily accepts multiple versions which exhibit such large numbers of contradictory readings? At the very least, won't he be confused? If he supposes God is happy for His people to use such diverse Bibles, won't this again detract

from faith in the verbal and plenary inspiration of Scripture that we discussed in Part 1?

Could It "B"?

In case any readers are still entertaining the thought that it might be family A in the wrong and that Codex B has the correct readings after all, please remember the multifarious reasons offered in Part 2a for discounting this possibility. Please also consider the following:

(a) One can be confident that B is at fault, because its shorter readings frequently make the Greek grammatically or logically inconsistent. For instance, the "stirring" of the water in John 5:7 no longer makes much sense given the deletion of verse 4.

(b) If Codex B is sound then most other Greek manuscripts contain a very considerable number of additions. But, in practice, additions to the text would be rare in these MS families. While it is true that a mere *heretic* might add to the text, an actual *false brother* would normally be far too subtle to do that because addition is much more conspicuous than deletion. A true Christian would only ever add to the original text accidentally. (What's more, these accidents would invariably only ever happen as a result of re-reading a similar-looking piece of text in the immediate vicinity of the passage being copied (this is called "dittography"). Certainly there are other ways in which text can accidentally be inserted into a MS, but they all imply a reckless copying procedure—and hence the product, at some point or another, of people who didn't venerate God's Word and whose work is therefore unreliable.)²⁰

(c) Although too large for most modern translators to be prepared to remove, nevertheless Hort's two favorite manuscripts are alone in omitting the twelve verses comprising Mark 16:9-20, yet Burgon was able to fill an entire book with evidence that this passage was part of the original text and should thus be present. His arguments have never been answered.²¹ (These same two manuscripts, "Aleph" and "B," also omit a second batch of twelve consecutive verses. This deletion occurs between John 7:53 and 8:11 and causes a breakdown in the logic of the Greek.²²) Note also that B is sometimes not even joined by Aleph in losing the sections of text I listed earlier.²³

(d) There are many other problems with B. These include omissions (such as occur in its version of the books of Samuel) and deliberate corruptions (such as those in its appalling rendition of the book of Job). To top it all off, "bad spelling ... is constant in [B]."²⁴ Together these things strongly suggest this codex to be the product of people who did not cherish Holy Writ and whose work is therefore not to be trusted.

(e) While employing a number of arguments, Part 2a could be said to have shown just *one* way of approaching the question of which Greek family is sound. If any reader doesn't accept the conclusions given in that article, please be aware that there are at least three *other* ways by which one can approach this issue – *and they all lead to the same result already seen*. I plan to look at these in future articles. (Supporters of family A who feel I have omitted vital aspects of this issue should find them dealt with there.)

Section Conclusion

Satan's primary goal, then, is to weaken our faith in Holy Writ. Some readers may think the above material would not do much damage. They need to bear in mind a few things though. Firstly, there are yet other entire facets of Codex B which undermine faith in God's Word but which we haven't even touched on. (I plan to cover two such in Part 3.) Beyond this, the world today—through our schools and media among other outlets—regularly offers us fake “reasons” to doubt the reliability of the Bible. Satan's offensive against the inspiration of Scripture goes well beyond corrupting the text itself. He is forever looking for ways to cause us to question the contents of the Bible—e.g., the miracles recorded there. What I am saying is that, alongside these other lines of attack, the changes I have thus far listed in this article can easily act as the straw that breaks the camel's back and lead Christians to deny the verbal and plenary inspiration of their Bibles with all the attendant damage this does to their spiritual walk in Christ.

To top it all off, B makes various alterations to Scripture which directly assist the work of Bible corruptors and also directly help to conceal the necessity of pursuing right doctrine. The most blatant instance is the complete removal of Psalm 119 and its 176 verses extolling God's Word. Of course this psalm is not removed from English translations—because no one would buy a copy which excluded it. But again, that is not the issue here. At this stage I am simply pointing out that B is such a debased document as to be totally untrustworthy as a guide to any readings. Besides, there are other such instances in B which do appear in English Bibles sold today:

- The fact that some scribes are thoroughly opposed to God's Word is obscured by their disappearance from both Matthew 26:3 and Luke 11:44.
- Even if we learn that someone we know has sinned against God by corrupting His Word, alterations to Matthew 6:15 & 18:35 (both of which originally

referred to *trespasses against us* but can now be read as including heresy, etc.) mean we are obliged to treat this news much less seriously than we should.

- Likewise, the alterations to 1 John 3:14b (loss of “brother”); Matthew 5:22 (loss of “without a cause”); and 1 John 4:19 (loss of reference to God) all allow the work of false brothers and their foolish supporters to continue more easily.
- We need wisdom, but *God's* wisdom rather than man's. The removal of the word “man's” from the phrase “man's wisdom” in 1 Corinthians 2:4 helps false teachers to claim that the wisdom God has supplied for us in His Word is not as important as it really is. Similarly, we need to “obey the truth,” but B has deleted this fact from Galatians 3:1.

Perhaps the most egregious change is made in Luke 4:4. It ought to read, “man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God,” except the emboldened section has gone from B!

Before we have even started to get into the doctrinal aspect of the corruptions, surely it is already obvious that it is simply wrong to claim we can safely ignore the differences between the Greek texts used by translators.

The next section will at last begin our review of the doctrinal impact caused by the differences in the Greek.

(In case the reader is wondering why I have waited so long to come to the doctrinal side of matters, my reasoning has been two-fold: Firstly there were other issues that also needed covering and I didn't want to run the unnecessary risk of losing readers who hold to the doctrinal errors promoted in Codex B before I had to. Secondly, until I had adequately exposed the depth of B's problems, all talk of doctrine could have been misconstrued as a circular argument—i.e., that I was simply supporting those MSS which support my personal doctrinal outlook. There is an added bonus to the approach I have used. Namely, once B has

20 It is often claimed, for instance, that marginal notes could easily find themselves inserted into the main text by later copyists. However, any decent copyist who was in any doubt about a reading would simply check another source. Similarly, it is obviously true that scribes get tired and that tiredness can lead to mistakes, but any copyist who truly cared about Holy Scripture would compensate for their fatigue by being twice as careful—just as any sensible driver who is tired will drive with extra diligence. It is also evident that harmonization of texts was hardly a “common activity,” since there exist a very large number of passages in the “New Testament” which make obvious candidates for annotation in one way or another for the sake of easier understanding but which apparently passed by all these supposed multitudes of interpolators and harmonizers.

21 For more details see Green, *op. cit.*, pp. 564-565.

22 For a fuller analysis of this, see Pickering, quoted in Green, *op. cit.*, pp. 566-567.

23 If any reader thinks *Aleph* to be a sound text, they need to explain away the points made in Part 2a. They also need to recall that *Aleph* was Hort's second favorite text. “The text of Westcott and Hort is practically the text of *Aleph* and B” [Herman C. Hoskier, *Codex B and its Allies—a Study and an Indictment*, as quoted in David Otis Fuller, *Which Bible?* (Grand Rapids International Publications, 1990), p. 136]. Hort himself said, “no readings of *Aleph/B* can safely be rejected absolutely” [B.F. Westcott and F.J.A. Hort, *Introduction to the New Testament in the Original Greek*, (1882), p. 225]. Finally, defenders of *Aleph* need to bear in mind that most of the corrupted verses mentioned in this article are also to be found in that MS—and that *Aleph* has further instances not found in B.

24 Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 59; see also p. 56.

been proved to be the Greek with the deliberate corruption, the most crucial aspects of the Gospel are swiftly confirmed to everyone, since they are the parts which the enemy of our souls had to attack the most in Scripture.)

THE ASSAULTS ON DOCTRINE

Once false brothers have engendered doubts about the infallibility of the Bible itself, it takes only a relatively modest—and therefore inconspicuous—amount of corruption to raise doubts about the central doctrines of the Christian faith and to allow false teachers to neuter the gospel. Let's see the different methods the enemy uses to achieve this.

2 Or 3 Witnesses

People often argue that, if a particular point is made somewhere in Scripture, it doesn't really matter if any additional occurrences of that same point have been lost. They claim we should tolerate the many problems with Bibles relying on family B because "you can always locate an alternative passage to support any given truth." In some people's eyes, as long as a teaching is given *somewhere* in the Bible then any additional mentions of the same teaching are apparently unimportant, if not completely redundant.

The first observation to make is that we are talking about the very Word of God, not just a letter to the *Times*. No part of God's Word is superfluous. A given statement in the Bible may need to be repeated for a variety of reasons. We noted several of these in the section entitled "Every Doctrine is Still Supportable." A further reason is that God has apparently ordained the principle that each doctrine can be established *only* if it has a minimum of *two* scriptural witnesses. Let's see some evidence for this. There is a rule in the Bible that, "In the mouth of *two or three* witnesses shall every word be established" (2 Corinthians 13:1). During His time on earth, the Lord Jesus stated, "the testimony of *two* men is true" (John 8:17b). He also said "in the mouth of *two or three* witnesses every word may be established" (Matthew 18:16b). Joseph explained that God gave Pharaoh his dream in two different forms "because the thing is *established* by God" (Genesis 41:32). For more evidence of this principle, see Acts 10:13-16; Revelation 11:3; or Matthew 26:42-45.

What this means is that we cannot definitively teach a given doctrine if our Bible doesn't contain at least two witnesses to it (i.e., two passages clearly making the point in question). I should clarify this. I am not talking about every last statement in the Bible. Not every fact is repeated in Holy Writ. But for every doctrinal point made in the Bible, there will always be at least one other passage having the *same spiritual significance*. (For two examples of that very truth in action, see Luke 13:1-5 and Acts 5:36-37.) D.A. Carson is one advocate of Codex B who endorses this principle. He writes, "[E]stablished doctrines are **never** based on just one verse....[D]octrine is not based on just **one** verse"²⁵ Therefore, if witnesses are removed from the Bible text such that

only one remains, the doctrine will indeed still be supportable, but it won't be *establishable*, and its significance becomes debatable rather than something we know we must obey. (Why would God create such a rule? For a start it obviously makes life harder for false brothers and "false witnesses" (Deuteronomy 19:15-16) who would like to quietly insert lies into, or remove truths from, God's Word. However, I suggest it was also an elegant way of alerting those early assemblies which didn't possess the full canon of Scripture, or whose copy had accidentally lost a page, to their lack. I plan to mention a third advantage in a later article.)

The principle that we need at least two scriptures witnessing to a given matter in order to establish that matter is one of the main reasons why no Christian can afford to use Bibles based on family B, else he will regularly find the necessary second witness missing. For pages and pages of examples, see the book, *A Concordance of the Destruction of the Two and Three Witnesses in the Bible* by Les Garrett. (Not every entry in Garrett is present in Codex B, but many are, and every entry can certainly be found in modern English versions in use today.) Here is a cross-section of examples to start us off and to illustrate the sort of things I am talking about:

- Did Jesus "call ... sinners to **repentance**"? The emboldened section is clearly important but has been removed from both Matthew 9:13 and Mark 2:17 in Codex B, so there is only one direct witness left.
- The phrase "gospel of **peace**" occurs only twice in the whole Bible, but just once in B (it is omitted from Romans 10:15).
- Christ suffered, but did He actually suffer "for us"? This question has implications, but one of the only two passages specifically saying He suffered for us has lost this crucial qualifier in Codex B (see 1 Peter 4:1).
- Did Jesus really ask the rhetorical question about every father, "if his son ask [for] bread will he give him a stone?" This passage appears twice in the Bible, but B removes it from one of those places (Luke 11:11) leaving only a solitary witness.
- Some people might reasonably suppose that the content of the Lord's prayer is of more than a little significance. The wording is given only twice in the Bible (Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4). Just take a look at the differences in Luke's version as given in Codex B. No longer does it mention God's will being done, and no longer does it include the request to "deliver us from evil." In fact, more than twenty words have been cut.

Someone who has been brought up under sound teaching, or raised with a sound Bible, may be able to compensate for some or all of these gaps, but what about those souls who do not have such a background?

(Please Note: Corruption of the second witness can be a problem even when the passage in question has no obvious impact doctrinally. If the passage occurs in one of the four Gospel accounts, and if it has an irrefutable parallel in another of the Gospels, the extra differences introduced by Codex B have the inevitable effect of causing further doubt in the reader's mind as to the reliability of Holy Writ. For example, the word "wife" has gone missing in both Matthew 19:29 and Mark 10:29 but has been allowed to remain in the parallel statement in Luke 18:29.)

Earlier I likened Satan's attack on the Bible to a knife through the heart. Sure enough, the enemy's main target, in terms of doctrinal corruption, is the heart of the Gospel. It goes without saying that the heart of the Gospel is the Lord Jesus Christ. The above list included two instances of our Savior's nature and ministry being injured. Here is a selection of further occasions, to show how wide-ranging the attacks are. (Again, more examples are available in the aforementioned book by Les Garrett.)

- Was Christ Mary's "firstborn" son? Regrettably, B removes this teaching from one of the two places it should occur (i.e. Matthew 1:25), but this question has major ramifications for the nature of our Lord, as Peter Johnston has eloquently explained.²⁶ The issue is directly related to the doctrine that Jesus Christ has "come in the flesh"—a doctrine that serves as the pivotal test of a false brother according to 1 John 4:2-3. Presumably this is the very reason Codex B drops this clause from verse 3! (You can easily "confess Jesus" without confessing that He has come in the flesh.)
- As a child, did Jesus grow "strong in spirit"? This too has serious implications for His nature, yet Codex B has taken it out of Luke 2:40, leaving only one clear witness to this truth.
- Was the Lord Jesus sent to "heal the brokenhearted"? This statement occurs only twice in the Bible, but it has been excised from one of those places (Luke 4:18) thanks to B, even though it appears in the middle of an "Old Testament" passage the Lord is quoting.
- Was Christ Jesus really "numbered with the transgressors"? Only two verses in the whole of Scripture make this specific statement, and Codex B has taken one of them away (Mark 15:28).

This "2 or 3 witnesses" issue may not impress every reader, but it is clearly a problem—especially when we consider that it takes only a small amount of alteration to pervert the Gospel.

One can ruin the Gospel just by adding a solitary extra teaching to it, which is why Paul and Barnabus needed to have such an enormous dispute with some men who tried to do that (Acts 15:1-2). Just a single change to the Gospel can turn it into "another [i.e., false] gospel" (Galatians 16; 2 Corinthians 11:4). This is undoubtedly one reason why God made it so plain that we are not to add or delete any words when it comes to Holy Scripture (a fact we discussed at some length in Part 1).

Remaining Witness Now Questionable

Hort's theories lead to the conclusion that even the Greek text he himself published is significantly flawed (i.e., mankind is still very much in the process of restoring the original Greek as we find more evidence). Those Bibles translated by people who follow Hort equip false teachers to argue that the lone remaining witness for a given teaching in those Bibles is only present due to the original text still being in the process of reconstruction. By this means, such people can expunge some doctrines completely!

The problem doesn't stop there. Consider this matter alongside the doubts that people justifiably develop about the accuracy of the Bible as a result of all the physical, geographical or logical impossibilities in translations based on B. Then consider the additional doubts about the accuracy of the Bible that are induced by Hort's claim that textual accuracy attracted hardly any interest among early believers, and that the insertion of explanatory notes was common. Suddenly it can be argued that the lone surviving witness to a given teaching was an uninspired addition to the true text, and that the very fact it is a lone witness—when every matter must be established by at least two or three witnesses—means it is almost certainly not part of the true Bible.

Similarly, if a particular article of the faith has been removed from, say, fifty percent of the passages in which it should appear, then there is still a problem even if two or more witnesses remain. This is because, if a person is shown these differences between Bible versions but is taught that Codex B represents the better Greek, they will assume that someone inserted these "extra" entries as part of the creation of family A. This could easily lead such folks to wonder why someone was so keen to add this point into the Bible. Might they not then speculate that the occurrences which are still present in B were also additions, and thus conclude that the article of faith does not belong in the Bible at all? If, as B's fans assert, some Bibles have a whole extra twelve verses added in a row, it is easy to argue that the occasional single verse, or partial verse, has also been added to the Bible from time to time.²⁷

26 Quoted in Green, *op. cit.*, p. 330. (Please note, however, that I would not endorse everything in Green's writings.)

27 It is all very well for B's supporters to say that the number of passages in dispute between Greek texts is relatively small (although 5,600 doesn't seem terribly small to me), but unless a believer happens to know precisely which passages are in dispute then they are bound occasionally to wonder if a given passage is one of them, even if it isn't.

The issue of fasting is quite a striking example. The assaults on this important aspect of Christian practice are copious. For instance, did Christ teach that “prayer and fasting” was required by the disciples in order for them to be able to cast out the more powerful devils? In Codex B this point has been removed from both of the only two times it is made (i.e., Mark 9:29 and Matthew 17:21). Was Cornelius fasting when God told him to send for Peter? The reference to this has been deleted from Acts 10:30. According to 1 Corinthians 7:5, should married couples set aside times to devote themselves to prayer and *fasting*? Not if one reads Codex B. If a believer is presented with many differences on a single topic, will this not lead to confusion at best?

Ambiguities

Having brought into question key aspects of the faith, it would appear the enemy’s next task is to see if he can surreptitiously change any verses so that they become ambiguous in such a way that they can be exploited to outrightly *deny* key aspects of the faith. Just one verse per doctrine can be enough, because if people don’t know their Bible (as a result of the enemy’s prior attacks on its reliability) then that’s all a false or heretical teacher needs. Such teachers can then promote the wrong interpretation of these ambiguous passages—not least by claiming that the “changes” taking these verses in the direction of family A were themselves corruptions perpetrated by individuals who produced a “vile” Greek (as Hort described it) and whose work is therefore deeply suspect.

Here are just four of the many Bible passages now made dangerously ambiguous in B. (I have added an extra four in the footnotes, but it would not have been difficult to supply a large number more.²⁸)

- Hebrews 1:3 declares that Jesus “purged our sins,” but Codex B removes the word “our” here—thus enabling heretics to teach that Jesus had His own sins to purge. Similarly, Matthew 27:24 no longer has Pontius Pilate describing Jesus as “this just person.”²⁹
- John 6:47 quotes the Lord Jesus saying we have everlasting life if we believe on Him. The removal of this condition helps false teachers convince people that every person of “faith” has everlasting life no matter who (or what!) they have faith in.
- Luke 12:31 tells us we should “seek the kingdom of God,” but B omits “of God,” thereby allowing people to apply this verse to an earthly kingdom that will be established before Christ’s return. (Matthew 6:33 suffers a very similar fate.)

- Matthew 6 verses 4, 6 and 18 teach that if we act in secret when we pray, or when we fast, or give to the poor, God shall reward us “openly.” By removing the word “openly” on all three occasions, Codex B equips false brothers to claim they have done these good deeds but that their reward is invisible to anyone else because it was given secretly.

In my experience, Christians often have to sit through sermons for which the chosen text is just a solitary verse. If that verse has been emasculated or otherwise corrupted so that it is hard to interpret rightly, the entire sermon may end up being one long deception. Also, what happens if a sound teacher gives a talk which relies on one or more verses that have been corrupted in the Bible versions used by many of the folks present at a meeting? Won’t he look foolish? Indeed, might not his scope for bringing valuable teachings in the future be eroded by such a thing? Why should he have to waste time checking lots of corrupt versions? (I am just grateful to God that this scenario hasn’t happened to me yet, as far as I am aware.)

Interconnections

Even if a corruption to a reading appears very minor, it is most likely that the verse is knitted to other parts of Scripture and that we will cause an unraveling of this if we are not careful. As noted in Part 1, the Bible is multi-layered. Some spiritual truths are supported by an interrelationship between two or more passages that may not necessarily appear closely connected at first glance. Passages can be linked in a variety of ways, and if Satan can break some of the more important links for a given teaching then he has once again weakened the force of that teaching. By their very nature, low-key links can often seem arguable, and I don’t want to be controversial if I don’t have to be, so I shall illustrate my point here with an indisputable connection, *viz.*, the way Codex B removes the passage commencing “that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet” in Matthew 27:35 which God placed into the Bible to help connect the crucifixion with Psalm 22 (cf v18).

Combination

Christians need to be prepared to put their very lives on the line for the sake of the truth. For this reason they need to have an unshakeable faith built on firm foundations. Just as a house depends on the solidity of its constituent parts, and depends on these parts being held together securely, so the constituent teachings of our faith need to be solid and properly connected. Our enemy doesn’t try to remove whole beams from the house, for that would be evident to all. Instead he enfeebles them and damages their joints.

28 Other verses made unhealthily ambiguous by Codex B include: **Matthew 26:28** (was our Lord instituting the *new* Covenant here? This ambiguity is perpetuated in Mark 14:24); **1 Peter 2:21** (didn’t Christ suffer for Peter too?); **1 John 4:19** (should we love men as much as we love God?); and **Romans 15:19** (*which* “Spirit” is in view? Cf 2 Corinthians 11:4).

29 The alteration to 1 Peter 4:1 we looked at earlier is an even more disquieting instance.

As Hort admitted, per our citation in the opening section of this article, it is in the *combination* of changes where the impact lies. When we consider the combination of different types of attack, we can finally recognize the true gravity of the situation. Some of the constituent parts of the house have had their “two or three witnesses” reduced to one; others have had a substantial proportion of their infrastructure eroded, even if this still leaves two surviving witnesses. Other parts have been badly weakened by being made ambiguous. And in other cases the interconnections, or joints, holding everything together have been severed.

Hort’s colleague Westcott confirmed as much when he said, “The value of the revision is most clearly seen when the student considers together a **considerable group** of passages, which bear upon some article of faith. The **accumulation** of small details then produces the **full effect**.”³⁰ Crucial teachings suffer multiple wounds which inevitably harm them materially.

Again, Satan’s focus is on the core of the Gospel, the Lord Jesus Christ. Like termites which have eaten away at the fabric of a house, Satan has scuttled unnoticed into God’s Word and chewed away at the truth about our glorious Redeemer. Key aspects of His nature and incarnation are undermined, including His virgin birth, His resurrection, and His lordship. Just consider His ascension. This has been weakened, for instance, by the removal of the last twelve verses of Mark (which include the statement that our Lord was “received up into heaven”) and by distorting John 3:13 (which no longer says He is currently “in heaven”). (We will expose even more of Satan’s attacks on the Lord Jesus in a later article.) Instead of the true Rock on which to build our house, the enemy gives us sand.

The Final Nail

What I have said thus far should be worrying enough for any true believer. But there is yet another issue to factor in. As I explain in my short series of articles entitled *Beware False Balances*, God seems to test our love for the truth by sometimes putting a verse in Scripture which, if not interpreted in the light of the rest of the Bible, appears on the surface to point *away* from the truth. Indeed, I have yet to find a doctrine which *cannot* superficially be questioned (or even denied) by at least one verse. (I realize this will be a radical teaching to some, so I beg readers who doubt it to remember that God promises to send a strong delusion upon those who do not believe the truth “that they should **believe a lie**” [2 Thessalonians 2:11-12]. I also encourage such readers to check out the relevant articles in the “Rubies” section of the bayith.org website.) If most doctrines do indeed have a verse in God’s pure Word which, on the surface, negates that doctrine, the true implications of the enemy’s corruption of Holy Scripture becomes even more chilling. Even with a sound Greek text,

God appears to have arranged things (in line with passages like Numbers 12:7-8; Matthew 13:13-15; and 1 Corinthians 1:19-20) such that we won’t grasp His Word aright if we do not approach it in faith and meekness. In view of this, imagine how hard it must be to understand His Word properly when an unsound Greek text is in use.

Section Conclusion

Let me reiterate that these sections could have included numerous further examples. But even in the event that a believer does not pick up any wrong doctrine from their aberrant Bible, these corruptions give the impression that God is confused or that the Bible is not verbally inspired.

I should also make clear that there exists a whole set of verses which have been altered to the point that they can be used to *directly* contradict the Gospel, but which I have so far not mentioned at all. These verses either add extra requirements to the pure Gospel or question the most pivotal aspect of it. This matter is revisited in Part 3. It would not make sense to identify them before that point in case I lose readers who hold to these very errors. Many sincere people around the world believe these particular falsehoods. (They do so precisely because they have been taught via Bibles reliant on manuscripts like Codex B.)

The Bible text God gave us was in perfect balance, but the thousands of changes in B have demonstrably produced a false balance. God calls false balances an “**abomination**” (Proverbs 11:1), so what must He think of Codex B? The reader may protest that actual translations avoid the problems I have highlighted. In reality, two popular English translations available today suffer *all* the scores of specific corruptions I have identified here.

Let me close this section by posing one final question. Who among us will be prepared to stand before Almighty God on the last day and say, “Even though You faithfully supplied us with a trustworthy family of Greek MSS, I couldn’t be bothered to take seriously the thousands of corruptions people made to it and I encouraged others to ignore them too?”

DON’T FOOTNOTES COVER THE ISSUE?

Some people consider what I’ve written in this article to be a non-issue because they think Bibles based on the wrong Greek still offer the correct readings in the footnotes or margins, and that this makes everything fine. The first point to offer in response is that some Bible versions do not give such footnotes, but let us assume they all do. The next problem is that translations rarely include all six thousand or so differences, but let’s again assume they all do.³¹

30 Quoted in Jasper James Ray, *God Wrote Only One Bible*, (Eye Opener Publishers), p. 26, as quoted in Jeff Johnson, *Spiritual Deception in the Highest*, (e-book), chapter 21.

31 For instance, many B-centered Bibles seem inconsistent in that they don’t admit that they supply only half the family A rendering of Ephesians 5:30 (i.e., they omit the words “of his flesh, and of his bones”).

Many people do not read the footnotes, but once again let us assume they all do. How many of us check (or remember) every relevant footnote every time we read a passage? Not many, I suspect, but let us assume we all do this too. The sad facts are these:

(a) Most of us are likely to trust the translators of our chosen Bible version to pick the right reading for the main text, and we will often thus reject the footnote variant.

(b) Even if we are not so trusting, the wording of these footnotes is typically extremely misleading in terms of guidance on which reading is the correct one. Frequently the translators either (i) **Give delusive data** (i.e., obscuring the true support for a given variant reading),³² or else they (ii) **Predetermine the issue** (i.e., saying things such as, “later mss *insert*,” thus prejudging the matter).³³

(c) We cannot simply decide to accept all the footnote variants, because not all of them come from family A.

(d) Even if we somehow always manage to pick the correct reading, many of the God-ordained interconnections between passages are obscured when we have to mentally replace sections of the text with the proper wording from the footnotes.

Let’s be generous and say that one person in every million could overcome all the above problems. Even if you or I are that one-in-a-million, we are still legitimizing our Bible version for the 999,999 in every million who can’t. We are giving credibility to a Bible based on corrupted MSS, yet Holy Writ calls us to do all we reasonably can to avoid causing a brother to stumble (e.g., see 1 Corinthians 8:11).

Of course there is an even more fundamental problem with such footnotes. Specifically, they cause a lot of questions about the reliability—and hence the verbal inspiration—of Scripture. Page after page, they promote doubt about the true readings. (They even suggest that the translators themselves are unsure as to what is the correct reading.³⁴ After all, why would these people offer another reading if they were certain it was wrong?) In other words, these footnotes actually serve Satan’s primary aim for the Bible! And besides, where do we draw the line down this slippery slope of compromise? The warning in 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 is very relevant here.

But again, this is all immaterial in a way. The question is, what does *God* think? Where does He ever teach that it is acceptable to relegate truths about Him and His Kingdom to mere footnotes while intentional corruptions are left in the main text of His Word?

(Please Note: It should be borne in mind that this article concentrates on the underlying Greek text. In other words, this arti-

cle does not include the additional problems introduced by the use of the “dynamic equivalence” method of translation discussed in Part 1. Nor does the document you are reading include those problems caused by any unsound motives on the part of translators—a possibility we will need to investigate in Part 3. Neither of these extra sources of error is removed by supplying footnotes of alternate Greek readings.)

HOW DID IT HAPPEN?

At this point, some readers will be asking themselves how Hort’s approach ever won any converts at all, far less how it came to be accepted by the majority of the 1871 KJV revision committee. In the previous article we saw five reasons why this committee was poorly placed to challenge Hort’s arguments and we also noted a reason why sections of the public respected the committee’s decision. We now need to look a little more widely at this aspect of matters. I shall start by considering some of the more forgivable reasons why Hort himself, along with his very close friend Brooke Foss Westcott, got things so wrong. I shall then suggest additional reasons why the majority of the revision committee were duped and why other souls followed them.

Westcott And Hort

There were a number of factors which led Westcott and Hort to take the wrong path. We shall look at a subset here and return to this question in Part 3, God willing.

One difficulty was that these men spent a lot of time in the company of what are termed “higher critics”—people who approach the Bible just like any other book. This undoubtedly encouraged Westcott and Hort to do the same. A further difficulty seems to have been that these two men spent several decades working on their theory without seeking the balancing effect of alternate opinions. The elder of the pair (Westcott) even admitted, “He who has long pondered over a train of reasoning becomes **unable** to detect its weak points.”³⁵ They were also busy men with a range of interests, who consequently appear to have failed to find the necessary time to check whether their theories actually agreed with the facts.

Another problem was the particular window of history in which they were working. On the one hand, Codex Aleph had been discovered twelve years before the committee began its deliberations, and Codex B had also recently become properly available to scholars for the first time in decades. (The exceptional age of Aleph and B was probably as intoxicating to Westcott and

32 For example, at least one Bible says, regarding the deletion of the thirteen words at the end of Matthew 6:13, that only “some ... manuscripts” include the missing words, whereas the truth is that more than **98%** of manuscripts include them. Given space, many other cases could be cited, including similarly breathtaking ones.

33 To be fair, translators are themselves often supplied with misleading information by textual critics, although it might be reasonable to expect translators to check their facts before annotating the very Word of God.

34 For important relevant comments by Burgon on these things, see *The Revision Revised*, (Dean Burgon Society Press, 2nd printing, 2000), pp. 235-238.

35 John W. Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, p. 362.

Hort as it proved to be to many other people, even though—as I noted in our previous installment—the survival of a complete manuscript from extreme antiquity is, for three separate reasons, a cause for *suspicion* rather than reverence.) On the other hand, evidence which would have stopped their theory in its tracks wasn't available at that time.³⁶ I will revisit this evidence in Part 3.

As I say, there are additional reasons why Westcott and Hort ended up promoting a counterfeit Greek, but these will have to wait until the next Part. The important point to note at this stage is that Hort's theory can plainly be seen to be false without even considering the issues I raise there.

The Committee

Let us now return to the Revision Committee and uncover more explanations for why most of its members were taken in by Hort's ideas.

The most obvious point is that Hort was not alone in his efforts. Westcott, who had been an extremely close personal friend of Hort for many years, was on the committee and thus doubled the pressure exerted on the other members. Furthermore, Westcott threatened to resign from the committee if a third individual who shared their textual outlook (G. Vance Smith, who was mentioned towards the start of this article) was not allowed to participate, even though other factors would certainly have barred him. Beyond this, several other members of the committee were friends of Westcott and/or Hort or were already on their textual wavelength.³⁷ It is also a fact that Westcott and Hort spent time influencing members before the committee began.

During the ten years the committee sat, members tended to submit to Westcott and Hort, partly because these two men were very intelligent. The regrettable conclusion seems to have been that if both men were sure of their ground and were so intelligent then they must be right. Both men also had strong personalities and this seems to have helped their cause. Similarly, the fact that Westcott was very well connected in British society (even being friends with the Prime Minister³⁸) doesn't appear to have hurt his objective. The next point to bear in mind is that Westcott and Hort were both absolutely committed to their cause, and worked resolutely and zealously to propagate their theory. "The Revisers of 1881 followed the guidance of ... Westcott and Hort who were **constantly** at their elbows."³⁹ Hence it has been said that "The committee of the Revised Version was dominated and practically controlled by Westcott and Hort."⁴⁰

There is a final observation to make here. It was naturally a major consideration, when originally creating the manuscripts comprising "family" B, for the false brothers responsible not to alarm Christians by the corruptions. If the changes were blatant, and certainly if the *purpose* of those changes was blatant, then no believer would accept such a document and the whole project would be pointless. The changes to the text had to seem as innocent and unrelated as possible. It is only when these alterations are grouped together in the ways we have seen in this article that the true nature of the corruption becomes discernible. As Hort privately admitted, "few would think of [the real impact of the changes] at first." What I am saying is that the committee accepted Hort's theories because it understandably failed to grasp their appalling ramifications. "[I]t seems clear that, not until after the Committee had disbanded, and their work had come under the scrutiny of able scholars ... were they themselves aware [of the true situation] ... Only after it was too late were the facts realized, even by the Revisers themselves."⁴¹

Of course this begs the question: why didn't the members disavow their work once they finally came to appreciate the truth? A few of them were indeed prepared to distance themselves from the work, but it takes a brave man to admit to the entire English-speaking world that he has been a complete fool for ten whole years. The decision becomes even harder when one realizes that participation in such a high-profile committee meant the members were virtually guaranteed a glittering future career—unless they renounced their participation. I fear a number of them couldn't cope with the latter course since it would have destroyed their reputations in the eyes of many of their peers and would have ruined their hopes of success on the world's terms. (Note also that after these men had spent ten years acting unbiblically, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that the Lord withheld conviction from some of them in line with His clear warnings at the end of Revelation about those who corrupt His Word.)

Finally, please be aware that Part 3 is expected to offer yet more reasons why Westcott and Hort were able to get the majority of the committee on their side.

Beyond The Committee

Apart from their reasonable, albeit misplaced, respect for a committee that had been entrusted with such a prestigious task, why did parts of the outside world follow the committee's lead? There were a number of forgivable, but nevertheless illegitimate, reasons for this.

36 For example, neither man lived to see the evidence that "Koine-Greek was the actual language of the New Testament. The Papyri discoveries were made after the time of Westcott and Hort" [Luther W. Martin, as quoted in Green, *op. cit.*, p. 349].

37 Lightfoot was a particularly close friend of the pair. Moulton and Milligan were both from the same Coleridge-inspired group of higher critics. For even more examples, see James Sightler, *A Testimony Founded For Ever*, (Sightler Publications, 2001), chapter 4.

38 Sightler, *Testimony*, chapter 10.

39 Ray, *op. cit.*, p. 25, as quoted in Johnson *op. cit.*, Chapter 21.

40 Fuller, *Which Bible?*, p. 106.

41 Philip Mauro, *Which Version? Authorized or Revised?*, (e-book, 1924), chapter VI. Italics in original.

(1) The public didn't realize the committee had gone beyond its remit. They therefore assumed not only that the committee members were qualified for the job they had performed, but that the work undertaken had been sanctioned by the hierarchy of the Church of England itself.⁴² Readers today may not attach a lot of weight to this point, but it should be remembered that the English-speaking people, especially the British, were very deferential in those days and implicitly trusted those in positions of authority.

(2) The actions of the Committee hampered Burgon and other scholars in their efforts to expose the truth. In particular, Burgon et al were never told that the Revised Version (RV or ERV) was based on a Greek text generated using radically different principles from those which produced the KJV. (Westcott and Hort had published a Greek text, but had done so *privately*. It was only "confidentially and under pledges of the strictest secrecy, placed in the hands of ... the revising body."⁴³) This had the following effect: "Burgon had undertaken the examination of the R.V. upon the supposition that that work was what its name implies, and what its authors had been charged to produce, namely, a 'Revision of the Authorized Version.' But, as he puts it, 'we ... found out that an entirely different problem awaited us. We made the distressing discovery that the underlying Greek Text had been completely refashioned throughout.' *This is the more serious because no one, upon reading the preface to the R.V. would find any hint at such a thing.*"⁴⁴ Beyond this, "[I]n the margin [of the RV] ... no record is preserved of the underlying textual changes."⁴⁵ All of these things afforded committee members valuable extra time to persuade those souls in the (not always terribly godly) world of academia to accept Hort's theory and his Greek text without the voices of Burgon and colleagues being raised in opposition.

(3) Even when Burgon was "up to speed" on the true situation, Hort and others were very active in their criticism of him. They chiefly dismissed him for his decision to approach the matter from a spiritual standpoint. Burgon worked on the basis that the Bible is God's Word. Hort and his followers confused some of the public by insisting that Burgon should instead spend his time disproving Hort's theories, even though (a) an English Bible created using different textual principles (i.e., the KJV) had already been widely accepted, so it was Hort who should have been doing any "disproving" before foisting his own ideas on the world, and (b) some of Hort's theories *cannot* be disproved—if the Bible is indeed just like any other book—so Burgon had no choice but to approach the matter from a spiritual point of view. (I will need to return to this topic in Part 3.)

(4) If the reader is wondering why the God-fearing public at large didn't take more notice of Burgon, there are several things to bear in mind. Firstly, Burgon was principally writing to other *scholars* (in the hope they would have the wisdom and godliness to repent), and he therefore used a lot of specialist terms and a good deal of advanced English phraseology which did very little to help the man on the street follow his arguments. Another problem was one I noted regarding Hort himself, *viz.*, the more ancient something is, the greater the excitement it naturally occasions and the greater the reverence it enjoys. A third factor was that Burgon was already almost seventy by the time the Committee ended its work, and he died within just seven years.

In closing, it is worth pointing out that the public largely *rejected* the English Revised Version once they had had a proper chance to read it and consider it. "The **highest** sales for the Revised Version, after the first year's [understandably] very large sales, came in 1892; ERV 54,419 copies and KJV 722,326. By 1902 the figures were 13,574 copies for the ERV and 774,785 for the KJV."⁴⁶ Some readers may argue that a lot of Christians today do not reject versions based on Codex B. However, this is swiftly explained when we remember that, unlike believers in the nineteenth century, most of these folks have never read a formal equivalence translation based on family A so they have very little with which to compare their version.

Sadly, not all scholars proved to be as wise as the public. In the next installment of this article I plan to look at this problem, and why it still exists today. Suffice it to say that Hort's ideas led his followers to accept a fundamentally different world view from the true. This "paradigm shift" to which Hort's followers continue to cling, means they interpret all new discoveries in the field of textual criticism from this immovable standpoint. Even when material is unearthed which proves Hort's central theory to be untenable, it is always subordinated to the fixed world view to which these people have pinned their reputations. You can liken this situation to misreading a map and taking a wrong road which leads into a dense forest. Instead of humbling themselves and retracing their steps so they can start over, these souls wander around grabbing hold of anything that can be made to fit their preconceived position. (Needless to say, this unhealthy approach means they usually find themselves in different parts of the forest to each other.)

CONCLUSION

I hope the reader has found this material of use. I trust I have at least demonstrated that many of the differences in B cannot possibly be accidental but must be deliberate corruptions by people heavily opposed to biblical Christianity.

42 Mauro, *ibid.*, chapter 6.

43 *Ibid.*

44 *Ibid.* Italics in original.

45 *Ibid.*

46 Data from Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church* (Oxford University Press, 1966), Vol. I, p. 55, as cited in Sichtler, *Testimony*, chapter 10.

However, this article in isolation does not expose the full magnitude of the problem. This material had to focus on the Greek rather than on English translations of the Greek, so it was obliged to remain silent on the additional problems caused by unsaved or apostate translators. Also, due to space limitations, it had to remain silent on other ways Codex B undermines faith in the verbal and plenary inspiration of Scripture. Finally, for the sake of readers caught up in cults, I have been obliged to stay virtually silent on the most crucial corruptions in B, since their exposure will directly challenge some teachings cherished by such folks and will therefore need a fuller treatment than could be supplied here. Part 3 will endeavor to make good all of the above limitations.

In case the reader is contemplating sharing this article with someone else, I strongly recommend forwarding a copy of Part 1 first, as it lays vital groundwork. (Part 2a, on the other hand, is vital only for those who already possess some knowledge of the whole debate.) No errors have yet been reported to me regarding Part 1 or Part 2a. Please see the end of Part 3 for an update on this.

How Does Your Bible Fare?

Codex B is clearly not a sound resource for translators! Indeed, it is a plain counterfeit. God would never require us to rely on such an ungodly document, thus it is not a manuscript on which *any* weight should be placed. Translators who have done so inevitably produce corrupt Bibles. Thankfully it is easy to check one's personal version.

To determine whether your current translation has been influenced by B, the simplest way to check is to read the Preface of your Bible and see if the creators of your version made use of either the "UBS" or "Nestle-Aland" Greeks. If they did, you have a problem—because every edition of both is very heavily slanted towards the side of Westcott and Hort and their beloved manuscript. But don't take my word for it. Scholars on both sides report, "The ... Nestle-Aland and U.B.S. ... really vary little from the W-H text";⁴⁷ "Nestle is essentially Hortian";⁴⁸ and "[Hort's Greek] was taken as the basis for the present [UBS] edition."⁴⁹

Similarly, if the translators of your version claim to have been "eclectic" in their choice of Greek it means they wish to appear independent while, in truth, "still essentially [remaining] within the framework of Hort's theory."⁵⁰ "[T]he recent [UBS] Greek New Testament ... which was produced by the so-called eclectic method, has moved even closer to Westcott and Hort...";⁵¹ "[E]clectic texts are based ... [mainly] on B and Aleph...."⁵²

If your Bible does not give any such indications as to the Greek used in its creation, one alternative way to check this is to look up the specific verses I've cited within this article. If your version suffers any of the flaws listed then you need to be concerned—remembering that I have cited only a small proportion of the corrupted verses. If it suffers more than a handful of them then you can be sure that Codex B has infected it. (Note that it is also a bad sign if the correct text is placed in italics or parentheses.) Even if your Bible passes this test, it does not completely *guarantee* that it has a sound Greek base, but if it fails then it is most definitely unsound.

I have decided not to identify which specific Bible versions do and do not rely on B. Partly this is because new versions are coming out all the time and I don't want my material to age unnecessarily, but mainly it is because I want to encourage readers to investigate the Bible version debate for themselves rather than blindly trust me—or indeed blindly trust anyone but God. It is vital that Christians learn to be less gullible, else they will be fooled by our extremely clever and wily foe. We must not underestimate Satan's cunning, or his seething hatred for God's Word. If he was able to trick Adam and Eve, we ought to be very vigilant (1 Peter 5:8; Jeremiah 17:9).

What If Your Bible Is Unsound?

As mentioned earlier, there are further reasons to reject Bibles which rely on B. God-willing we shall come to these in the next two articles along with added reasons why this matter is so serious. However, if you are already convinced that you ought to reconsider your current Bible version, the following note offers some guidance.

Among other things, Part 3 will show that the logical conclusion of approaching textual criticism from a godly, rather than a worldly, standpoint is to use a Bible translation made from (a) the *Textus Receptus* (or TR) for the Greek part of Scripture,⁵³ and (b) the "Masoretic" Hebrew for the remainder of the Bible.⁵⁴ The text of the TR was the product of having exactly the sort of faithful outlook Burgon espoused. (It was refined by various God-fearing scholars over a period of about a hundred years from a wide variety of family A materials.) I shall have more to say in the final Part (Part 4) on the excellence of the TR and on the badly misinformed comments made about it by those who have fallen for the deceptive claims of the very type of false brothers who penned B in the first place. ❖

**You may address your comments or questions to Dusty:
Dusty Peterson - C/O SMP - 24 Geldart St., Cambridge CB1 2LX
England, UK**

47 Wilbur N. Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, (Thomas Nelson, 1980), p. 38.

48 Pickering, *Contribution*, p. 90.

49 Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, (German Bible Society, 1975), p. xviii.

50 Pickering, *Contribution*, p. 105.

51 Richard N. Longenecker and Merrill C. Tenney, *New Dimensions in New Testament Study*, (Zondervan, 1974), p. 19.

52 Pickering, *Identity*, p. 145. "The modern 'eclectic' Nestle-Aland text ... differs in less than 400 places from the Westcott-Hort text." [James Sightler, *Westcott's New Bibles*, (Sightler Publications, 2001), Introduction].

53 Latin for "received text." References in this article to "family A" are usually simplified references to that text.

54 It is Hortian to prefer the Septuagint text to the Masoretic. I plan to explain why in the next article.

COUNTERFEIT CHRISTIANITY

Part 5 of 7 part series

I. Introduction

- A. The Biblical Warning of World-Wide Deception
- B. Self-Esteem, Sorcery, and Global Unity
- C. Human Potential and Humanistic Psychology
- D. The New World Order
- E. Four Ways Christians are being Deceived

II. Deception within Christendom

A. In Latter Times - 1 Timothy 4:1

"Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,"

B. Wolves in Sheep s Clothing - Matthew 7:15

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves."

C. Men will not put up with sound doctrine - 2 Timothy 4:3

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;"

D. Tares among the wheat - Matthew 13:38

"The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one."

E. Apostasy - 2 Thessalonians 2:3

"Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, "

F. The Whore of Babylon - Revelation 17:4-6

"The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement. "

G. Christendom vs. The Remnant - "7000" who have not bowed to Baal

Romans 9:24-27

"...even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? As He says also in Hosea: "I will call them My people, who were not My people, and her beloved, who was not beloved." "And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, `You are not My people,' there they shall be called sons of the living God." Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, the remnant will be saved."

Romans 11:4,5

"But what does the divine response say to him? "I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace."

III. Speaking the Truth in Love

2 Timothy 2:23-26

"But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant

of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will. "

Ephesians 4:15

"...but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head-- Christ-- "

IV. Counterfeit Christianity - The Great Apostasy

A. [Positive Thinking](#) and Christianized Human Potential

1. The Power of Positive Thinking - Norman Vincent Peale, 33rd degree Freemason, Founder of Guideposts magazine

2. [Robert Schuller](#)

a. Self-Love, Self-Esteem: the New Reformation

W. Clement Stone 33rd Freemason, Billy Graham

[Love your neighbor as yourself](#) - Matthew 22:34-40

...last days...lovers of themselves... - 2 Timothy 3:1-5

b. Tough Times Never Last, But Tough People Do!

B. Christianized [Sorcery](#)

1. The Tongue - A Creative Force - Charles Capps

2. The Fourth Dimension - Paul Yonggi Cho

3. The Laws of Prosperity - Kenneth Copeland

4. Miracle of Seed Faith - Oral Roberts

5. The Secret Kingdom - Pat Robertson

Immutable laws , positive confession, dominion

C. Dreaming and Idolatry

1. Don't Let Anybody Steal Your Dream - Dexter Yager with Douglas Wead

2. The Possible Dream: A Candid Look at Amway - Charles Paul Conn

3. Compassionate Capitalism - Rich DeVos, Co-founder of Amway

4. Multi-level Marketing

D. Psycho-Heresy and False Gospels

1. Hide or Seek - [James Dobson](#)

Humanistic Psychology

2. See You At the Top - Zig Ziglar

Frequent guest on Focus on the Family

Zig Ziglar has been the "head liner" for the ["Get Motivated"](#) seminars (8/2004). He has been closely associated with James Dobson and "Focus on the Family" for years. One of Ziglar's famous books is See You At The Top. On the back of the 1982 edition of the book is a photo of Zig Ziglar shaking hands with the 33rd degree Freemason, the late Norman Vincent Peale, who is endorsing the book. Peale was famous for promoting "Positive Thinking".

Human Potential, [Norman Vincent Peale](#) - 33rd degree
[Freemason](#)

3. The Language of Love - Gary Smalley

Right Brain - Left Brain paganism

4. Building Your Mate's Self-Esteem - Dennis and Barbara Rainey

Campus Crusade for Christ Marriage and Family Ministry

5. Spirit Controlled Temperament - Tim LaHaye

6. [Bill Gothard](#)

7. Neil T. Anderson

Psychological and mystical techniques for deliverance

8. Life-Style Evangelism - Joe Aldrich

Abraham Maslow's Humanistic Psychology - Self-Actualization

Hierarchy of Needs, opposite of the Sermon on the Mount

9. [Re-written Hymns](#) (an illustration)

E. Christianized Global Unity, Utopia, and Heaven on Earth

1. The Mustard Seed Conspiracy - Tom Sine

You can change the world for God's new age.

2. The Road Less Traveled - [M. Scott Peck](#)

Humans evolving to godhood.

3. People of the Lie - M. Scott Peck

Healing human evil.

4. The Different Drum - M. Scott Peck

Found in both New Age Occult bookstores and Christian bookstores!

Becoming a mystic, meditation, Community, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, World Government, The Aquarian Conspiracy, A Wrinkle in Time, Earth in the Balance, Al Gore, "Christianity

Today", The New Age Catalogue

5. Leadership for the 21st Century - Ron Boehme

- a. Youth With A Mission (YWAM)
- b. Kingdom Now - Dominion - Reconstructionism
- c. Synthesis with pagan utopian visions - Dream

John Naisbitt, M. Scott Peck

6. Chuck Colson

The Body, The Parliament of the World's Religions, the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion, Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium

F. Something is Drastically Wrong!

1. Post Intelligence advertisement: Robert Schuller's 1000th Hour of Power Celebration

Five living U.S. Presidents, Norman Vincent Peale, Billy Graham, Mother Theresa, Coretta Scott King

2. Billy Graham

- a. Endorses Robert Schuller
- b. Modern Psychology - Self-worth
- c. Yokes with Roman Catholicism - the world's largest cult
- d. Endorsed the Williamsburg Charter Foundation
- e. Endorsed George Bush's concept of the New World Order including the NWO war against Iraq

G. The Rebirth of America ? - A false hope

[The Obelisk](#)

V. Closing

A. Just like when I became a Christian, I had to face the fact of the wickedness and hopelessness of my own heart before I could recognize my need for a Savior. Similarly, we as Christians must face the fact of the total wickedness and hopelessness of this World System before we can be set free from our idolatrous attachments to it and be set free to truly put our hope in being with the Lord Jesus in eternity.

B. [Next session - The Priorities of Noah](#)

[Counterfeit Christianity, The World Religion, and The New World Order](#)

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THE NEW WORLD ORDER

- PART II

Part 4 of 7 part presentation

I. Introduction

- A. The Biblical Warning of World-Wide Deception
- B. Human Potential, The Rulers, and Idolatry
- C. Global Management
- D. Freemasonry, The Occult Brotherhoods, and Secret Societies

II. The New World Order

- A. George Bush's [State of the Union Addresses](#)
- B. Mikhail Gorbachev: [Tolerance](#) is the alpha and omega of the New World Order
- C. Vision of Global Peace
- D. Mother Earth : Global Environmental Movement
- E. [Earth in the Balance](#), Al Gore
 - 1. Paganism and Christianity: a Syncretism
 - 2. Goddess Worship
 - 3. Unite to save Mother Earth
 - 4. Endorsed by Bill Moyers, [M. Scott Peck](#), and Carl Sagan

F. Bill and Hillary Clinton: Southern Baptist , Paganism, and Globalism

G. Pope John Paul II, the Dalai Lama, Liberal Protestants, and Evangelicals

The Keys of This Blood: The Struggle for World Dominion Between Pope John Paul II, Mikhail Gorbachev & The Capitalist West, by Malachi Martin

H. Transition to the Global Peace System - Special Study Group in the early 60s

1. Global Government
2. [Transitional Enemies](#)
3. The War on Drugs
4. Dismantle the War system and find replacements for the non-military functions of war
5. Use of the [uniformed military for civilian law enforcement](#)
6. Pyramid building projects such as the Space Program
7. The Unarmed Forces, euphemized form of slavery, National Service , International Service

III. Partly of Clay and Partly of Iron - Daniel 2:39-44

"But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth." And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others." Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay." And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile." As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay." And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. "

IV. [Four Ways Christians Are Being Deceived](#)

A. The Repackaged Lie

1. Selfism, Sorcery, and Unity
2. Mysticism, Spiritual Warfare, Signs and Wonders, Deliverance from demons, Dominion, Territorial Spirits, Generational Sins, Inner Healing, Christianized Sorcery and Divination
3. Unity at the expense of sound doctrine

Twisting John 17

4. Christian Psychology

A neutral tool? Pagan Religion

B. Blurred Distinctions

1. Father of Lies, Author of Confusion
2. Neo-paganism and the Liberal Church
3. The Liberal Church and Evangelicals

C. Unequal Yoking

1. Evangelical Right Wing yoking with Mormons, Moonies, and Catholics in the name of Traditional Family Values and conservative politics
2. Evangelical Left Wing yoking with liberals, New Agers, and globalists in the name of solving the problems of Mother Earth: World Peace, World Hunger, and Global Ecology
3. Christians allow themselves to be polarized into opposites by worldly conflicts and stop thinking for themselves as Bereans.
4. The Williamsburg Charter Foundation
 - a. United left wingers and right wingers, pagans and Christians with the goal of creating a curriculum for the public schools about the world's religions and our common values.

b. Groups and individuals involved

The Mormon Church, the National Council of Churches, the National Association of Evangelicals, the Muslim American Community, the American Jewish Committee, National Organization for Women's Molly Yard, Concerned Women for America's Beverly LaHate, Phyllis Schlafly, People for the American Way's Norman Lear, Dr. James Dobson, Chuck Colson, Oz Guinness, [Billy Graham](#) gave the address at the signing ceremony with Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford present.

5. Parliament of the World's Religions

Chicago, Summer of 1993

A Global Ethic - [a statement of faith for the world religion]

6. Renovare - Richard Foster, founder

Author of Celebration of Discipline

7. [Promise Keepers](#)

8. **Any system of morals and ethics and values that either ignores or rejects Jesus Christ is just another pagan religion. Even a system of Christian morals, without Jesus, is just another pagan religion.**

D. Following Gurus

1. The mass media (television, newspapers, radio, magazines, book publishing, etc.) including the Christian mass media creates Christian celebrities which then become our gurus.

2. Dangerous in these last days to set someone up as a guru.

3. Nobody can be beyond critique and honest evaluation and that goes for even our most famous evangelical celebrities: James Dobson, Bill Gothard, Pat Robertson, Billy Graham, Chuck Colson, etc.

4. We must face up to the fact there are tares among the wheat, wolves in sheep's clothing, and counterfeits in these last days.

5. Be a disciple, not of men, but of the Lord Jesus. Be an Acts 17 Berean.

V. Closing

A. Friendship with the World

1. "Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."

James 4:4

2. In the world, not of the world

Not of the world's philosophies, religious theologies,
institutions: economic, political, religious.

B. [Next session: Counterfeit Christianity](#)

[Counterfeit Christianity, The World Religion, and The New World Order](#)

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THE BIBLICAL WARNING OF WORLD-WIDE DECEPTION

Part 1

I. Introduction to [the Presentation](#)

- A. The [Cult of Evangelical Churchianity](#)
- B. Not a "[New Age](#)" or [End-Times](#) Prophecy seminar
- C. Global Perversion of [the Gospel](#)

Psalm 2, John 16:33

II. Introduction to the 1st part

- A. [Jim and Kim Background](#)
- B. Questions to Ask Ourselves

Do we really belong to Jesus? Do we really believe his death and resurrection is sufficient? That his grace is sufficient? That the "fruit of the Spirit" can come only by the work of the Holy Spirit? That only Jesus can change the evil human heart? That only Jesus will bring peace to the earth? Do we really believe that God is sovereign?

- C. [Idolatry](#) and Serving Baal vs. a Pure Devotion to [Jesus Christ](#)

III. The Biblical Warning of World-Wide Deception

- A. [Satan's Self-Talk and Affirmations](#) Isaiah 14:12-14

B. The Serpent, Eve, and "[Human Potential](#)" [Genesis 3](#)

C. Global Rebellion: [The Time of Noah](#) Genesis 6

D. Global Rebellion: [The Tower of Babel](#) Genesis 11:6

["Zamam"](#) and Human Imagination

E. [Lovers of Self](#) 2Timothy 3:1,2

F. [Sorcery](#): Self and Utopia Deuteronomy 18:9-12

The usurping for ourselves what seem to be god-like powers to manipulate reality. We attempt to be Sovereign and Lord. We attempt to get what we want through: Incantations - confessing it, Mind Power - thinking it, Voodoo - doing a technique.

G. Love of [Money](#): Self and Utopia 1Timothy 6:10

H. That [Serpent](#) Satan Who Deceives the Whole World Revelation 12:9

I. Peace, Peace

Jeremiah 6:14, 8:11, 1Thessalonians 5:2,3

J. [One World Government, Economic System, and Religion](#)

Revelation 13:7, 17, 8

K. Will this happen overnight?

[1John 2:18](#)

L. The Trend of [World History](#)

M. [Watch out that no one deceives you](#) Mark 13:5,6

IV. The Universal Vision of Rebellious Mankind

A. [Self-Esteem](#), [Sorcery](#), and [Global Unity](#)

B. Popularizing the Universal Vision

1. Psycho-Cybernetics, Maxwell Maltz

The Magic Power of Self Image Psychology, Maxwell Maltz

"Self" Magazine

Celebrate Your Self, [Dorothy Corkille Briggs](#)

2. Think and Grow Rich, Napoleon Hill

"Whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe it can achieve"

Success Through Positive Mental Attitude, Napoleon Hill & [W. Clement Stone](#)

Wishcraft, Barbara Sher

3. [Megatrends](#), John Naisbitt

V. Closing

A. The Bible Warns: The whole world is being deceived.

B. [Next part: "Human Potential", The Rulers, and Idolatry](#)

C. "Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near." Luke 21:28

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"HUMAN POTENTIAL", THE RULERS, AND IDOLATRY

Part 2

I. Introduction

- A. The Biblical Warning of World-Wide Deception
- B. The Universal Vision of a Rebellious Mankind

II. The Human Potential Movement

A. The Aquarian Conspiracy, Marilyn Ferguson

1. A rallying cry for Transformation
2. 1987 edition: Forward by John Naisbitt
3. Ferguson's Survey of New Age Leaders

One question: Name the individuals whose ideas had influenced them. The names that were most often mentioned were:

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, C.G. Jung, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Aldous Huxley

B. The Four Forces of Psychology

1. Psychoanalytical - Sigmund Freud
2. Behavioral - B.F. Skinner
3. Humanistic - Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Eric Fromm

Self-Actualization, Hierarchy of Needs, Self-Image
Psychology

4. Transpersonal - Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers

The Science of Spirituality

C. The New Age Catalogue

D. The National Commission on Human Resources, Legislation for

Senators Claiborne Pell and Albert Gore

The Ruler's manipulation of the masses is nothing new.

III. The Rulers of This World

A. History: Rulers in Rebellion

Garden of Eden	Emperor Charlemagne - AD 768	League of Nations -1920
Tower of Babel	Holy Roman Empire - 1st Reich - AD 962	Hitler and Stalin - Opposites
Pyramids, Paganism, Shamanism everywhere	Crusades, Knights Templar and De Molay, Popes, Kings - 1200	World War II - 1939
Egypt - 3000 BC	The New World - 1492	United Nations - 1945
Babylon - 2000 BC	American Revolution -1776 Boston Tea Party -1773	Communists and Capitalists "Opposites" , Synthesis

Medo-Persian Empire - 500 BC	French Revolution -1789	Perestroika - New Thinking - Restructuring - Synthesis
Greece - 479 BC	Emperor Napoleon - 1799	Free market Socialism , Global Democracy
Roman Empire - Pax Romana - 27 BC to AD 476 - to the present?	German Empire - 2nd Reich - 1871	United State of Europe - 1992
Emperor Constantine - AD 306 Pontifex Maximus	World War I - 1914	Pax Universalis - the New World Order - Revived Roman Empire
Roman Catholicism - Pope Gregory AD 590 Pontifex Maximus The Roman Empire continues	Bolshevik Revolution - 1917	The Blessed Hope Like a thief in the night (1Thessalonians 5:2)

B. Political Power of the Rulers - [Niccolo Machiavelli](#) (1469 - 1527)

1. The Purpose of Political Power
2. Morals and Ethics
3. Opposites
4. Manipulation, Deceit, Murder
5. Machiavelli influenced G.W.F Hegel

C. Upward Towards Perfection - G.W.F Hegel (1770-1831)

1. Hegelian philosophy the basis for: Marxism, Nazism, Fascism, and Western Progressive philosophy and social engineering.
2. Progressive Realization of Spirit
3. Opposites in Conflict

The Hegelian Dialectic: Thesis, Antithesis, Synthesis

D. Using Opposites - Powerful People - Destiny

1. Polarizing people into opposite groups - stop thinking for yourself
2. Control both sides - synthesis
3. Greek Philosophy, Yin-Yang
4. Satan comfortable on both sides of every human issue
5. Christians sanctified and set apart - Joshua 5:13-15

E. Not Conspiracy Theories but Planning

IV. Truth or Idolatry

- A. If anyone would be my disciple... - Matthew 16:24
- B. Abide in the Vine - John 15:5
- C. Be a Berean - Acts 17:11
- D. Lovers of the Truth - 2 Thessalonians 2:9
- E. The Blessed Hope - Titus 2:12-14

V. Synthesizing the Evangelicals

- A. New World Order Niceness
- B. Unity
- C. Christian Utopian Visions
- D. False Gospels

VI. [The Next Part: The New World Order - Part I](#)

[Counterfeit Christianity, The World Religion, and The New World Order](#)

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THE PRIORITIES OF NOAH

Part 6 of 7 part series

I. Introduction

- A. The Biblical Warning of World-Wide Deception
- B. The World Religion
- C. The Counterfeit Christ
- D. The New World Order
- E. Christians are being Deceived

II. False Hopes, False Gospels, and Works of the Flesh

A. Those who cause division

"Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them."

Romans 16:17

B. Questions to Ask Ourselves

Do we really belong to Jesus? Do we really believe his death and resurrection is sufficient? That his grace is sufficient? That the "fruit of the Spirit" can come only by the work of the Holy Spirit? That only Jesus can change the evil human heart? That only Jesus will bring peace to the earth? Do we really believe that God is sovereign?

C. Idolatry and Serving Baal vs. a pure devotion to Jesus Christ

D. Morality is not our hope!

1. Another Pagan Religion

2. Christianizing Society

a. Pharisees and whitewashed tombs

b. Filthy Rags

3. Bible Accountability Groups

a. Pharisees policing each other's behavior

b. Relationships in the Body of Christ involve encouraging, correcting, and teaching, but in the context of freedom and a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus.

E. Techniques... unity ...Psychology...12 steps...Pharisee Groups...Masonic Morality...
World Peace

Attempting to do in the flesh what only the Spirit of God can do.

F. Techniques... Turning a relationship with Jesus into techniques from the wisdom of man.

G. The New World Order - Tolerance is the alpha and omega... Acceptance

"Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. "For I have come to `set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law'; "and `a man's enemies will be those of his own household.' "

Matthew 10:34-36

III. The Sovereignty of God

A. Romans 13:1-5

"Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God,

and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake."

B. Psalm 2

"Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, "Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us." He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; the LORD shall hold them in derision."

IV. The Priorities of Noah

A. The Coming of the Son of Man

"But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be."

Matthew 24:37-39

B. The Time of Noah

1. The nature of the Political, Economic, and Religious system in Noah's time - Genesis 6:5
2. Built an Ark to save his family - Hebrews 11:7
3. Preacher of Righteousness - 2 Peter 2:5

Not morality... but a right relationship

C. Good Guys - Bad Guys Thinking

1. Our side or their side? - Joshua 5:13-15
2. There is only one that is good - Matthew 19:16-17
3. There is no one righteous - Psalm 14:2,3

D. Politics, Economics, and Religion

1. The Nations Rage and the Peoples Plot in Vain - Psalm 2
2. World System of Anti-Christ - Revelation 13
3. The Coming of the Lawless One - 2 Thessalonians 2:9
 - a. Delusion
 - b. Straining at gnats and swallowing camels (Matthew 23:24)
4. The god of this world/age - 2 Corinthians 4:4
5. Friendship with the World is hatred towards God - James 4:4

E. What Kind of People Ought We to Be? - 2 Peter 3:3-18

"...knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation. For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without

spot and blameless; and account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation-- as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever.

Amen."

F. Like in the Time of Noah

1. Destruction is Coming - Revelation 19:20,21

2. Follow Jesus - Matthew 16:24-26

3. Ambassadors for Christ - 2 Corinthians 5:20

What does an ambassador do and what does he not do in representing his Sovereign Lord in a foreign land?

4. Warn Others - Ezekiel 3:17

a. Proclaim the truth to whoever will listen and leave the results in God's hands.

b. Proclaiming the truth can be like lancing a boil.

5. You will have tribulation - John 16:33

We are called to suffer with Jesus, we are called to lose, i.e., to lose our lives and thereby gain our lives. (Matthew 10:39)

6. The Ark is Jesus - 1 Thessalonians 1:10

...Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

7. The Blessed Hope - Titus 2:12-14

"...teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of

our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works."

V. Closing

A. Our Calling

1. Dead to the Flesh.
2. Dead to the World.
3. Alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:11)

B. [The next and last session: Summary and Questions and Answers](#)

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"Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field.'" Matthew 9:37-38



News from Nathan & Julissa Cedarland Serving In Mexico

www.lam.org www.spearhead.org

Getting Started In Navolato

December 2006

Greetings! We arrived in Navolato, Sinaloa on November 1st and are now settled into our new house here. It consist of three rooms (bedroom, living room, and kitchen), the bathroom is detached from the house and can be found off the back patio.



Our House

Our Ministry

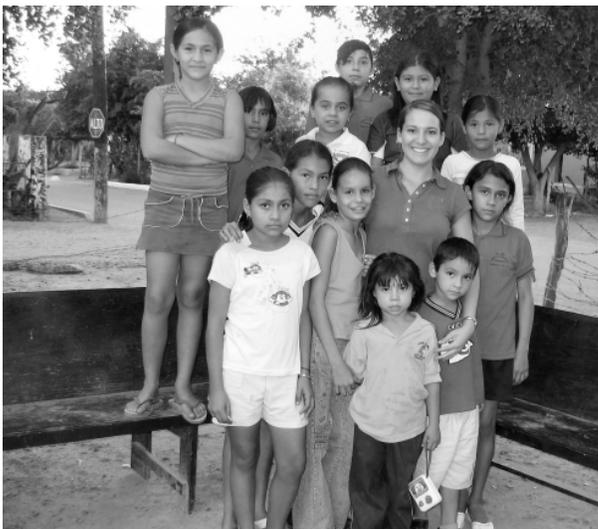
We only had a few days to settle in before diving in to full-time ministry. Our work here so far has mainly been preaching, teaching and evangelizing. We are spending part of our time in a small village, outside of town, called El Caimancito. There, Julissa is teaching Bible lessons to kids two evenings a week and I am preaching in the small church there on those same evenings (Sundays and Thursdays). We are also ministering with the pastor throughout the week, evangelizing and visiting people who have expressed interest in the gospel, or who are in need of encouragement.



Preaching to a small group in El Caimancito

Ministry Highlights

While here in Sinaloa, we've had many awesome opportunities to share about the Lord Jesus and His love. On the 16th we had an evangelistic outreach in the home of some of the Christians here in town. They invited people from their community to come and watch a Christian film as well as hear a short message, which I had the privilege of giving. Several people came and heard the gospel, and although no one, as far we know, was saved; many expressed interest. We will continue to work in that area. Julissa and I have also been working with the small group of youth from the church. We hope to get them more involved in the ministries that we are doing so that they can continue on after we leave.



Julissa with some of the kids from her Bible class

Learning a New Culture

We have discovered that the culture of Sinaloa is very different in many ways from that of Mexico City. In general, the people here are not as warm and polite; they seem to be more abrupt, loud, and outspoken. Although they are very kind people it is not as exaggerated as in Mexico City. The Spanish here is also different. There are many dissimilar words, which when spoken with their strong costal accent can make understanding a bit of a challenge. Sinaloa has a dark history of drug trafficking. This has caused many social and family problems in the region. It's said that many of the illegal drugs shipped into the U.S. are grown here.

Thank you for all of your prayers and support. We pray that you will have a wonderful Christmas filled with the blessings of Christ our Savior,
In His Name,

Nathan and Julissa



Celebrating my birthday with friends from church

Praise The Lord!

- ⇒ For numerous opportunities to share the message of God's love with others
- ⇒ For the friendships we have begun with many of the young married couples from church
- ⇒ For the health and strength He gives to us each day
- ⇒ For the financial contributions that continue to come in and for those who have given them

Financial Contributions:

**Latin America Mission
P.O. Box 52-7900
Miami, FL 33152**

Checks should be made to "Latin America Mission" or "LAM."

Indicate on a separate piece of paper that it is

Our E-mail Address:

njcedarland@gmail.com

If you would prefer to receive our newsletter via e-mail in the future instead of by regular mail, please e-mail to notify us.

Please Pray

- ⇒ That God would help Julissa as she prepares her Bible lessons, and me as I prepare for at least two or three messages a week
- ⇒ That The Lord would be with us as we share about Him and that He would go before us to prepare the hearts of the people
- ⇒ That He would give us more opportunities, and wisdom in reaching out to and encouraging the youth and younger couples
- ⇒ That God would bless our marriage, and give us strength and protection as we serve Him together



Julissa and me in front of the church in Navolato

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 5:23

"Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field.'" Matthew 9:37-38



News from Nathan & Julissa Cedarland Serving In Mexico

www.lam.org www.spearhead.org

Our Return to Mexico

Fall 2006

Greetings! We are back in Mexico City and almost feeling more at home in Mexico than in the U. S. We've lived nearly as much of our married life here as we have there! We returned on September 25th and have been going non-stop since then. We will be here in the city until October 31st when, Lord willing, we will leave for Sinaloa. While here we are taking advanced Spanish classes four days a week and are getting together with Paul and Nydia (the Spearhead directors) a few days a week for culture classes and ministry training. We are keeping busy with plenty of homework but are really enjoying it. We applied for our visas the day after we arrived and were told it would take about a month for them to be ready. We had hoped to get them before leaving to Sinaloa, but we just learned that they won't be ready until December. Please pray that they will come through before we return to the U.S for Christmas.



Our "team". Paul, Andrés, Nydia, Me and Nathan. We stopped for a short time at the beach on our way home from Sinaloa.



One of the new Christians and her baby

News from Tetitla

While here in the city, we are living with Gonzalo and Eunice again (the couple we were originally living with when we came in January). It has been great to spend more time with them. They have updated us on everything that has been going on in Tetitla (where we were church planting during our first four months here). There have been many more souls saved. Many of them being former drug addicts or wives of drug addicts. Nathan had the opportunity to preach on our first Sunday back in Tetitla and it was great to see how God has continued to bless the work there. Opposition has now begun to raise in the community, but we know that God is greater than Satan and will ultimately win the battle.

Our Trip to Navolato, Sinaloa

At the end of September we were able to take an exploratory trip to Navolato, Sinaloa where we will be living and ministering from the beginning of November until the middle of May, Lord Willing. While there, we met the pastor and attended their Sunday church services, where Nathan had the opportunity to preach. We had a couple of meetings with the pastor to discuss what we would be doing and to work out some of the logistics involved. We were expecting to have to scope out the area for houses to rent, but the pastor already had found a place for us! When we return to Navolato, we'll have a house and a bed ready and waiting for us. That is a wonderful blessing and a load off of our shoulders. Praise God. It looks like we will be kept very busy during our time there. There are many ministry opportunities and we are very excited to get there and get started!



Navolato, Sinaloa

Thank you for your love and prayers. We pray that this letter finds you all well.
May The Lord bless and keep each one of you,
In Christ Jesus,

Nathan and Julissa

Financial Contributions:

**Latin America Mission
P.O. Box 52-7900
Miami, FL 33152**

Checks should be made to "Latin America Mission" or "LAM."

Indicate on a separate piece of paper that it is for our support. You will get a tax-deductible receipt for your financial gift.

Our Email Address:

E-mail: njcedarland@gmail.com

Praise The Lord!

- ⇒ For all the new lives saved in Tetitla
- ⇒ A safe journey to and from Sinaloa
- ⇒ Because He has already provided a house for us in Navolato
- ⇒ For the financial contributions that have come in

Please Pray

- ⇒ That God would prepare us for the work He has for us in Navolato and that He would go before us
- ⇒ That God would continue to provide the finances we need for the rest of the year
- ⇒ That our visas will come through in time without any further complications
- ⇒ That we would keep our focus. That everything we do, would be to glorify our Savior and magnify His name



And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Now to our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Philippians 4:19-20



Crusades for "Morality"

Editor, The Sun (November 1992):

"Take-over-the-world-for-Christendom" and Crusades for Morality. These are two of the "visions" in which Evangelical Christians are being manipulated and used. For the last 15 years, Evangelicals have increasingly been provoked to put their hope in Civil Government and the electing of candidates who stand for "Traditional Family Values". In fact "values" and "morality" have become the new gospel.

A full page ad promoting "Virginity" in the Sun, on November 15th, was a perfect example of the new gospel (which is no gospel at all). Eight area churches yoked themselves with every cult and human philosophy on earth in preaching the gospel of good works and human morality.

There is nothing Biblical about trying to get people who are not Christians to live like Christians. The only message for a follower of Jesus to proclaim is that God desires to reconcile to himself self-centered and rebellious humans. All of the Crusades, Inquisitions, and Holy Empires have produced nothing of eternal significance. The current crusade for "Morality" will be just as futile. I recommend, instead, the priorities of Noah. I recommend that we speak and act as the "Ambassadors" we are suppose to be.

[THE NEW WORLD ORDER - Part II](#)

[Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism](#)

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Christians & Political Action

To the Editor of the Bremerton Sun: (October 1996)

Evangelical Christianity's most prominent feature in Kitsap County these days is its political activism. And yet there is not a single exhortation in the New Testament for followers of Jesus to be politically active.

The most prominent feature of the New Testament is the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

When a person hears the term "Christianity" he or she should not have cause to think of right-wing political action or left-wing social activism. My hope is that they would have cause to think of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

[Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism](#)

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Should Christians Join the

Republican Party or the American Heritage Party?

Editor, The Sun

(March 1998 - In response to a forum asking if it was a good thing that some Evangelical conservatives switched from the Republican Party to the "American Heritage Party". The last paragraph was edited out by the Sun and not published.)

Followers of Jesus will always be manipulated by the rulers of this world as long as they allow themselves to be entangled in worldly conflicts. The Republicans have used politically zealous Christians and so will the U.S. Taxpayers Party. The worldly tendency is to see a conflict in terms of "good guys and bad guys", pick a side and jump on. Christians have been seduced through the centuries to do this very thing, not realizing that there are no "good guys".

Satan works both sides of every worldly conflict. The only way followers of Jesus can do what we are called to do is by pulling out of the world system's "Hegelian Dialectic". We are called to a heavenly citizenship in which we are ambassadors for Christ to this foreign world system; rescuing people out of this system, instead of trying to reconstruct the world system.

This state's affiliate to the U.S. Taxpayers Party is yet another example of "red- white-and-blue" idolatry: the American Heritage Party. This idolatry is based upon a false gospel of "morality" and "cultural values". But there is only one Gospel as referred to by Paul, "For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

Rather than building the Kingdom of God, which Jesus said is not of this

earth, Christian political activists yoke themselves with the Harlot of Revelation 17: the counterfeit-Christian religious system that prostitutes itself with the political and economic rulers of this world.

[Crusades for "Morality", Political Action, Social Activism](#)

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Footnotes

to "Machiavelli and How Rulers Think"

These references in no way should be considered an endorsement of the authors and their particular philosophies. These authors are as likely to be as unbiblical as Machiavelli himself!

1. George H. Sabine, A History of Political Theory, Third Edition, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1961), 339.
2. World Book Encyclopedia, 1990 ed., s.v. "Machiavelli, Niccolo", by John H. Geerken
3. Michael A. Soupios, European Political Theory, (Lanham, Maryland; University Press of America, Inc., 1986), 281.
4. Sabine, 664-667.
5. C. J. Friedrich, "Introduction to Dover Edition" in The Philosophy of History by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1956)
6. Bertrand Russell, A History of Western Philosophy (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1945) 730.
7. William L. Shirer, The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich, (New York: Ballantine Books, 1960) 143-145.
8. Sabine, 634.
9. Ibid., 341
10. Ibid., 345-346
11. Ibid., 344
12. The World Book Dictionary (Chicago, Illinois: Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, 1990).

[Machiavelli and How Rulers Think](#)

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Recently I linked to brother Cristian Secrieru's web site, and then noticed that he dedicated his book, partly, to Robert Schuller. Being concerned about that I asked him about it. And I truly appreciated his reply (which he permitted me to post):

"As per Robert Schuller I do not endorse his teachings or ministry. I am sorry that such conclusion could be withdrawn from the dedication page.

"I also do not endorse the Charismatic Paul Crouch & Co. from TBN or Bayless Conley teachings or ministry. Still I dedicated the book to these guys because I came to God THROUGH THEIR SATELLITE TV BROADCASTS. They explained salvation and made repeated calls to viewers to receive salvation through faith in Jesus and by grace alone. I was very encouraged by Schuller's positive messages. I came out a very godless society with zero religious knowledge. I could not distinguish that time at the beginning of my Christian walk what was wrong with different guys or denominations or individuals. The shows from Crystal Cathedral helped me many times in times of great discouragement. Schuller always had been optimistic and encouraged the viewers to be positive believers and follow their dreams; one quote: ["I shut the door on yesterday and threw the key away. Tomorrow is another day"](#). I know he endorsed Norman Peale's teachings of Positive Thinking. I know he stressed on our will more than on God's will, on his or Psychology teachings more than on bible teachings. I loved that man, I loved his faith in God's goodness and power. I was impressed about his wife surviving breast cancer, about his daughter surviving an amputated leg, about his family surviving a fire destroying their house completely. The Hour of Power is not about a church is about the Schuller family & guests performances.

"I also do not endorse The In Touch Ministry of Charles Stanley. It is also about one man ministry. Though Charles made great efforts to bring me to Jesus and to the right path of Christian walk. So I cannot forget that these guys helped find Jesus, walked the normal path and encouraged me when I was so confused or distressed. I am grateful to them eternally. Anyway I let them know about my book on pastors and thus actually what God asks of them. I told them, "You help come to God and walk on His ways, Let me on my turn now help you walk on God's narrow path".

"As you can see the dedication ends like that "May the Lord be praised for all these, but I wish very much that all be saved and in the perfect will of God. ", meaning I wish all of them BE SAVED or IN THE PERFECT WILL OF GOD" cause we don't know who's saved or not.

"Anyway I shall try to avoid any misunderstanding or confusion and will modify a little bit the text of the dedication.

"So beloved I warned these guys and I wish they might wake up one day and give their lives completely to Jesus."

I had a similar experience with [Pat Robertson](#) and Ben Kinchlow and the 700 Club. As a new believer I was greatly encouraged by them both. And yet, later, I looked back and a lot that was being said was mobilizing Christians to right wing political action and predicting imminent economic collapse. It was strongly implied that we should buy gold. And then Pat Robertson wrote his book, [The Secret Kingdom](#), which had a lot of serious false teaching.

But, Brother Cristian and I and many others can still thank the Lord for working in our lives in spite of serious error all around us.

[Pastor's Site](#)

A
Romanian
brother
who
recently
immigrated
to Canada.

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[Positive Thinking](#)

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For four locations of an important article:

[HOUSE CHURCH DIRTY DIAPERS CHRONICLES NUMBER SIX - The Gene Edwards Disaster](#)

[The Gene Edwards Controversy](#)

[Gene Edwards- The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly](#)

[Gene Edwards- The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly](#)

An Email Received 5/31/05

6/6/05

[and my response](#)

Hi,

I came across your website while searching for some Gene Edwards books. I wanted to share a piece of advice with you.

First, you would do well to mind your own business and not criticize whole movements, people, and particularly individuals like Gene Edwards. It sounds childish, old-fashioned and impotent when a Christian denounces another Christian in the name of "true doctrine". Your "zeal" for correcting and criticizing is not Christ's life in you, but your own mental hang-ups and personality issues. Just like the rest of us. We've all done that at one time or another. Look into the Lord Jesus and step out of this self-righteous religious zeal.

Second, show us the way by practically revealing how your idea of church can be applied. Rather than listing your 17 principles, copying/pasting Scripture verses which we all know by heart, and launching clichés such as "proclaim, invite, warn, contend for the faith" etc., tell us how your church is doing, give us encouragement that there is a way to do church outside of the Catholic/Protestant system, share how work to build the house is done.

Finally, get some first hand experience of the cross. It will tune you down, break your pride,

and increase your need for other Christian workers and brothers. Preconditions before you start telling Christians who and what to follow.

Take care, B.

Jim's Response to B. sent 5/31/05

6/9/05

B.,

I would be a fool not to take your criticisms seriously. I'm grateful that there are still people left who would love others enough to confront them.

You have guessed right: I am childish, fleshly, self-centered, lacking in love, self-righteous, proud, jealous, etc. etc. But I don't want to be. Jesus is breaking me and remaking me.

But even if that is all true, it's a different issue as to whether one should proclaim, warn, confront, correct, rebuke.

Who has convinced you that it is childish to proclaim, warn, confront, correct, rebuke? You did not learn that from reading the New Testament.

The only question is are we motivated by love.

What makes a follower of Jesus different from a mystical pagan who follows his guru? They both can appear nice, humble. It's the truth. Mystical pagans are convinced that truth is relative and unimportant and they promote the "deeper things". They self-righteously look down their nose at anyone's concern for the truth.

Our Lord Jesus reveals himself in the word. We are transformed by the truth of the word. The New Testament is very clear about the need to warn of false gospels and false Christs.

You and I have an opportunity to be friends in spite of our differences.

Jim Baumgaertel
Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning_
<http://procinwarn.com>

[The "House Church Movement"](#)

[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#)

[Frank Viola Promoting Contemplative Spirituality](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Return to Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

<http://procinwarn.com>

Dan Trotter is a brother I have grown to love, though I've never met him in person. However, I don't agree with his eschatology as he calls himself an "orthodox preterist".

Jim B.

[The "House Church Movement"](#)

[Gene Edwards articles](#)

[House Church Links](#)

[Some Words for a really nice Hyper Preterist](#) (not written to Dan)

[Return to Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

<http://procinwarn.com>

West African Mission Update

"We do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as bondservants for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor. 4:5)

"You also joining in helping us through your prayers" (2 Cor. 1:11)

Steve & Patricia Phillips

[The Gospel for West Africa](#)

[West African Update 7-05](#)

[West African Update 4-05](#)

October 2005

Dear Brethren,

Greetings in the love of Christ. This is Patti writing for the Phillips.

The Lord is working, and He will finish what He has begun. We are here in Sierra Leone by His grace, and are working alongside Him who will not fail. He has shown Himself mighty on our behalf, and has revealed His love and faithfulness to us.

What a wonder, that the Almighty God in unapproachable light, holy and fearsome, is also meek and lowly so as to reach down to fragile clay vessels, weak sinful men, and call them to work hand in hand with Himself. All I can do, because of His grace toward me through faith, is obey Him who loved me and gave Himself for me, that I might no longer live for myself, but for Christ. I give Him all the glory for this also, for in myself I can do nothing.

This is the lesson my loving Father has been teaching me in

a very practical way these past few months. What a lesson it is! And, one I need never to forget.

Like the children of Israel leaving Egypt , they were not to forget their bondage and suffering in that land of slavery under that wicked ruler. They were to yearly eat the bitter herbs in order to remember.

When I drift, am distracted, discouraged, or dull, it is then that I find myself very susceptible to spiritual attacks against truth and my faith in it. I have learned to be always on guard over my heart from whence come the issues of life. The many admonitions of the Scriptures have become very precious to me, things like, "Pray for one another, encourage one another, confess your sins one to another, build each other up in your most holy faith, do not neglect the assembling of yourselves together, and give thanks always." It is good to remind ourselves over and over as Peter said. Even the godly ones who live by faith enter into fiery ordeals which are for eternal good. Though difficult, I've been learning to not despair but allow the Lord to work out the details of it to the glory of His name.

We have printed over 2,000 tracts on the subject of purity, with a gospel message at the end. The brethren are asking for it very much in order to hand out to the people. Immodesty in dress and immorality in behavior are prevalent here. The awareness of this prompted us to write this tract, print it and send it out.

We have printed a few small booklets which we felt would be very helpful to certain brethren in their spiritual growth, as well as another gospel tract and *The Discipleship Experience* to train faithful men through the study of the Word of God. We are thankful for this ability and hope in the future to increase our output of these gospel publications.

We have had contacts with many church groups from the beginning and have taught and discussed the Scriptures with them. Many have responded with a hunger for the truth of God's word. Yet we have proceeded carefully and watched and

listened, finding that several proved to be wavering back and forth. We pray often for these young people, that they will commit their lives to the Lord to please Him only rather than serving, fearing, or trying to please men, which has proven a snare to many.

Some pastors have even gone so far as to say things about us that are not true in order to try and discourage or prevent others from coming to study the Word with us. When men are drawn to Christ through His Word, the evil one does not like it and opposition can be expected. Those who are not fully devoted to Christ are being sifted as wheat, yet we still pray for them that Christ may reach their hearts and bring them into His perfect way.

The radio broadcast on the gospel of John is just about finished, and then we will begin the book of Judges.

After some weeks of the broadcast, we gave announcements of a meeting in town for all the listeners to come and learn more from the Scriptures and ask questions. It has started out slowly, 10 or so thus far, but more are showing interest and promising to join us. I went to one of those meetings and it was such a blessing. But it is not possible for me to attend every week because of the needs at the home.

I hope the attendance increases and that these times will bring fruit, save souls, and put us in touch with faithful men who will give their whole lives to the preaching of the gospel and discipling others.

It seems that the Lord has equipped us to speak to the extreme variety of Pentecostalism found in West Africa . The Lord has given Steven wisdom and understanding of the issues at stake and the ability to explain the problem and the solution.

We have just gotten 500 copies of *All Things Loss* from the printer, which has helped many of our African brothers to see clearly what the Scriptures teach about the New Testament pattern for the church while correcting many of the common errors of this movement. My husband says we must

not use the Scriptures as the devil does by taking them out of context. Rather, we must learn from Christ by studying the Word in its God-given context.

I spoke at a seminar for some 20 women on the subject of "Women in the Church." It was a great blessing to me as the Lord granted the boldness and peace of God's Word coming to my lips as I spoke for about 2-1/2 hours.

At the end, there resulted a debate among these women over the truth and/or their willingness to obey what had been taught. As they were arguing their points, their voices rose and I gently reminded them of the passage that we are to be gentle and quiet. They tried for a few moments but had not the exercise of practicing righteousness in this area of life and fell back into their sharp and loud remarks to one another.

A few of the women were wholly set on following what the Lord teaches women to do. They were not going to lead in the church, teach or usurp authority over the men. Their pastor wanted them to, but they refused to his dismay. We are thankful for their faithfulness, yet pray for their continued obedience and peace among those who have not come to that conclusion.

Three men from this same church are now faithfully coming for Bible study and discipleship training with Steve and Quintin. One especially is devoted to us, and says that if we move to the Provinces to spread the gospel across the country, he will pack up and come with us the next day. He seems to grasp the truths quickly and has a heart to serve with us. His wife is one of the young women I am teaching in English, math, and Bible.

Now there are three young women who are learning to read and write. They are all at different levels and two meet at 3:00 while the other comes earlier at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. But the attendance is sporadic. Sometimes due to sickness, theirs and mine, and sometimes I cannot figure out why they do not come.

I am praying for the women, for they are not as interested

in coming and learning in any consistent way, which causes me concern for their spiritual development. I so want them to be godly helpmeets to their husbands, and the single girls to be suitable marriage partners for the young men who are seeking discipleship and a deeper walk with the Lord. Pray with me for this concern, please.

We are seeking to know the mind of Christ as to reaching out to the whole country with all its needs. There is no Christian influence to speak of in the Provinces; no schools, no hospitals.

These people need to hear the gospel, they need to be able to read the Scriptures and in general to receive true knowledge and wisdom to free them from the ignorance they are in. Our hearts are full of compassion and desire to reach these people. The Lord will show us the way and the time will come.

Do pray for Steven and us as he is in Nigeria until the 14th of November. He has 40 teaching sessions scheduled.

Love,

Steve and Patti Phillips

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[The Gospel for West Africa](#)

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West African Mission Update

“We do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as bondservants for Jesus’ sake” (2 Cor. 4:5)

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Steve & Patricia Phillips

[The Gospel for West Africa](#)

[West African Updates on the Procinwarn.com blog](#)

[West African Update 4-05](#)

July 2005

Dear Brethren,

We bless the Lord for all of His tender mercies new every morning that sustain us day by day. Prayer is being heard at the throne in our behalf as the work of the Lord is progressing. Our own hearts and those of the children are benefiting from your faithful bearing of our burden in the love of Christ.

May the Lord continue to encourage and refresh each of you from that living Spring that never fails. Amen.

I spent 17 days in Nigeria in May and June, visiting the brethren that we had worked with during our six years in that land. They scheduled 20 Bible teaching programs for me during those days along with frequent individual meetings for counsel and replying to questions.

The condition of the brethren and the ongoing expansion of the kingdom there were most encouraging.

Brother David, who has printed my books, is preaching in villages weekly and has translated and printed *Preach the Word* into Yoruba. Brother Titus [who has now joined us in Sierra Leone for further discipleship] has established gospel works in three locations now where his disciples are carrying on the work. Victor has a group meeting for study of the Word in Abeokuta . Serge leads a similar gathering in Ore. Brother Michael in Ibadan has expanded into two other areas of that great city.

Brother Timothy arranged a three-day seminar/forum on "True Prosperity" in which he did the teaching. Dr. George and the brethren with him have preached the gospel in a nearby village, where there is now a New Testament church meeting. Brothers Moses, Otobo, Tony, and Akogo have been encouraging brethren in the house church in Eke as well, as continuing the weekly Bible studies at the Polytechnic.

Brother Solomon is discipling about six brothers currently as well as continuing his circuit of teaching in several villages each week. Brother Isaac in Lagos is teaching and encouraging five families whom he is drawing together in his home weekly. I was able to meet some new brethren with whom I am communicating by e-mail, some of whom are now beginning *The Discipleship Experience*.

Deborah was in the midst of college entrance exams and we were thus unable to see each other, though we talked by phone. She is doing fine.

Increasingly, there is a dissatisfaction with the religious status quo and a developing hunger and thirsting after righteousness among many. We trust that this trend will continue and that there will be a genuine return to the Word of God.

Following is a summary of the first message I spoke the day I arrived. It addresses Joshua 1:12-18. May the Lord lead us all into His full provision in Christ Jesus our Lord.

"Do not take us across the Jordan " [Num.32:5]. This was the determined decree from 2-1/2 tribes among the Israel of God. They had gone far enough. Canaan 's prospects seemed as

nothing in their sight. The command of God was spurned for their self-chosen sanctum.

No movement of the pillar of cloud and fire moved them. No alarmed reproof from their brethren alarmed them. They would stay where they were.

Failure or refusal to enter into the Lord's inheritance is rebellion [Num.32:6-15]. To not dwell in what God has provided in Christ Jesus is wickedness, divisive, and discouragement to the people of God. How many evils have arisen from half-hearted saints who despise God's portion by their self-chosen ways!

Reader, be warned, self-will is dangerous ground. Walking by sight is blindness to the soul. No cloudy pillar to guide you, no ark of the covenant dispensing mercy, and no presence of God abides in the land of Gilead [Num.32:1]. Cross over and live in Christ's Canaan .

Things of the world have captured your heart. Cattle are become more precious than Christ [Num.32:4, 26]. Fertile earth is counted as more significant than eternal treasure.

O, if we could glimpse for a moment the excellencies of Christ, pursuits of folly would slip willingly and unnoticed from our grasp. Stupid empty pretenses would be torn down and seen for the idolatrous acts of rebellion that they are [Josh.22:10-29].

"See the copy of the altar of the Lord which our fathers have made, not for burnt offering or for sacrifice" [Josh.22:28]. Yes, we see it. It is empty. No sacrifice ascends from it to heaven. Nothing acceptable is placed upon it. God is not there.

Such an altar has an outward form but no reality. It is good for nothing. It will not convince your children that you have not abandoned the Lord. You have. They will only see you as hypocrites [Josh.22:24-27].

Your altar is for show, not for sacrifice. You claim that it

is a witness [Josh.22:27]. Indeed it is. It testifies to an empty unconsecrated life, a cheap imitation without substance.

No one is fooled thereby. The same spirit that animated Ananias and Sapphira was at work in your copy of the real. But you only have crafted a copy because you do not want the real.

The Lord of heaven knows that it is not His altar. The people of God do not mistake your substitute for the actual. Your children know that you are not in fellowship with the tribes of Israel . The emptiness of your folly is exposed before all.

Why not leave your pretensions? Forsake Gilead 's deception. Canaan awaits the welcome step of your obedience.

"If, however, the land of your possession is unclean, then cross into the land of the possession of the Lord, where the Lord's tabernacle stands, and take possession among us. Only, do not rebel against the Lord, or rebel against us by building an altar for yourselves, besides the altar of the Lord our God" [Josh.22:19].

Here in Sierra Leone , I have begun a weekly half-hour radio broadcast of exposition of the gospel of John, chapter by chapter. It reaches a potential audience of about 3 million in this land of 4.9 million inhabitants. We have received some encouraging responses and believe that the listening audience is increasing each week.

Our Sunday evening fellowship meeting here in the home for mutual encouragement and breaking of bread is attended by about 20 adults from a broad spectrum of backgrounds.

Brothers Quintin and Peters are leading weekly Bible teaching times along with open forum question sessions in two universities in Freetown . We are very blessed to have them with us in fellowship.

Both are progressing admirably in the things of God. Both

have completed the entire *Discipleship Experience*, being the first ones that I know of to have done so. We have moved on to different aspects of discipleship, focusing now on particular other passages of Scripture along with their own research assignments.

Peters, along with brother Titus, led three young women who are our neighbors to the Lord last week. Various brethren come weekly to see me with questions from the Scriptures and for teaching.

The children are doing fine and we are pleased at their progress in many ways, especially in their attitudes and growing godly behavior. Timothy is diligently working through *The Discipleship Experience*. He and Peters have become "soul-mates," which has been a blessing to both of them.

Patti has been speaking the gospel to different women and children here in our village of Regent . Some have been coming to learn English from her as well.

Our focus remains the same, to raise up faithful disciples who will teach others also.

Here in Sierra Leone , over 50 percent of the districts in the provinces [outside of Freetown] have no Bible church at all. About 70 percent of the population remains Muslim, though of a relatively nominal sort. Immorality is rampant and it is actually unusual to find a girl who has not given birth to a child before marriage.

Do continue to pray for us as we need wisdom daily to respond to each situation, as well as plan for the future of the work. May the Lord bless you one and all.

Love,

Steve and Patti

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West African Mission Update

April 2005

Dear brethren,

Jesus our Lord is the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. All spiritual movements of heart meeting with the approval of God must originate and consummate in Him. He is both Author and Finisher of faith.

Genesis 1:1 emphatically declares this to be so at the inception of history's revelation: God is central, supreme, and first in everything. He has priority before all for He is from the beginning.

Whether we acknowledge Him as First in this life or not, we shall all acknowledge Him as the Last on that fearful coming day of reckoning. Then we will clearly apprehend that the things we accounted to be of first importance were worse than last; and we who promoted self as first will be found to be last: dishonored, rejected, and tormented by one's own undying conscience throughout endless ages. And for what? And then what?

All of our first pursuits, the "I can't right now, I first need to...", will be viewed from the standpoint of horror, panic, and remorse without remedy. Remedy is a matter for the present, not an afterthought when Jesus the Lord is met as the Last.

Better now to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness [Mt.6:33]. Better to first cast the beam out of your own eye [Mt.7:5]. Better far to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all you mind. This is the first and great commandment [Mt.22:37,38]. Yes, this is far better than the would-be disciple who dictates his own agenda from distorted demands, saying, "Lord, permit me first" [Mt.8:21].

How could the Lord succumb to, "Permit me first..." from his supposed servant? It is unthinkable. May the Lord Himself

impress our hearts with the reality of Col. 1:18, that in all things He might have the first place.

This has been a month of firsts for us in many ways. The first booklets, *The Believer at Work*, were distributed when we first arrived at the Freetown airport. There we met our first attempt to defraud us of our money and the Lord's first deliverance of us from their schemes. Meanwhile, customs officials, airport personnel, and the public relations officer for the entire airport all received their own copies of the booklet.

My first prayer on Sierra Leonean soil was uttered in the transport bus Quintin and Peters had arranged to convey us to Regent, to the amazement of the Muslim driver. We all drank for the first time on the ferry from freshly opened coconut shells, expertly sliced open with a machete by the local wheelbarrow vendor.

We arrived in Regent, some 7 km from Freetown, the first town we have lived in that has no market at all; nowhere to buy food and other household necessities. After some few days, Stephan and Seth killed their first bush rat, with Seth pulling the muskrat-like animal out of his burrow by the tail while Stephan dispatched him post haste with a machete. We all ate it, of course, nicely roasted on an open fire.

Peters had his first bicycle accident on Stephan's bike; sliding downhill in gravel and dirt on palms, elbow and chest. That afforded my first occasion for emergency first-aid.

The first rain following dry season flooded Patti and my bedroom with one half inch of water, soaking all the papers in my briefcase, some to the point of illegibility. Seth and one brother who is living in our house killed their first black mamba outside of Quintin's window. That one got eaten as well. A neighbor brought a wounded and abandoned new-born puppy to our house, saying that Christianna needed to have it. So she has her first puppy, that she is nursing unto health.

And yes, Patti and I both have met our first bouts with malaria, which resulted in Patti being taken to the hospital for the first time. There she was attended to by a kindly Chinese physician who was trained in Texas. This also afforded Patti's first gospel opportunity with a Muslim medical assistant who attended her.

Easter week provided several firsts. On Good Friday, in various places effigies of Judas were constructed out of straw, dressed up in clothes, complete with Bible in hand, and then thoroughly beaten and scattered with sticks. Sunday witnessed the first spectacle of homemade kites being flown even by men to celebrate the resurrection. Monday was going to Galilee, parties at the beach.

The Anti-Corruption Commission received their first copies of *Believer at Work*, along with the International Accountability Group, an adjunct of Transparency International. Copies were taken to a national convention convened to address the moral and spiritual solutions to the problems of corruption in SL. They have indicated that they wish for 80 copies for a West African convention with delegates from many nations, coming up in the month of May.

Preparations are underway for my first proposed radio Bible teaching endeavors. The programs will be one half hour weekly and will reach the greater Freetown area which contains 50% of the country's 4.9 million people [according to the official census of December, 2004].

This week begins my first lessons with Quintin and Peters in NT Greek. We discuss the Word of God daily on various topics and as they progress in *The Discipleship Experience*. One of the great joys is leading them through systematic analyses of various texts, where they are required to reason through for themselves and weigh interpretive options to derive the correct understanding.

The first group of disciples has formed in Murraytown, a district of Freetown. There are about 12 who regularly attend, four of whom are particularly spiritually keen. When they resume classes at their various campuses this coming week, we are planning to do gospel outreach as well as Bible teaching there on the university campuses where they attend. These were the brothers that Peters stayed with for about two months when he first arrived in SL.

We have held our first house fellowship where some 10 adults joined us for the breaking of bread, prayer, singing, and exhortation contributed by several brothers.

This past weekend was my first trip to the Provinces on public

transport, riding in a mini-van packed with 23 people, plus loads of various types for the three-hour journey in 100 plus-degree heat and 90%-plus humidity. A full 50% of the chiefdoms in SL [of which there are 149] have no Bible believing church at all in their areas.

We traveled about 85 km from Freetown to a remote area that had been completely razed and burnt by the rebels during the war. All of the houses there now are new, within the last three years, built of mud block in this subsistence agricultural region.

One faithful brother, Abu, moved there with his family and began preaching about three years ago in this completely Muslim area. The Lord has blessed his efforts and we met about 20 who came for the two-day teachings on "What is the Gospel?" and "Assurance of Salvation."

The Lord blessed His Word and we witnessed about eight people earnestly indicate their desire to receive Christ Jesus as Lord. The message was well understood according to the indigenes who know the Krio [Creole] language well. We will see this dear brother Abu again this week to further encourage him in the ways of the Lord.

This is a sweeter first fruit than the translucent coral-pink blushed African apple that graces our compound with its refreshing fruit.

Do pray for us as we seek the Lord's guidance about all that is before us in our attempts to influence this country for everlasting good for the sake of Him who is the First as well as the Last.

With all of our love,

Steve and Patti

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Zealotry

No matter how radical you think you are...

There's always somebody who thinks you're not radical enough!

[Walking in the Spirit](#)

[Abide in the Vine](#)

[For the "Great Leader"](#)

[Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

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Choosing Curriculum

Kim Baumgaertel

Ask any veteran home school parent about curriculum, and you are likely to get a variety of responses. Each of us has our favorites, and our not-so-favorites, and our opinions about what has worked in the past and what we have learned from our mistakes. Some of us will tell you of radical shifts in style or publisher or both; how we started our home education endeavors with one curriculum and dropped it for another. Some of us base our preferences on what is easiest to work with; some of us on what is “best” academically; some of us on what fits with our world view or interpretation of scripture. If you are a brand-new home school parent, you need a curriculum-in-a-nutshell overview of what is available to you, and an evaluation of it.

Home schooling curriculums can be lumped into two broad categories: teacher-directed curriculums, and correspondence curriculums. Each has its pros and cons, and you should not assume that one is better or more wholesome than the other. The Lord Jesus has directed you to home school your children and he knows even better than you do what your priorities and gifts are. If you determine that a correspondence program is right for you and your children, then go with it. If you determine that you have the time and energy and desire to plan your own lessons, then you will enjoy the independence of a teacher-directed curriculum. Use the talents God has given you to do the best teaching job you can for your kids.

Teacher-directed curriculums consist of books that you buy to teach subject areas in each grade level. You buy your books, with or without test booklets and teacher guides, spend a few hours looking them over, and then plan your lessons accordingly. Teacher-directed curriculums allow you the freedom of chucking the books for a day at the museum or a week at grandma’s house in the middle of February or a (dare I say it!) day to catch up on laundry. You also have the freedom to skip a chapter you deem to be too easy, or too repetitive, or too dumb, or too offensive. You have the freedom to not assign all the “On Your Own” questions at the end of the chapters, or to let your child do all the odd problems in math, or to respond to the literature selection by writing a critical review. You have the option of grouping your kiddos together for the science lesson or the geography map work.

The flip side of this freedom, of course, is the labor of plowing through those texts on your own. Teacher-directed curriculums require the teacher to know what’s in them, and how to cover it sufficiently in a certain amount of time (determined by you, of course). No, you do not have to be an expert on biology to get your tenth grader through the course, but you have to be willing to read the book with her and keep her progressing through it. You will have a bit of help if you choose to buy any

test booklets and answer keys to accompany the texts, but the daily planning and executing of lessons is your job.

At the other end of the curriculum spectrum are the correspondence courses, including any on-line class or part-time attendance courses or co-op participation you may involve your family in. These curriculums take the content and the planning out of your hands. Your job is to make sure your kids wake up in the morning and get to work, and possibly to mail in any assignments or tests they have to take. Some courses, such as the Abeka video school, require participants to own a TV and VCR and to return videos by mail on a regular basis; the Bob Jones SAT program necessitates the videotaping of their live classes, possibly at all hours of the day. Most correspondence courses provide a report card evaluation and high school diploma to their students, which is another factor that will make your life easier.

Which type of curriculum should you choose? The answer depends on your talents and your family's priorities. All curriculums cost money. Correspondence courses are the most expensive way to go, but you are also going to get a lot for your money, such as more time for other things and a record of your child's work on an "official" piece of paper. Teacher-directed curriculums, likewise, can be expensive unless you are able to buy used books or have a good home schooling support system where you are able to share and borrow books, etc. Many families combine the two types of curriculum and use on-line or co-op programs for certain harder-to-teach subjects, such as math or science, and complete the other subjects on their own. Many home school families have switched back and forth depending on family circumstances during a particular school year or because one child learns differently than another did. If you are new to home schooling you may evaluate your time and talents and determine that a correspondence program is the way to go, and then change your mind as you become more experienced and confident. Likewise, you may start out the other way with a teacher-directed course, and then determine that you are in over your head and need to make adjustments.

So, what do I do? I desire to encourage, in Jesus' name, any one who desires to educate their children at home. Home schooling is a blessing and a joy, a labor of love, a calling of God. I have home schooled for 13 years, and I have opinions on curriculum and lesson planning and just about any other aspect of home education you could think of! When I share with you what I do and have done with our children, I do so because it may encourage you in your own endeavors, not to impress upon you the "right" way of doing it.

I like teacher-directed curriculums. For most of our 13 years of home schooling I have used Abeka books for science, history, and some language arts. I own Understanding Writing by Susan Bradrick and highly recommend it for composition through all grade levels. I recently began to use Spelling Power by Beverly Gordon and like it for my 8th and 4th graders. I also like Easy Grammar by Wanda Phillips for grammar and mechanics in junior high. For math I have used almost extensively the Saxon Math series, and find it more than adequate because of my limitations in that area!

I do not like correspondence programs, mostly because I want to be in charge of what my

children learn and how they respond to it. The correspondence courses I have watched my friends use appear to me to require too much “busy work”. I don’t want to be tied to deadlines and assignments and textbooks that some other program has dictated for me.

Whichever type of curriculum you choose, or maybe even a combination of curriculums, I pray that the Lord Jesus will bless and encourage your decision to educate your children at home.

“And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:4

[Email Kim with comments or questions](#)

Editor's note: Kim and I do not necessarily endorse the views of any of the above mentioned organizations or individuals. Many of the textbooks include views we seriously disagree with. Dads and Moms who homeschool need to be Acts 17:11 Bereans as you make use of these homeschooling tools and texts.

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Lesson Planning

As I write this, it is mid-August. My Mommy-teacher friends and I rendezvous almost every evening at the soccer field to sit in our lawn chairs in the late summer sunshine and chat. How was your summer . . . did you travel . . . the blackberries are ripening . . . Slowly, cautiously, and with tentative dread, our conversations turn to curriculum, schedules, band instruments, and SCHOOL. We are collectively in denial. No more spending hours in the garden. No more lazy picnics at the lake. No more frappes at Starbucks on a whim. No more quilting, painting the bathroom, organizing the filing cabinets, picking bouquets, sewing skirts, sleeping in, walking the beach. No. We are stealing ourselves for the FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL. We begin to discuss, to plan, to chart our courses for the year.

I am a lesson planner. I love to sit at my desk with my plan book, perusing through textbooks and scheduling pages to be read and chapters to finish. If I have to wait for the oil to be changed on the mini-van I take my plan book. If I am sitting at the dentist's, I have my plan book. When I really should be cleaning out the refrigerator or ironing clothes, I am writing in my plan book! This passion is both a blessing and a blight.

When I first began home schooling over 13 years ago, I was still brainwashed by my teacher training courses in college. I had taught junior high school language arts at a "Christian" school in our town for a number of years before Jim and I had our first child. My plans at that time were to raise our kids and then return to teaching when they started kindergarten. The Lord convinced us by the time our second child was born that we take control of their education.

You have probably heard of the saying "do you home school, or do school at home?" referring to how home educators tend to turn their homes into a little classroom modeled after whatever they perceive school to be. That was me. I was a hyper-planner, a sit 'em at their desks and work until lunchtime Mommy-teacher. Fellow home schoolers who visited my home during school time were intimidated by the sight of my four little children working industriously at their desks and me sitting nobly at mine. Many years have gone by and I have slackened the school-at-home thing considerably, but I am still an advocate of the good 'ol plan book!

At the beginning of a school year I like to take a day or two for myself as a Mommy-teacher in-service day. I gather all of the kids' books; spread them before me on the picnic table and start looking them over. I want to get an idea of what lies ahead of us for the school year; conquests of continents by marauding bands of Huns, taxonomy of living things according to the Biological classification system, division of polynomials, parsing complex sentences, Beowulf. This part is fun.

Next I begin to map out the year, subject by subject. Math is easiest because the lessons are already numbered and you are safe in assuming that your child should do one lesson a day. I look at how many math lessons my kids need to work through to finish the book by the end of May, calculate in the tests, and write up a schedule for the first week. Now, what usually happens is that one or all of my kids will inform me that they already know the contents of the first three or five or eleven lessons of their math text because it's review. No kidding. This is when I have to do some evaluating to see if they are seriously capable of skipping those lessons, or if they need the review. I usually have them work a few representative problems in each lesson and go from there.

For subjects that aren't so cut and dried as arithmetic, you can do essentially the same type of planning. Peruse the text, noting how many chapters or sections or pages you have to cover in your allotted time. (Now, I actually know home schooling families who, believe it or not, home school all through the summer! If you are one of those families, I salute you. I need my summer off!) You may want to have your student spend half the year on history and the other half on science. This works well. Or, you may decide to work on both subjects throughout the entire year, but not do both subjects on the same day. At any rate, get a good idea of the amount of text you need to cover and pace your students through the year.

I have always encouraged fellow home educators to take lesson planning seriously. Planning lessons the weekend before a school week begins is a means of keeping yourself accountable, adding some structure to your day, and giving your children a sense of the seriousness of their education. Your plan book serves as a journal of progress made and a record of advancement for any authority that may question your legitimacy as a home educator. And, perhaps best of all, it is your overseer, your watchdog, your supervisor.

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WALL ST
← 1-9

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BROADWAY
CANYON OF HEROES



*Is there any HOPE
for a*

GHETTO CHILD?

Dave Frederick

Hope In Christ Ministries



*Is there any HOPE
for a*

GHETTO CHILD?

Dave Frederick

Hope in Christ Ministries

INSIDE FRONT COVER
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Is there any HOPE
for a
GHETTO CHILD?

Dave Frederick

Hope in Christ Ministries

DEDICATION

To the hundreds of young people we have had the privilege of serving over the past 8 years.

We have learned so much from you!

We love you and desire for each one of you the HOPE about which we write.

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Introduction

Hope. I think that most of us take it for granted.

Hope...that there is some way that things will work out. Hope...that we will get the money somehow. That we will find a job somewhere. That we will find someone to help us do something.

For most of us it is unthinkable to feel that we have absolutely no one to turn to and nowhere to turn. No hope of things really being different. The future seeming pretty much a depressing continuation of the present pain. There is always hope. Someone. Something. Somewhere.

Unless you are a ghetto child...

And then...dreams will always just be dreams. Hope will always seem a fantasy. And the future will always just be more of the same.

There is just too much garbage. Too many insurmountable obstacles to overcome. Too much past to get past. Too much... No hope.

Have you ever met a ghetto child? It is so easy for us to go through life living our own lives in our own worlds and not really seeing them; not be a part of bringing them hope.

I trust that you will take time to read this short little booklet. It introduces you to one such ghetto child. One among the many that we meet and

serve week after week through our ministry as we seek to offer them the hope they desperately need and yet so often have given up expecting to experience.

I am hoping that by the time you finish reading this brief story you will feel compelled to help offer them hope!

God bless you as you read.

Dave Frederick
Hope in Christ Ministries
The Coffee Oasis
June 8, 2006

"It had been a great day"

"Katie and I were trimming back the trail with loppers. The guys were doing the 'manly' work, hauling gravel to another part of the trail. The guys were taking a break. I walked up to the guys (I guess I was taking a break too☺) and started giving them crap about sloughing off on the job. They started returning it about how easy us girls had it and the easy work we were doing. So I became all big and macho about how I could do their work just as good as them.

So...they started filling the wheelbarrow with gravel. I told them to fill it full. I grabbed it and started down the hill. It started dragging me. Before I could make it down the hill, it tipped over and dumped all of the gravel into the bushes!

*They were pissed.
It was fricking heavy!"*

She said that whenever she was having a great day, something was sure to ruin it.

It had been a great day. A trip to Arlington to pick up a dress for prom. A scenic 5.2 mile hike on the Lime Kiln Trail she'd worked on as part of a youth work crew.

Next she'd taken us on a sightseeing tour through Everett, recounting for us the different

places she'd lived, schools she'd attended, and experiences she'd had.

And finally dinner at Herfy's with her drug addicted and alcoholic mom. Her older sister had even joined us for a few minutes. Only her grandmother could not make it because of a priority commitment to play bingo!

It had been a great day.

Something was sure to ruin it.

There was a letter waiting for her when we arrived home. It was from the State Department of Health, Nursing Assistant Program requiring court restitution records regarding the felony she had received when she was 14 years old.

It's not that she was unaware of the likelihood of receiving such a letter; but it hit her like a shotgun blast.

"All she really wanted to be"

"When we got home I got the mail. I had been waiting forever for the NAR (Nurse's Assistant Registered) Certification which everyone else had already gotten when they completed the training. There was the letter. I started reading. My first reaction was...WHATEVER. Then I read it again and was really pissed off. I showed it to my foster mom and then went to my room. I didn't want to be around anybody so that they couldn't see me crying. I was pissed. 'F' the world! Finally I had something that I wanted to do with my life that was legit and now I was going to have to get some stupid minimum wage job like my mom. I couldn't do anything because of the felony. It would always be there. There was no way that I could pay off the restitution!"

Since age 13, all she'd really wanted to be, after she'd eliminated drug dealer and stripper from her options, was a nurse.

It started with a conversation she'd had with a teacher.

She thought she was pregnant and was talking with the teacher about her options.

Though the teacher, who'd had an abortion herself, advised her to get an abortion (because of

her age and the negative impact a baby would have on her life) she could sense the personal regret in the teacher's eyes.

It struck her that delivering babies would be awesome! And a legal job!

Her dream traveled from being an OB GYN doctor to a delivery nurse to wanting to be a nurse of any kind.

It's all she really wanted to be.

For years it had just been a passion, a dream, but drawing closer to high school graduation she saw her opportunity to pursue it a little further.

An opportunity arose for her to take a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training class.

She started the training on March 6th. On her written final she was among only 5 students who received a 100% out of 32 who started the training! She graduated April 5th. She now has 120 days to take the Washington State CNA exam.

But that dreaded letter. It arrived April 1st, but it was no April Fool's joke.

She'd known that she couldn't practice as a registered nurse with a felony on her record.

But there had been hope... Hope that she could start the process...become a CNA...save money as she studied for her nursing degree...and

by the time she graduated with her nursing degree have paid off the \$8,500 in restitution and fees which would allow her juvenile record to be closed and the juvenile felony removed as a hindrance to her dream.

"It was such a stupid mistake"

"We were staying at a motel on Evergreen Way. My sister was visiting. We were being wild and crazy. I told them what we did. My sister freaked out. It was NOT the reaction I had expected. I thought, "O crap." My sister then went to the school to tell them what we had done!"

It was such a stupid mistake. Already stoned, but not high enough, she was on her way to the "jungle" with a friend to get higher.

Rock in hand. Walking by some cars. Goofing off. Messing around like she was going to scratch the cars. No real intention of doing it. A friend's dare. Several cars scratched. The wrong done.

The result. A felony on her record at age 14, and \$8,500 required for restitution and court costs. Though she was hardly aware of what she was doing...she was destroying a future dream.

"Of all the things I've done," she commented, "I got caught for that!"

She had experienced a lot.

"Both parents were drunks and drug addicts"

"When I was 4 or 5 years old we were at a friend's apartment. Everyone was drinking. I was chilling in the room with them. My parents started fighting. They always fought. It started over a case of beer. Dad was pissed off at mom and started leaving with the case of beer in hand. Mom started after him, attacking him to get the case. She ripped out chunks of his hair. I was yelling at mom to stop. Someone called the police. Dad left with the beer! They both got picked up and hauled off to jail. I was always visiting mom in jail. I got picked up the next day by grandma."

When I was 9 years old, mom, my sister and I were staying off and on at a crack house. Earlier in the day mom was pulled over and taken to jail because of driving without a license. A guy named Smurf told me that mom was in jail. She had called him to bail her out. I hung out at the house all day with a bunch of people. Everyone was getting high or cutting up the dope. I was watching a movie. There was a loud knock at the door. Everything happened fast. A guy put the plate of crack under the couch. The police busted down the door, yelling at everyone to get down on their faces. My sister and I stood up to see what

was happening! The police pointed their guns at us! They began searching and cuffing everyone. They were ready to take my sister and me into custody. The officer was telling us on the porch that we were going to be put into foster care. At that moment, mom walked up. Smurf had bailed her out. It was the happiest I ever was to see my mom!"

She was the youngest of 5 children, 2 boys and 3 girls, by three different dads.

Both parents were drunks and drug addicts.

Her dad was a heroin addict. Her mom was a stoner who started using crack cocaine when she was 10 years old.

Her mom had 6 felonies and too many misdemeanors to remember. She was always in and out of jail.

Despite this, she mostly lived at home with both parents until she was eight years old.

At age 8, her dad left to "go to the store" and never returned. Later she found out that "Easy", her mom's boyfriend at the time, had "shot him up with something" and threatened to kill him.

Mom went to jail again and she moved in with grandma.

When she was kicked out of grandmas for kicking grandma (who was holding her down and

choking her), "living" became an endless blur of cheap motels, assorted apartments, crack houses, a women's mission, cars, bushes, "Crazy Jims", and the like.

With her mom selling drugs, her daily life and experience was filled with drug dealers, drug deals and house raids.

She began smoking pot at age 9. By age 11 she was drinking and using daily. When she was 14 she went to a party and the only drug available was meth. Thus began her entrance into the world of tweaking. She did three lines that first night. She became a regular meth user.

At age 11 she was placed into foster care. She has continued in foster care until the present except for about a year back with her mom around ages 13-14. It was a year of the same "living."

Living the drug life and involved in a myriad of sexual relationships, she became pregnant at age 14. It was at this time that her two sisters, seeing the downward spiral of her life, convinced her to turn herself again back in to foster care.

"She was in 23 different foster homes"

"I was 12 years old. I had just been kicked out of a group home in Seattle and was being moved to Bellingham. I found out 1 hour before it happened. Driving to my new home my case worker told me that the guy was a state trooper. Crap...I hated cops. When I first showed up he was the only one there. He gave me some root beer and nuts. He was nice. I really liked it there. Besides me they had another 9 year old foster girl and a 15 year old adopted daughter. I really liked them. Finally, I thought, I had found a home.

Then...things started getting weird...slow...off and on...not sure... At first it was weird touching...rubbing my hand. I don't know. He always tried to get me alone with him. Alone out in the pasture where he would sneak a kiss... other things too.

One night I stayed up watching TV. His wife went to bed. He stayed up. He gave me a Corona and sat down next to me. He began rubbing my shoulders and told me that he had never loved anyone like me.

Another night when I was sleeping I woke up and he was sitting on my bed watching me. I didn't know what to do. I was scared. I wanted to say

something forever, but I didn't want to ruin things.

I liked them. I had a home.

One day I was out at the pond with my foster sisters. We were talking about kissing. Who we had kissed. Who had kissed us. I wanted to tell someone...anyone...so much about what was happening. I did then.

Their daughter ran home crying. I chased after her freaking out. Her dad was at home. She told him.

She told her mom when she came home. He denied it. She got mad. No one believed me.

I stayed in my room all the time. I started cutting myself. I was put into a psych hospital. I was moved soon afterwards."

From age 11 to the present, she has been moved over 23 different times, stays varying from "5-day beds" to a couple of stays over one year.

Take a brief look at her foster care history...

At age 11 she was first placed in a home in Darrington, but it only lasted 1 ½ - 2 weeks because the people feared her mom "killing them." She was moved to a group home for one month.

From there she was moved to a Christian home that she hated. They didn't like her because she wouldn't talk (a trait that followed and hurt her in many foster homes). She was taken by the foster dad to "visit" her sister and moved into a

foster home next door. She made it there 2 ½ months before being kicked out after lots of drama.

Next followed 1 – 1 ½ years of over 9 different stops mostly lasting 1 week to 1 month.

At a group home in Seattle, she started cutting herself. She was kicked out of there for being drunk and high all the time.

At a home where she finally seemed to settle in (she really liked them and even desired to be adopted) in Bellingham, her hopes again were dashed when the man made sexual advances towards her. Her allegations were denied by the man and not believed by the authorities. She again began cutting herself and was sent to a psych hospital.

She managed to finish out 7th grade living with a single mom in Everett.

After the year out of foster care and back with her mom, she began the foster care gauntlet again...nine more moves from age 14 until the present.

The first three were the same routine of "5-day or month beds." It was beginning to sink in deeply that "nobody wanted me." Nobody wants a teenager problem child.

It was at a group home in Everett that she gave birth to her daughter – a "psycho home" full of behavior problem girls.

She was moved to a home on Whidbey Island after the birth where she remained 1 ½ months.

She was moved back to Everett where again it didn't work out after 4 ½ months.

Her next stop was a guardianship with a cousin. This time her stay lasted over a year until things fell apart. The couple had little ones and were not used to a teenager. They struggled, like others had, with the fact that she didn't talk. She got suspended for cussing out a teacher. She got suspended again for an MIP (minor in possession). And it was time to move on again.

Another Christian home was on the agenda. Again it didn't work out. Eight months later it was over. And yet, it was also a beginning.

She felt forced into going to church. She would put up a front. She resented every Sunday.

And yet, the music and preaching began to seep in. She began to see how it related to her.

She felt pure child-like joy coming back...

Then, she was moved into the home of the "psycho bitch." She was stopped from going to church. She went crazy there.

And yet it spurred her on to read the Bible daily and pursue a relationship with God that would help her through her present hell.

Five months was all that she could handle. She asked to be moved to another foster home.

She was told that it was her last move. She'd better make it work.

That was February 2005. It is now June 2006 and it is working. It has been hard. Being in a home where she could get comfortable, maybe too comfortable. Surrounded by people nudging her to do good, yet she wanting to do bad.

Loving Jesus and yet struggling... Struggling to finish high school...to be a parent...to not drink...to be good...to not just want to say "to hell with it all" and go back to "the jungle." It's hard for a ghetto child to hope.

And yet it was in the ghetto of "the jungle" that she'd first experienced hope.

"As a little girl, she always loved Jesus"

"I loved singing songs on the bus taking us to Sunday School. This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine. I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart. Jesus loves me this I know. Deep and wide. And many, many others. I loved Jesus with all of my heart. Back then I always remember having a love for Jesus in my heart."

Between the ages of 5 and 8, she lived in "the jungle" in Everett. On Sundays a husband and wife would come in a church bus into the ghetto and pick up kids who wanted to go to Sunday School. Her parents and sisters weren't interested but she loved it.

She would get all dressed up. She would NOT forget her Bible. (If you remembered your Bible, you would get candy on the bus on the way there!)

She loved the bus ride to Sunday School. They would sing songs in the bus. They would have singing competitions. One side of the bus against the other side.

She also loved Sunday School. How they talked about Jesus. Everything sank in. At the end of each Sunday invitation she would get saved again! It was awesome!

Today...

Those days as a 5 year old back in the jungle seem a long ways away. A simple love for Jesus. A hope in the midst of her hellish surroundings.

The years have taken their toll. The simple love for Jesus has become a daily struggle to believe. Child-like joy has turned into cynical despair. Hope is missing.

I was talking with her late last night. The plan is that she stays with us this summer after she is out of foster care in order to save up money to get into an apartment. She had a question about it. One question turned into 1 hour of sharing her stress, hopelessness and despair.

She is totally stressed out about the future. She looks ahead and sees impossibility. There is starting college, finding a job, getting into an apartment, caring for her daughter, paying all the bills, taking care of the court fines and restitution, etc, etc, etc...

I look ahead and see hope for her. She graduates from high school one week from today. And then there is hope to become something that none of her family has ever become. Hope to graduate from college and become a nurse. Hope to move beyond minimum wage. Hope to move out of the ghetto. HOPE.

Yet...the hopelessness is setting in. She has just heard that her drug addict mom has moved in with her sister in Everett. She knows that it is a dead end there and hates everything that all of that past and present stands for. And yet...the lure of the sick, yet familiar, is strongly drawing...

Go back to Everett. Move in with mom and sister. Become a motel maid like them.

The word on the streets in Everett is "you will never really get away...you will come back." It seems inevitable...the hopelessness.

Can you feel at all her pain? Does this brief glimpse at her story grab your heart and compel you to ask, "What can I do to help?" I hope so.

We have so much.

Should we not be sharing it with those who have so little?

If this true story of one ghetto child's life has stirred your heart at all, I pray that you would read on and see how you can help offer her HOPE. And not only her, but hundreds others like her.

And...pass on this little booklet to someone else who might want to offer hope also.

HOPE. We take it for granted. To many it seems impossible. Let's together offer it to her and others.

About Hope in Christ Ministries

“Demonstrating the simplicity and sufficiency of Christ in transforming hopeless lives and communities”

Hope in Christ Ministries is a faith-based 501c3 non-profit ministry dedicated to serving the at-risk youth of Kitsap County by the following means...

Building Relationships – To come alongside hurting and homeless youth as friends, we

- Meet them on their turf or ours...**Street Hope**
- Open up The Coffee Oasis as a welcoming and accepting place...**Oasis Youth Center**
- Cultivate mentoring relationships...**Partnering Hope**

Communicating Truth – To lead individuals to real life in Christ, we

- Proclaim the power of Christ to completely transform young lives
- Use the arts, music and drama to deliver Christ’s message of hope
- Offer ministry internships

Showing Compassion – To reflect the heart of Christ and follow His example, we

- Offer a drop-in refuge for hurting and homeless youth
- Help at-risk youth find resources to meet their needs
- Provide training and mentoring

Networking – To give our ministry added breadth and effectiveness, we

- Involve with churches, individuals, and like-minded organizations
- Connect youth with other individuals and organizations that can help them

What can I do?

Hope in Christ Ministries/The Coffee Oasis seeks to offer hope to hundreds of hurting, homeless and at-risk youth each year.

We do it primarily through the gifts of generous and caring individuals.

If you are interested in participating in this ministry, please check any of the following:

I would like to help financially offer young people HOPE.

Enclosed is \$ _____ to be used towards:

Ghetto Child's \$8500.00 Court Fees and Restitution

Wherever needed most

I would like more information about your ministry.

I would like you to speak at my church/club.

I would like copies of "Ghetto Child" to pass out.

Enclosed is \$ _____ to help towards expenses.

I would like to receive your monthly report/newsletter.

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to: Hope in Christ Ministries
All gifts are tax deductible.

Mail to: Hope in Christ Ministries
822 Burwell Street
Bremerton, WA 98337

INSIDE BACK COVER
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Four Feasts of the Lamb

Scriptures

A Song

*(Sing to the
tune of
"Greensleeves")*

Enslaved in Egypt the people cried out To God, their Father in Heaven.

Jehovah heard and He sent them one, a man named Moses to free them.

The Angel of Death passed over each, who had the blood on their doorposts.
The Blood of the Lamb and the Passover Feast, would forever remind them of
mercy.

Jesus Christ, His death he knew, was soon to follow this Passover.
Disciples with the Lord to share the Bread, the Wine, the Last Supper.

“This, this in remembrance of Me, as often as ye share the feast,
“The Bread and the Wine, My Body and Blood, a meal of love, one another.”

From Feast to Feast, until that day our Lord returns with the trumpet's call.

The Lord's Supper and Agape Feast foreshadow our hope in Heaven.

Glory, glory, and hallelu! The Marriage Supper of the Lamb ensues.

Jesus Christ, the Lamb which was slain, our King, the Lion of Judah!

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[Unite against terror, Pope says in Christmas speech](#)

(Excerpts below)

12/25/05 <<By Philip Pullella

VATICAN CITY (Reuters) - Pope Benedict, in his first Christmas address, on Sunday urged humanity to unite against terrorism, poverty and environmental blight and called for a "new world order" to correct economic imbalances...

He said humanity should look to the Christ child for encouragement in times of difficulty and fear.

"A united humanity will be able to confront the many troubling problems of the present time: from the menace of terrorism to the humiliating poverty in which millions of human beings live, from the proliferation of weapons to the pandemics and the environmental destruction which threatens the future of our planet," he said.

"Do not fear; put your trust in him! The life-giving power of his light is an incentive for building a new world order based on just ethical and economic relationships," he said, speaking in Italian...>>

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[Four Ways Christians Are Deceived](#) - [The September 11th Turning Point](#) - [The Roman Catholic Empire](#)

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From: PTMIN [PTMIN@aol.com]

Sent: Friday, April 07, 2006 7:57 PM

To: jimbaum@procinwarn.com

Subject: April 2006 Newsletter: Slaughtering Sacred Cows - The Felt-Presence of God

April 2006: Contents

- Knowing Christ Together: Volume 2 (*New CD Set*)
- Gathering in Homes: Volume 1 (*New Book*)
- Body Life Conference in Lansing, Michigan: May 5-7, 2006
- Slaughtering Sacred Cows: Part 3: "The Felt-Presence of God"
- April Book Special

Important Note: All of our CDs have been *discounted* and they are now available to *most countries*.

New CD Set

Knowing Christ Together: Volume 2

The second volume of *Knowing Christ Together* is now available! It is in CD form.

The 4-CD set contains four weighty live messages that Frank delivered to over 20 house churches who attended the Portland, Oregon conference this March. The messages are as follows:

- Message 1. Lessons from the Journey
- Message 2. Your Christ is Too Small: Challenging Observations on Knowing the Lord
- Message 3. The Church After God's Own Heart: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow
- Message 4. Church Pathology 101: Four Common Diseases that Afflict House Churches

These messages are both challenging and prophetic. If you meet in a house church or simple church, or any group outside the institutional church, they are highly recommended.

If you live in the USA, order at www.ptmin.org/audiocd.htm

If you live in Canada or Mexico (only Mexico City, Guadalajara, or Monterrey), order at www.ptmin.org/canada.htm

For all other countries, order at www.ptmin.org/countries.htm

Note: All of our CDs have been *discounted* and they are now available to most countries.

New Book

Gathering in Homes: *Volume 1 - Beginning*

Over the last two years, we have received a great deal of mail asking the following: "We've read Frank's books and have left the institutional church. A group of us would like to start meeting under the Headship of Christ without a leader, but we have no idea how to start. Can you give us some guidance?"

To answer this query, Frank has just finished writing a practical guide to give new house churches a beginning. This volume, entitled *Gathering in Homes*, is filled with practical instruction and exercises to give your house church its legs. Questions such as "what do we do with the children?", "what do we do about giving and money?," "what about music and singing?," "how, when, and where should we start meeting?" and many more questions are addressed in great detail.

This volume was not written for individuals. It is for house churches and simple churches comprised of eight or more adults who are just beginning. Particularly those who have read Frank's books and wish to be involved in a house church that corresponds to the vision that is presented in them.

It is also written for house churches that have been meeting, but who wish to make a fresh start.

If you would like to order this volume for your group (minimum of eight or more), please write us at PTMIN@aol.com and tell us a little bit about your group. Ordering information will be emailed to you.

Body Life Conference in Lansing, Michigan

May 5-7, 2006

On May 5-7, Frank will be holding a conference in Lansing, Michigan. He will be speaking on God's central passion. The goal of the conference is to establish a first-century styled house church in Lansing, MI. If you would like registration information for this conference, write us at PTMIN@aol.com

The conference is FREE of charge.

Regards,
Jeanette at PTM

Slaughtering Sacred Cows: Part 3

"The Felt-Presence of God"

by Frank Viola

I would like to say a word in preface about the following article. In 1994, what came to be known as "the Toronto Blessing" hit the United States. Rodney Howard-Browne held his first convention in the Carpenter's Home Church in Lakeland, Florida. That convention went on for weeks. From there, it quickly spread to other

parts of North America . . . most notably Toronto, Canada; Melbourne, Florida; and Pensacola, Florida.

Upon hearing about the new move of God in 1994, I traveled to Lakeland and sat in on those first meetings where "the blessing" had just begun. The following year, I traveled to Melbourne, Florida and sat in a meeting officiated by Randy Clark when the phenomenon had spread there in full force.

I will not share my observations of "the blessing" in this article. But I'm glad I went to those meetings. Ever since I've been a Christian, I've had an insatiable hunger to know my Lord more deeply. Consequently, if I hear a report that God is uniquely at work in a given place, I will move heaven and earth to visit it. This is what prompted me to check out those early meetings in Lakeland and Melbourne.

1995 marked an important year in my life. Not because of my encounters with "the Toronto blessing." But because of what occurred as a result.

One of my closest friends is a man named Frank Valdez. I met Frank in 1992. He is the wisest Christian I've ever met. He is also the most knowledgeable and spiritually insightful. (I have often told people, "If you don't want to know the answer to your question, don't ask Frank Valdez!") Further, unlike many gifted Christian men, Frank is completely honest, straight-forward, and has no trace of a manipulative or deceptive spirit. He is one of the most Christ-like men that I know.

Sometime in 1995, as we were sharing lunch together, I told Frank about my observations on "the Toronto blessing." This led into an invaluable discussion that marked a turning point in my life. Frank said to me, "There is a Christian tradition that practices a form of prayer that employs no words. It's beyond speaking in tongues and deeper than the Toronto blessing."

He had my attention.

As I quizzed him about his comment, Frank began to share with me about the contemplative prayer tradition. He spoke about centering prayer, *lectio divina*, and other ancient spiritual practices that were unfamiliar to me at the time. He also used a word that I wasn't too keen on. I've since learned that this word has been historically used to honor people . . . and with equal rigor, it has been used to damn them. Frank introduced me to the Christian "mystics."

Paranetically, to offer some overly-simplistic definitions, contemplative prayer is a prayer of interior silence that is beyond words.

Centering prayer is a silent gazing upon the Lord that employs the use of a "sacred word" like "Lord" or "Jesus" to center one's attention upon Him when the mind begins to wander.

Lectio Divina is a form of spiritual communion where the Scriptures are turned into prayer.

None of these practices are new to the Christian faith. They are all quite ancient. Only very recently have they been getting air-play in evangelical circles.

Back to the story. As we sat at lunch, Frank gave me a brief history of the Christian "mystics," as they came to be known. These were Christians who sought experiential union with their God. They had a fervent love for the Lord that had landed them into hot water. That love caused them to think and experiment "outside the box" of traditional religion. In their desperation to know the Lord intimately, *some of them* discovered ways of communing with God that went beyond petition-prayer, Bible-reading, and speaking in tongues.

In short, I was intrigued by what Frank shared with me that day. I then launched into a quest to read the writings that were part of this tradition. More importantly, I began to implement some of their discoveries into my own devotional life. As the years passed, I met others who were on this same journey. They too had gleaned from the same writings that had helped me so much.

I later discovered that there were some in this same tradition who are my contemporaries. Most of them, however, are outside the evangelical tradition. Rather, they are part of high church denominations like Catholic, Episcopal, and Anglican. Their writings have uncovered practical forms of spiritual communion that I've found to be of great profit personally.

That being said, this article owes much to my discussions with Frank Valdez. We have talked about the subject of "the felt-presence of God" at length. And we've arrived at many of the same conclusions. A number of the ancient mystics held to this same viewpoint. Most notably, Nicholas Herman of 17th century France. He is better known as "Brother Lawrence" and wrote the spiritual classic, *The Practice of the Presence of God*, of which his fame rests.

Please note that my intention in writing this article is to set at liberty a vast number of Christians who have grown pathologically dependent on "feeling God's presence" or who have unwittingly used it as a benchmark to measure their spiritual condition. It is also to set at ease those who have unsuccessfully sought "the feeling" of God's presence without success.

My hope is that the Spirit of God would use this article to give His people a proper perspective of God's holy presence. A perspective that will *de-mystify* the *mystical* in their lives and set them at liberty to love their Lord beyond feelings and sensations. A perspective that will encourage them to walk by the highest spiritual sense of all . . . *faith*. And faith transcends the realm of the senses. As Paul put it, "we walk by faith, not by sight."

I spent most of my early Christian life drinking deeply from the wells of the Pentecostal/charismatic movement. There is much in that movement that is helpful and authentic. I am thankful for what it taught me about one aspect of God's present activity. At the same time, there is much in that movement that is not so helpful. And a good bit that's not exactly authentic.

The propensity to seek the felt-presence of God in that movement is central and overwhelming. I've watched Christians struggle with this quest to the point of concluding that something was wrong with them . . . that God loved them less . . . all because they weren't "feeling" or "sensing" God's presence on a regular basis.

I have known Christian women and men who were utterly devoted to the Lord, extremely gifted, spiritually insightful and fruitful. Yet in private, their confession was that they had *never* "felt" the presence of God.

I've also personally known Christians who were in dire spiritual straits. Some were living a double-life. Yet they didn't wince at their poor condition because during worship services or prayer times they regularly "felt the presence of God."

This being said, I believe that there is a great deal of confusion over this matter of God's presence. Part of it is rooted in semantics. Another part is rooted in bad theology.

Let's look at the semantic problem first. (Semantics refers to the words we use to express certain concepts.)

Stated simply, some Christians have a way of overstating their experiences. Others understate them. Two people may experience the same exact phenomenon . . . whether it be a church meeting, a conference, a retreat, a convention, a particular manifestation of the Holy Spirit, or a shared encounter. One person will describe it as "unbelievable!" . . . "incredible!" . . . "awesome!" . . . "beyond description!" Another will describe it as "good" . . . enjoyable" . . . "encouraging" . . . delightful."

People often use different vocabulary for expressing the same thing. For instance, Watchman Nee used a unique phrase when he referred to his fellowship with the Lord. He called it "touching the Lord." Others use the phrase "sweet communion." Others use "Divine encounter." Others use less phenomenological phrases.

To describe fixing one's heart upon the Lord, some people use the phrase "turning to the Lord." Others use the word "gazing." Others say "beholding." Still others say "contemplating" or "centering" or "abiding" or "partaking." Others describe it as "meditating."

By and large, it's semantics.

I've observed this principle all of my Christian life: *People express the same experiences differently.* This is due to many different factors. Some of which are the person's temperament, the specific vocabulary that is used in one's fellowship circle, or a specific "effect" they wish to have on those who hear them testify. (Sometimes this isn't so well motivated.)

In addition, to say that a Christian is to "seek" a feeling of God's presence is bad theology. Plain and simple. There is no such exhortation in all of Scripture. Try to find it in the New Testament, and you will discover that it is glaringly absent. There is no such example either.

An oft-quoted passage used to support the idea of seeking God's felt-presence is Psalm 22:3. In the KJV, it reads: "You, God, inhabit the praises of Israel." This text has been traditionally used to invoke or summon God's presence by singing praise and worship songs.

Strikingly, except for the KJV, the New Jerusalem Bible, and the New Century Version, all of the other versions take a different tack on the translation. For instance, the Revised English Bible translates it this way: "You, the praise of Israel, are enthroned in the sanctuary."

The New American Bible takes the same approach: "Yet you are enthroned in the holy place, O glory of Israel." The New International Version does likewise: "Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the praise of Israel." The New Living Translation translates it as follows: "Yet you are holy, the praises of Israel surround your throne."

The term "praise" here is seen as a reference to the One who Israel praises. The text is an affirmation of an Old Testament commonplace. To wit, that the presence of God dwells in the holy of holies in the Temple at Jerusalem. It in no way indicates that God is somehow made present by our praises.

According to the scholars who have translated this passage in the above versions: (1) The text must be understood in the context of Old Testament Temple worship, and (2) It is God Himself in His presence in the Temple who is called "the Praise (or Glory) of Israel." What's more, we must be cautious about literally applying to Christian worship statements about Old Testament Temple worship. Consider the implications of Jesus' words in John 4 in this regard. "Believe me . . . a time is coming when you will worship the Father

neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

Let me begin by drawing some distinctions about God's presence. These are my own linguistic handles and definitions. I know no other way to communicate about this matter as it can tend to be complex:

- 1) The Reality of God's Presence - refers to when God is *actually* present in or with a person or group of people.
- 2) The Felt-Presence of God - refers to the *perceptible* and *evident* sense or feeling of God's presence.
- 3) The Active Consciousness of God's Presence - refers to when one's mind and heart is actively set upon God.
- 4) The Background Consciousness of God's Presence - refers to the mostly *unnoticed*, but *ever-present* consciousness of God's presence. More on this later.

Now some candid observations on the presence of God that I hope will bring clarity to the issue:

* God is *always* present in the life of the believer . . . whether one actively feels His presence or not. Jesus Christ Himself promised His followers, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." To put it another way, the *reality* of God's presence is always with the believer, and it changes not. It is not dependent on or evidenced by feelings or senses.

* The New Testament is quite loud in its proclamation that God in Christ dwells in every believer by the Holy Spirit. That is an unmovable fact. To state it personally, you dear Christian, are *always* in God's presence! His presence is not something you need to seek. It's not something you need to acquire. The presence of God is not something to be invoked, summoned, or sought after. It is an ever-present reality for all Christians. As Paul said to the Romans, you don't need to go to heaven to bring Christ down. Nor do you need to go to the depths to bring Christ up. *He is in you . . . nearer than your breath is to your mouth.* You have access to Him at any moment (Romans 10).

* There is a great difference between the "felt-presence" of God and the "active consciousness" of His presence. To be conscious of His presence is to be "actively aware" that He is with you and in you. How do you become actively conscious of His presence? By simply putting your attention upon Him. In Paul's words, to be conscious of God's presence is to "set your mind on the Spirit" (Romans 8). Some of the mystics called the active consciousness of God's presence "being *in* His presence." Technically, that's not correct. We are *always* in His presence for He lives in us. Practically, however, to be "in His presence" is simply to turn your attention upon Him.

* One can be actively conscious of God's presence by a simple act of faith. I give you as an example what I call "the analogy of the nose." Your nose is always with you, correct? It is a part of you. It is inseparable from you. However, you can go all day long and never once give attention to your nose. Does this mean that you are no longer in the presence of your nose? No. It simply means that you can be unconscious of it. In the same way, the Lord is always with you. But you can go about your busy day and never once acknowledge Him or think about Him. You can set your mind on earthly things and never once be conscious of the Lord's presence. On the contrary, by setting your mind and heart upon Him, you become actively conscious of His presence.

* The secret to spiritual formation is to be conscious of God's presence as much as possible. How is this? There is a surface element and then there is a deeper spiritual element. I will only address the surface element in this article. Imagine with me that Jesus Christ physically appeared to you right now. And . . . He

went with you wherever you went. That is, you physically saw Him at all times. He was physically with you every waking moment. Would this have any effect on your conduct and behavior? The answer is obviously yes. The disciples were changed simply by being *with* Him! ("And they took note that they had *been with* Jesus.") Brother Lawrence called the active consciousness of God's presence the art of "practicing His presence." For Brother Lawrence, to practice God's presence is to be mindful of Him all day long. It is to converse with Him and turn to Him throughout the day. It would be a kin to drawing my attention to my nose constantly. Although my nose is always with me, I may or may not be conscious of it. It all depends on where my attention is centered.

* A few words about the felt-presence of God. It is possible to have experiences where one is overwhelmed with the "feeling" or "sense" of God's nearness, His majesty and power, His love, His favor, and His union and oneness with the believer. To put it another way, it is possible to have a "sense" or "feeling" of His presence. However, I am of the strong opinion that we should never "seek" for such feelings. Nor should we make the profound mistake of employing such feelings as a gauge or measure of spirituality or spiritual formation. Permit me to speak personally for a moment. In my own life, I have had numerous occasions where I felt overwhelmed with God's love, grace, and nearness to the point of weeping profusely. (I used to be embarrassed by this, but I've learned to just accept it. It's how I typically react when I'm overwhelmed by the Lord's love.) I've had times when I felt God's power so strong that I *physically* couldn't contain it. I literally felt that I was going to explode. I've also known times when I literally "smelled" the fragrance of His presence and other times where I had ecstatic experiences too deep for words. (I cannot explain any of these experiences rationally by the way.) However . . . *none* of these experiences were a measure of my spiritual condition. Nor did they display God's sentiments toward me at a particular time, as though His feelings for me changed with the wind or were based upon my conduct. Further, I have learned not to *seek* such experiences. If they come, they come. If I never have them again, it doesn't change the fact that I'm *always* in His presence, and He is *always* with me. His love and favor toward me remain unchanged. They cannot be altered for they are not based on my work, but upon the work of Another. Further, I have learned to delight in the quiet rest that comes from just turning my attention upon Him . . . whether that be in a time of quiet stillness before Him . . . or it be it throughout the day where I'm constantly in fellowship with Him. This discovery is not novel. It is echoed in most of the writings of the mystics. A number of them have written rather strongly that to seek "spiritual" delights is just as harmful as seeking "worldly" delights.

* In the 16th century, a Spanish monk who was very short (he was only five feet tall) known as John of the Cross wrote extensively on the Lord's presence. John became a priest at 25 years of age. He wrote his best-known books between the ages of 35 and 37. In one of his books, he described what he called "the dark night of the soul." This experience is when God removes the "sense" of His presence from a believer's life. Some Christians believe this is an exotically rare experience that few have. Others believe it's much more common. According to John of the Cross, "the dark night" is when God tosses out the moral compass from a believer's life. The Christian feels as though God simply does not exist! I have no desire to expound on the dark night except to illustrate one point. Consider this analogy. During the course of the day, you are virtually always unconscious of the presence of your nose. The exception is when you have a sniffle, a nose itch, a nose bleed, or when you look in the mirror. But if you were to have surgery and your nose was removed, you would certainly be conscious that something essential was missing! And that consciousness would remain for quite a long time. Point: There is something that I call "the background consciousness of God's presence." If God were to remove this background consciousness, you would know it immediately! The background consciousness of God's presence is largely undetected and unnoticed by us Christians. We don't notice it for one simple reason: *It's always present*. It's not dissimilar to why you don't notice the ring you wear on your finger or the watch you wear on your wrist every day . . . you don't notice it because it's *always* there. However, if the consciousness of God's ever-abiding presence were removed, it would register heavily upon us. So in one regard, we are always conscious of the Divine presence in that we are *used* to it. The light of God is *always* on. But it looms in the background. At another level, we can be *actively* conscious of His presence . . . we can be centered on His presence in the foreground. . . we can be aware of it . . . and

attentive to it. Again, consider the analogy of the nose.

At this point you might ask: *How do I become actively conscious of God's presence?* There are many ways. I am presently writing a book that will discuss a number of them practically that I have gleaned from various ancient spiritual instructors and that I have built into my own life over the last decade. (A note to the curious: I've only written two rough draft chapters for the book. But it's progressing.)

For the purposes of this small essay, I shall introduce you to one of the simplest ways which will also help make my overriding point.

At this very moment, turn your attention on the Lord who is always with you and who is always in you. Open your mouth and say, "Lord, I am thankful that I belong to you and am known by you. You dwell in me and are always with me."

At that very moment, you are *in* His presence . . . at that very moment, you are *conscious* of His presence . . . at that very moment, you are *practicing* His presence . . . or whatever other name you wish to assign to it. This is true regardless of what your senses or feelings may say. *God's presence is deeper than any human sensation or perception.*

Continue this simple practice the rest of your life, and you have found the wellspring and mainstay of spiritual formation.

End Note:

In connection with one of the closing sentences of this article, "*God's presence is deeper than any human sensation or perception,*" I would like to add a few words about three people who Frank Valdez introduced me to. I think it will prove helpful to help unearth the unhealthy roots of "the felt-presence of God" sacred cow.

Meister Eckhart was a 13th century German mystic who is generally regarded as the fountainhead of "Rhineland mysticism". He taught that God was beyond all conceptualization. This conceptualization included the "concept" of god itself. Meister pointed people to the "God beyond god", i.e., the God who exceeds any concept we have of Him. This means that God cannot be possessed as an idea or an experience or a feeling. Our knowledge of Him is a poor reflex of His knowledge of us. He graciously owns us as His redeemed creations and we should see ourselves as being His rather than seeing Him in any sense as being ours as an object or possession.

Thomas Merton was very influenced by Eckhart. Merton added a social and historical dimension to Eckhart's critique of religion. According to Merton, modern people define themselves by what they can buy and own. We want to "own" God as if He were another consumer good which adds to our sense of self-worth as an especially valuable possession. *But God cannot be owned because He is not an object.*

The great Christocentric theologian Karl Barth also said that God is never an object. He is never the passive recipient of our investigation. God is always the revealing Subject who reveals Himself to us and is knowable only in faith.

[Note: *Slaughtering Sacred Cows Parts 1 and 2* can be found at www.ptmin.org/articles.htm]

If this message ministered to you, share it with a friend!

Bloggers, E-ziners, and Webmasters, you may publish this article on your web site in its entirety. Please do not edit it.

April Book Special

This April we are offering the following two specials for **USA CUSTOMERS ONLY** or for those who can supply a **USA SHIPPING ADDRESS**.

Special 1: Order KNOWING CHRIST TOGETHER: VOLUME 1 (the book) **with** KNOWING CHRIST TOGETHER: VOLUME 2 (the 4-CD set) for only **\$25.00**. (The CD set alone is regularly priced at \$22.) To order, go to www.ptmin.org/knowingspecial.htm

Special 2: Order our 5-Book Special and get *Rethinking the Will of God* FREE. Simply order the 5-book special at www.ptmin.org/specials.htm and we'll throw in the free book.

If you are not already signed up to receive these monthly messages directly from us, send an email to PTMsubscribe@aol.com and type "subscribe" in the subject line.

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[*The Emergent Church Movement*](#)

[*Items from the Lighthouse Trails Research Project Newsletter*](#)

The "House Church Movement"

Four Ways Christians Are Deceived

Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel

Gene Edwards articles

[Return to Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning](#)

<http://procinwarn.com>

From: Jim Baumgaertel [jimbaum@procinwarn.com]
Sent: Saturday, April 08, 2006 2:43 PM
To: PTMIN
Cc: Editor@LighthouseTrails. Com
Subject: RE: April 2006 Newsletter: Slaughtering Sacred Cows - The Felt-Presence of God

Frank,

Greetings in the love of Jesus Christ. I have been an advocate of house churches for about eight years. For most of that time I have been aware of your name as a leader among some segments of the house church movement.

I just became aware today through your email newsletter that you have been drawn into and are promoting among Christians the "contemplative prayer" concepts and mystical techniques. I believe this is a grave mistake and represents serious deception among professing Christians. I encourage you to reject this ancient Catholic mysticism as being of the same root as all pagan mysticism, which I believe draws a believer away from a pure devotion to Jesus Christ according to the New Testament. The contemplative techniques ultimately promote a different Jesus and a different gospel.

I have cc'd Lighthouse Trails on this email. I pray that you and they would consider a discussion to reason together out of the scriptures about these things. I will also be posting my concerns on my web site since it is clear that your endorsement of contemplative techniques is already so public. I pray that I will someday be able to report a change of view on your part about these matters.

Sincerely,

Jim Baumgaertel
Proclamation, Invitation, & Warning
<http://procinwarn.com>

-----Original Message-----

From: PTMIN [mailto:PTMIN@aol.com]
Sent: Friday, April 07, 2006 7:57 PM

To: jimbaum@procinwarn.com

Subject: April 2006 Newsletter: Slaughtering Sacred Cows - The Felt-Presence of God

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You can order Al Dager's book at his website ([see the link below](#)). The book is titled: The World Christian Movement - A Great Delusion Leading to the Religio-Political State of the Anti-Christ. I consider Al's writings on this topic to be of great importance in warning those who profess to be followers of the Lord Jesus about clever deceptions in these last days that are preparing the world for a [counterfeit](#).

<http://www.swordpublishers.com/Book-Index.htm>



Media Spotlight

"A Biblical analysis of religious and secular media"

Al and Jean Dager

P.O. Box 290
Redmond, WA 98073-0290

[Back to the description of the "World Christian Movement" article](#)

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<http://procinwarn.com>

The information on this page is excerpted from the site (9/3/05):

"New Thought Movement Home Page"

"The Practice of the Presence of God for Practical Purposes"

This site is currently not available so for your information I have provided quotes below. I do not endorse this page but provide it as a source to recognize disguised versions of New Thought that have come into Evangelical Christianity. Jim B.

Some Major Families of New Thought and Overall Organizations Concerned with All of Them

Unity/Divine Science-Related New Thought Denominations and Outlooks	Overall Organizations	Religious Science-Related New Thought Denominations and Outlooks
<p>New Thought Fillmore-style: the Unity family of beliefs and organizations Unity School of Christianity and Assn. of Unity Churches, incl. directory of member churches; Unity-Progressive Council; World Federation of Unity Churches; and Universal Foundation for Better Living (derived from Unity, by way of C.U.T.)</p>	<p>International New Thought Alliance (INTA) INTA Archives New Thought History Chart 2003 INTA CONGRESS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS ">July 2003 Congress, Phoenix, AZ</p>	<p>New Thought Holmes-style: the Religious Science (Science of Mind) family of beliefs and organizations United Church of Religious Science; Religious Science International; Independent Science of Mind; Global Religious Science Ministries; Affiliated New Thought Network (derived from Religious Science) Process Science of Mind</p>
<p>New Thought Cramer and Brooks Divine Science style: here here here here here here here</p>	<p>Society for the Study of Metaphysical Religion (SSMR)</p>	<p>New Thought Taniguchi-style: Seicho-No-Ie</p>

The depth of green background color of the denominations listed above corresponds to the order of their founding.

Process New Thought--not an organization, but a combination of traditional New Thought techniques and a new understanding of the metaphysical foundation of New Thought, offering new opportunities for most wisely engaging in co-creation with God. See the next section below and the links in the **section with this color** to numerous writings by **Alan Anderson and Deb Whitehouse**. See **Process Philosophy and the New Thought Movement**, as well as **A Practical Spirituality . . .**, and **Nuggets . . .** for more details. See also the type of New Thought known as **Process Science of Mind**.

The material given above partly summarizes information given below; see there for links to other groupings, independent organizations, individuals, writings, and other resources related to New Thought. Either **scroll** through the site **or go directly** to the following: [brief introduction](#) | [overall organizations](#) | [Brad Jensen's conference system](#) | [directories of denominational and various independent organizations, books, services, coming events, etc.](#) | [periodicals](#) | [conventionally published articles available online](#) | [various WWW writings](#) | [Anderson and Whitehouse books, monograph, and other writings on New Thought in general and on the metaphysical foundations of New Thought](#) | [listserv](#) | [New Thought-influenced organizations](#) | [Philosophy Corner](#) | [other resources](#)

BRIEF INTRODUCTION

The New Thought movement--not to be confused with New Age--is a more than century-old, practically oriented spirituality that promotes fullness of all aspects of living, through constructive thinking, meditating, and other ways of realizing the presence of God. New Thought includes **Unity, Religious Science (Science of Mind), Divine Science, and other groups and individuals**. It was recognized as "The Religion of Healthy-Mindedness" by William James in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. New Thought involves habitual God--good--aligned mental self-discipline. It has no one creed, but has affinities to idealistic philosophical traditions of all ages and places. It is mostly Christian in background, but has become allied to various religions. New Thought continues to develop conceptually, educationally, and organizationally.

Because New Thought affirms **freedom of belief** of each person, New Thinkers cover a broad range of theological positions, from traditional **supernaturalistic theism** (God largely outside the world) at one extreme, to **pantheism** (all is God) at the other, with the newer **panentheism** (all is IN God) as a centrist, mediating position, rapidly gaining supporters in many theological quarters. In common with most other religions and spiritualities, most forms of New Thought take for granted the existence of

continuing **substance**; however, the **Process New Thought** represented by the [Anderson and Whitehouse](#) writings linked below accepts a process understanding recognizing experience, process, living quanta of energy, and the interactions of these many minds, as the nature of reality. This Process New Thought presents **process, panentheism, and a personalism** recognizing God as the supreme, not anthropomorphically conceived, person as essential to an adequate New Thought. The latest expression of process thinking within New Thought is [Process Science of Mind](#). An earlier non-pantheistic interpretation of New Thought was advocated by [Horatio W. Dresser](#).

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OVERALL ORGANIZATIONS RELATED TO NEW THOUGHT

[The International New Thought Alliance](#): the umbrella organization connecting many New Thought groups and individuals. Includes links to directories of local group members, districts, and officials of INTA.

[Society for the Study of Metaphysical Religion](#): the academic organization concerned primarily with the New Thought movement.

NEW THOUGHT SCHOOL EMPHASIZING LIBERAL ARTS AS AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF NEW THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

[Emma Curtis Hopkins College and Theological Seminary](#), Clearwater, Florida; has external degree programs and emphasizes academic excellence.

SOME ORGANIZATIONS INFLUENCED BY NEW THOUGHT

[Guideposts Online](#), with its Outreach Division, including the Peale Center, promoting the thought of [Norman Vincent Peale](#), who acknowledged his indebtedness to New Thought.

[Crystal Cathedral](#) of [Robert Schuller](#), whose "possibility thinking" was inspired by Peale's "positive thinking."

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The Lie of the Serpent in the Garden of Eden

The Foundation of Mormon Doctrine

"...ye shall be as gods"

In the Garden of Eden, Satan, in the form of the Serpent, deceived Eve. She and Adam disobeyed God and ate of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. This was rebellion against God. This was sin. This was an evil act that brought death into the world. This event was the beginning of great evil and deception and rebellion among mankind throughout history continuing through the time of Noah, The Tower of Babel, and culminating in the rule of the Anti-Christ prior to Jesus' return. [See Genesis 3:1-4:1](#).

And yet this event is exalted by "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints" (LDS), the Mormons, as the very foundation of their doctrine. They teach it was actually good that Adam and Eve disobeyed God in that situation.

The Bible teaches that God gave Adam and Eve two commandments:

1. Be fruitful and multiply. (Genesis 1:28)
2. Do not eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. (Genesis 2:17)

The LDS religious system teaches that the greater commandment was the first, "Be fruitful and multiply" because they see it as the foundation of their doctrine of "Eternal Progression" where human beings can become gods. See quotes from the [Book of Mormon](#) and [Mormon Doctrine](#). Associated with Eternal Progression is their doctrine of eternal marriage and "plural marriage" (currently disavowed by the mainstream LDS).

They teach that it was a great and noble thing that Adam and Eve disobeyed the lesser command in order to fulfill the greater command. But this is a twisting of God's word, the Bible! There is no indication in the Bible that they had to disobey one to fulfill the other. They could have obeyed God in every commandment.

Nothing in the Bible calls the rebellion in Eden anything but an evil that the Lord Jesus Christ would redeem us from (Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 45-47; 2 Corinthians 11:3). The Bible in Revelation 12:9, speaks of, "...that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world..."

Instead, Mormonism joins a great company of pagan and occult traditions that promote the Serpent's lie and the "godhood" of Eve as good. It is no coincidence that the LDS system is promoting the very lie that deceives the whole world through the centuries. See the articles on this site: [Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, & the Tower of Babel](#) and [About The Matrix Reloaded](#).

Therefore, I appeal to you, if you are an LDS member, to see the corrupt foundation of the LDS religious system. I encourage you to be an Acts 17:11 Berean, and compare everything with the Bible, repent of your sin and trust in the real Jesus in terms of the Biblical Gospel of grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

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Quotes from the [Book of Mormon](#)

"And because he [the devil] had fallen from heaven, and had become miserable forever, he sought also the misery of all mankind. Wherefore, he said unto Eve, yea, even that old serpent, who is the devil, who is the father of all lies, wherefore he said: Partake of the forbidden fruit, and ye shall not die, but ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil.

"And after Adam and Eve had partaken of the forbidden fruit they were driven out of the garden of Eden, to till the earth. And they have brought forth children; yea, even the family of all the earth. And the

days of the children of men were prolonged, according to the will of God, that they might repent while in the flesh; wherefore, their state became a state of probation, and their time was lengthened, according to the commandments which the Lord God gave unto the children of men. For he gave commandment that all men must repent; for he showed unto all men that they were lost, because of the transgression of their parents.

"And now, behold, **if Adam had not transgressed he would not have fallen, but he would have remained in the garden of Eden. And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end. And they would have had no children; wherefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin. But behold, all things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things. Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy.** And the Messiah cometh in the fulness of time, that he may redeem the children of men from the fall. And because that they are redeemed from the fall they have become free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves and not to be acted upon, save it be by the punishment of the law at the great and last day, according to the commandments which God hath given." (2 Nephi 2:18-26 in Book of Mormon)

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Quotes from Mormon Doctrine by Bruce R. McConkie (1915-1985) a member of the LDS "Quorum of the Twelve Apostles".

"Adam's great part in the plan of redemption was to fall from the immortal state in which he first existed on earth and thus bring mortality and death into the world." p. 17

"Eve was the first woman... Strictly speaking, it was she who first partook of the forbidden fruit, with the resultant change in the physical body from a state of immortality to mortality. Adam thereafter partook in order to comply with the command to multiply and fill the earth with posterity...One of the most perfect summaries of the plan of salvation ever given fell from the lips of Eve: 'Were it not for our transgression,' she said, 'we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our

redemption. and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient,' (Moses 5:11 [in the Mormon Pearl of Great Price]) Indeed, Eve is a joint-participant with Adam in all his ministry, and will inherit jointly with him all the blessings appertaining to his high state of exaltation." p. 242

"According to the foreordained plan, Adam was to fall; that is, "in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things" (2 Ne. 2:24 [in the Book of Mormon]), Adam was to introduce mortality and all that attends it, so that the opportunity for eternal progression and perfection might be offered to all the spirit children of the Father." p. 268

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Genesis 3:1-4:1 in the Bible

"Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

"And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid,

because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

"And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

"And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

"And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

"And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

"And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD."

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<http://procinwarn.com>

Discussion with members of the Baha'i Faith

Ravi's first message	Bill's first message
My reply	My replies
Ravi's second message	Bill's second message
My reply	Bill's attachment
	My reply

Ravi - first message

Hello,

I was doing some research on Jesus's virgin birth and came across your page on the Bahaí faith. I request that you remove the paragraph stating:

"Bahatism rejects the Christian concept of the trinity, the deity of Jesus Christ, his virgin birth, his substitutionary atonement for the sins of the world, and his bodily resurrection. Bahatism also rejects salvation by grace through faith apart from works and they reject the infallible authority of the Bible as the unique Word of God."

In the Bahaí writings it states:

"It would be sacrilege for a Baha'i to believe that the parents of Jesus were illegally married and that the latter was consequently of an illegal union. Such a possibility cannot be even conceived by a believer who recognizes the high station of Mary and the Divine Prophethood of Jesus Christ. It is this same false accusation which the people of His Day attributed to Mary that Baha'u'llah indirectly repudiated in the Iqan. The only alternative therefore is to admit that the birth of Jesus has been miraculous. The operation of miracles is not necessarily irrational or illogical. It does by no means constitute a limitation of the Omnipotence of God. The belief in the possibilities of miracles, on the contrary, implies that God's power is beyond any limitation whatsoever. For it is only logical to believe that the Creator, Who is the sole Author of all the laws operating in the universe, is above them and can, therefore, if He deems it necessary, alter them at His Own Will. We, as humans, cannot possibly attempt to read His Mind, and to fully grasp His Wisdom. Mystery is therefore an inseparable part of true religion, and as such, should be recognized by the believers."

Also if you could please replace the word "greatest" with "latest" in the sentence "This Baha'u'llah is considered the greatest" ; and remove Confucius from the following list.

thanks,

Ravi

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Dear Ravi, (Reply to first message)

Thanks for providing your input on my Baha'i article. Are you an adherent of Baha'i faith? Is there any other virgin births besides Jesus' that the writings of Baha'i recognize?

I understand why you would question the part of that paragraph on the virgin birth. But why would you want me to delete the rest of that paragraph? I don't think that Baha'i considers Jesus to be uniquely God in human flesh who is, alone, the way to the Father, as is the Christian understanding.

As to "greatest": I've heard Baha'i faith people sing songs about Baha'u'llah, but have you ever heard them sing songs about Jesus?

Why do you want me to delete Confucius? What would the Baha'i view of Confucius be?

Thank you for your help on these issues.

Jim Baumgaertel

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Ravi - Second message

Hi! Thanks for taking the time to reply!

> Thanks for providing your input on my Baha'i article. Are you an adherent of Baha'i faith?

The short answer: Yes The long answer: I'm a student who is now going through a process Baha'i's dub "Independent Investigation for the Truth" in which one approaches and investigates all other religions with an open heart. I was asked

by a former teacher of mine to read the book "Jesus Among Other Gods" as a defense for Christ being the absolute eternal truth, which is how I came across your page.

> Is there any other virgin births besides Jesus' that the writings of Bahai recognize?

I do not believe so. My understanding of the Bahá'í belief is that god chose that method of conception for Christ to challenge the thinking of the people of that time -- but did not feel a need to do so otherwise.

> I understand why you would question the part of that paragraph on the virgin birth. But why would you want me to delete the rest of that paragraph?

I do not believe the rest of the paragraph is accurate either, though I am still learning. If you would like to determine the stance for yourself, a selections from the Bahá'í writings on the Trinity can be found at:

<http://www.ibiblio.org/Bahai/Texts/EN/SAQ/SAQ-27.html>

Mainly the paragraph didn't seem to fit with the rest of the article's flow of "Bahá'í stress the Unity of mankind" which is definately an accurate point -- though to be honest I don't see how that is a bad thing.

> I don't think that Bahai considers Jesus to be uniquely God in human flesh who is, alone, the way to the Father, as is the Christian understanding.

I know that Bahá'ís believe that *when* Christ said "No one comes to the Father except through me." he was, and that the Bible is upheld as from God. If any Bahá'í were living in the year 100AD they would definately be Christian.

> As to "greatest": I've heard Bahai faith people sing songs about Baha'u'llah, but have you ever heard them sing songs about Jesus?

Yes, but they are rare -- I guess the parrallel question would be how many songs are there about Moses in Church, relative to Christ? I'm in a performing arts group that does one dance extolling Christ, but, yes, in general the belief is that Baha'u'llah provides the message for this day and age. Here is the explanation I wrote my teacher: Bahá'ís believe there is a single path to god, however that path changes as time passes and mankind is able to hear/absorb and the prior message. Much that Moses was at one time the path, then Christ, then Mohammad, then The Bab, and now Bahá'u'lláh. Sort of like how my 6th grade teacher would say something like "it's impossible to divide by a reciprocal" -- and then you'd get to 9th grade and they'd say "we're going to learn how to divide by a reciprocal!" and you'd scream "but you can't do that" ... and then you'd learn it for everything but zero. Then you'd get to college and they'd say something like "Even though we told you it's impossible to divide by zero, now we're going to learn how!" and you respond "I quit. I'm majoring in Communications and Linguistics you big eggnog."

So basically the belief was that Christ was like the 11th grade teacher for humanity, except he did not use maps and crayons to get his point across. Mohammad the 12th grade teacher (the end of the high-school teachers), the Bab is kind of the College Orientation Councillor and Bahá'u'lláh the first College teacher (huzzah!).

While the message the later teachers (manifestations) bring I guess could be considered greater -- it is not because they themselves are any "greater", but rather their students are more apt and have the foundation put in place from the prior messenger.

> Why do you want me to delete Confucius? What would > the Baha'i view of Confucius be?

To be honest, I do not know. I don't think he's held as bad or anything, but I've never seen him regarded at the same level as Moses, Jesus, Baha'u'llah, Muhammad or being divine. Basically it just seemed your point was demonstrated well without him -- and placing him in that list is probably incorrect.

Where can I find more about the passage "One-World Government, a One-World economic system, and a One-World Religion headed by the Anti-Christ." ... I saw it a long time ago, but dismissed it as referring to Joseph Stalin or somebody. I still don't think it refers to the Bahá'í Faith, in that we don't really prescribe an economic system or advocate one person running the world; but it sounds interesting.

> Thank you for your help on these issues.

Likewise from you,

Ravi

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Dear Ravi (reply to second message)

I do want to correct items of fact in my article. And on more subjective issues of analysis or conclusions, I will consider your input. Thanks again for your feedback.

You wrote:

<Where can I find more about the passage "One-World Government, a One-World economic system, and a One-World Religion headed by the Anti-Christ.">

Revelation 13 in the New Testament speaks to the political, economic, and religious power of the Beast.

You wrote:

<Mainly the paragraph didn't seem to fit with the rest of the article's flow of "Baha'i stress the Unity of mankind" which is definately an accurate point -- though to be honest I don't see how that is a bad thing.>

To begin to understand why a follower of Jesus should be concerned of visions of "unity", please consider the article,

below, from my website.

Lucifer, The Garden of Eden, & The Tower of Babel

I'm eager to discuss all these issues further if you would like.

Jim Baumgaertel

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Bill - first message

[From Bill]

Bahatism rejects the Christian concept of the trinity [The Baha'i Faith teaches that God reveals Himself <the Father> via the Holy Spirit <the Holy Spirit> manifested in the perfect "mirror" of Jesus and the other Manifestations <the Son>. This is the trinity]

the deity of Jesus Christ, [for Baha'is, God does reveal all of His attributes in Jesus, and therefore, Jesus is God because we see nothing save God's reality operating in Him]

his virgin birth, [you are incorrect; Baha'is believe in Jesus's virgin birth. "With regard to your question concerning the Virgin Birth of Jesus; on this point, as on several others, the Bahá'í teachings are in full agreement with the doctrines of the Catholic Church. In the Kitáb-i-Iqán (Book of Certitude) page 56, and in a few other Tablets still unpublished, Bahá'u'lláh confirms, however indirectly, the Catholic conception of the Virgin Birth. Also `Abdu'l-Bahá in `Some Answered Questions', Chap. 12, page 73, explicitly states that Christ found existence through the spirit of God which statement necessarily implies, when reviewed in the light of the text, that Jesus was not the son of Joseph." -- Shoghi Effendi, Directives from the Guardian.

"What science calls a virgin birth we do not associate with that of Jesus Christ, which we believe to have been a miracle and a sign of His Prophethood. In this matter we are in entire agreement with the most orthodox church views." -- Shoghi Effendi, High Endeavours.]

his substitutionary atonement for the sins of the world, [you are incorrect, Baha'is believe in Jesus's substitutionary atonement; His atonement was not the only one: "That which thou hast heard concerning Abraham, the Friend of the All-Merciful, is the truth, and no doubt is there about it. The Voice of God commanded Him to offer up ... a sacrifice, so that His steadfastness in the Faith of God and His detachment from all else but Him may be demonstrated unto men. The

purpose of God, moreover, was to sacrifice him as a ransom for the sins and iniquities of all the peoples of the earth. This same honor, Jesus, the Son of Mary, besought the one true God, exalted be His name and glory, to confer upon Him. For the same reason was Husayn offered up as a sacrifice by Muhammad, the Apostle of God. No man can ever claim to have comprehended the nature of the hidden and manifold grace of God; none can fathom His all-embracing mercy. Such hath been the perversity of men and their transgressions, so grievous have been the trials that have afflicted the Prophets of God and their chosen ones, that all mankind deserveth to be tormented and to perish. God's hidden and most loving providence, however, hath, through both visible and invisible agencies, protected and will continue to protect it from the penalty of its wickedness. Ponder this in thine heart, that the truth may be revealed unto thee, and be thou steadfast in His path." -- Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, pp. 75-76]

and his bodily resurrection. [Note that 1 Corinthians says "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." Resurrection is of the spiritual body. Just as Jesus Christ lives and reigns forever and ever, so also do the other Messengers of God, whose spiritual bodies never die, and in fact exert far greater influence than when their physical bodies walked the earth. Baha'is do not deny the resurrection]

Baháism also rejects salvation by grace through faith apart from works [faith is absolutely essential first; works come second: "The first duty prescribed by God for His servants is the recognition of Him Who is the Dayspring of His Revelation and the Fountain of His laws, Who representeth the Godhead in both the Kingdom of His Cause and the world of creation. Whoso achieveth this duty hath attained unto all good; and whoso is deprived thereof hath gone astray, though he be the author of every righteous deed. It behoveth every one who reacheth this most sublime station, this summit of transcendent glory, to observe every ordinance of Him Who is the Desire of the world. These twin duties are inseparable. Neither is acceptable without the other. Thus hath it been decreed by Him Who is the Source of Divine inspiration. "-- Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Aqdas: 1)]

and they reject the infallible authority of the Bible as the unique Word of God. [No Baha'i rejects the Bible's authority; it is not, however, the only Word revealed by the One True God and Creator of the Universe, whose hands cannot be chained up by any human conception of what He is permitted to do: "Leaders of religion, in every age, have hindered their people from attaining the shores of eternal salvation, inasmuch as they held the reins of authority in their mighty grasp. Some for the lust of leadership, others through want of knowledge and understanding, have been the cause of the deprivation of the people. By their sanction and authority, every Prophet of God hath drunk from the chalice of sacrifice, and winged His flight unto the heights of glory. What unspeakable cruelties they that have occupied the seats of authority and learning have inflicted upon the true Monarchs of the world, those Gems of divine virtue!" -- Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Iqan, p. 15]

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William, (replies to first message)

#1

William,

I'm very grateful for your efforts to correct my article. I want to be as precise as I can in comparing what the Bible teaches with what Baha'i Faith teaches.

You are a follower of the Baha'i Faith, of course?

What I want to show is that the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the Bible is mutually exclusive with teachings of Baha'i. You probably consider them to be compatible, is that right?

Hope to hear from you again.

Jim Baumgaertel

#2

You wrote:

[The Baha'i Faith teaches that God reveals Himself <the Father> via the Holy Spirit <the Holy Spirit> manifested in the perfect "mirror" of Jesus and the other Manifestations <the Son>. This is the trinity] the deity of Jesus Christ, [for Baha'is, God does reveal all of His attributes in Jesus, and therefore, Jesus is God because we see nothing save God's reality operating in Him]

Do you believe that Jesus is uniquely God in human form? I understood that you considered Jesus one of the Babs, like Muhammed or Buddha. Is Jesus God but Muhammed and Buddha are not?

Jim

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Dear Mr. Baumgaertel, (Bill's second message)

I apologize for being so long in responding to your previous emails. As a rather active professional, husband, father, and Baha'i, there is plenty of work and not enough time for it all.

You wrote: "I'm very grateful for your efforts to correct my article. I want to be as precise as I can in comparing what the Bible teaches with what Baha'i Faith teaches... What I want to show is that the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the Bible is mutually exclusive with teachings of Baha'i. You probably consider them to be compatible, is that right?"

And you also wrote: "Do you believe that Jesus is uniquely God in human form? I understood that you considered Jesus one of the Babs, like Muhammed or Buddha. Is Jesus God but Muhammed and Buddha are not?"

Because you start from the conclusion that the Gospel and Baha'i teachings are mutually exclusive, you begin with a disability that renders the possibility of your making an unprejudiced comparison rather slim. I therefore am not intending debate the compatibility/incompatibility of Baha'i teachings with what you consider to be the correct teachings of the Bible. I really want to make sure that whatever you seek to demonstrate is at least providing reference to the actual teachings of the Baha'i Faith, and not a "straw man." There are also what I would call basic courtesies that are helpful in addressing another religion (even one that you believe to be false).

So, initially I would say that "Bahatism" is not a correct term, although it has often been used in the past by those who are not Baha'is, usually in a somewhat disparaging way. While the word "Bahatism" occurs in English dictionaries, I would suggest avoiding it. The religion is the Baha'i Faith or the Baha'i religion.

Baha'u'llah's Glad-Tidings is that the one True God incarnates His attributes in a series of divine Manifestations Whom He periodically sends to the world to reveal one ancient faith. We do not call these messengers of God "Babs." This notion appears in Winfred Corduan's book *Neighboring Faiths: A Christian Introduction to World Religions* (InterVarsity Press, 1998), but it is fallacious. The term Bab means "gate" and is the title of the forerunner of Baha'u'llah. We sometimes use the word Prophet (capitalized) to refer to the Manifestations, but Prophet only refers to one function of a Manifestation. Corduan's book contains a lot of serious errors, particularly about Baha'i history, which I will only go into if you ever want to pursue that topic. A common belief of many Christians is that Baha'is demote Jesus to just one among a bunch of lesser prophets, whereas the reality is that all of the great divine Founders are God's Manifestations, each with a specific mission and uniqueness, yet all together one in divine purpose. From the perspective of human beings, each of these Manifestations embodies the fullness of divine attributes, and therefore is God in the only way we can know Him - through His attributes. This is just as with a perfect mirror reflecting the sun; we look at the mirror and say "There is the sun." The sun has not descended into the mirror, but the sun's attributes of heat and light are perfectly visible. This is what Baha'is mean by Jesus', Buddha's, Muhammad's, or Baha'u'llah's divinity.

Thus we have the following authoritative Baha'i statement about Jesus and Christianity:

'As to the position of Christianity, let it be stated without any hesitation or equivocation that its divine origin is unconditionally acknowledged, that the Sonship and Divinity of Jesus Christ are fearlessly asserted, that the divine inspiration of the Gospel is fully recognized, that the reality of the mystery of the Immaculacy of the Virgin Mary is confessed, and the primacy of Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, is upheld and defended. The Founder of the Christian Faith is designated by Bahá'u'lláh as the "Spirit of God," is proclaimed as the One Who "appeared out of the breath of the Holy Ghost," and is even extolled as the "Essence of the Spirit." His mother is described as "that veiled and immortal, that most beautiful, countenance," and the station of her Son eulogized as a "station which hath been exalted above the imaginings of all that dwell on earth," whilst Peter is recognized as one from whom God has caused "the mysteries of wisdom and of utterance to flow out of his mouth." "Know thou," Bahá'u'lláh has moreover testified, "that when the Son of Man yielded up His breath to God, the whole creation wept with a great weeping. By sacrificing Himself, however, a fresh

capacity was infused into all created things. Its evidences, as witnessed in all the peoples of the earth, are now manifest before thee. The deepest wisdom which the sages have uttered, the profoundest learning which any mind hath unfolded, the arts which the ablest hands have produced, the influence exerted by the most potent of rulers, are but manifestations of the quickening power released by His transcendent, His all-pervasive and resplendent Spirit. We testify that when He came into the world, He shed the splendor of His glory upon all created things. Through Him the leper recovered from the leprosy of perversity and ignorance. Through Him the unchaste and wayward were healed. Through His power, born of Almighty God, the eyes of the blind were opened and the soul of the sinner sanctified.... He it is Who purified the world. Blessed is the man who, with a face beaming with light, hath turned towards Him."

'Indeed, the essential prerequisites of admittance into the Bahá'í fold of Jews, Zoroastrians, Hindus, Buddhists, and the followers of other ancient faiths, as well as of agnostics and even atheists, is the wholehearted and unqualified acceptance by them all of the divine origin of both Islám and Christianity, of the Prophetic functions of both Muhammad and Jesus Christ, of the legitimacy of the institution of the Imamate, and of the primacy of St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles. Such are the central, the solid, the incontrovertible principles that constitute the bedrock of Bahá'í belief, which the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh is proud to acknowledge, which its teachers proclaim, which its apologists defend, which its literature disseminates, which its summer schools expound, and which the rank and file of its followers attest by both word and deed.' (Shoghi Effendi, *The Promised Day is Come*, pp. 109-110)

God does not change. Human beings, as their societies change, have different requirements in different times and places. Just as a physician does not prescribe only one medicine for all illnesses, so the Divine Physician prescribes the spiritual medicine for each era of human history. We call this "progressive revelation" -- a phrase not at all unfamiliar to 19th century Christian dispensationalist theology, which holds that God prescribes steadily progressing means of salvation in each "dispensation" (the best-selling Schofield study Bible is the most well-known example of this dispensationalist soteriology). Every religion has statements that appear "exclusivist," in which the religion's central figure states that He is the sole way to God or divine truth. The Baha'i tenet is that each individual Manifestation is the only way to God at the time He makes the statement and for the period of His dispensation. Because all of the Manifestations also have a station of essential unity, then each is also the only way for all time, because they are all one. The Bab and Baha'u'llah make clear that those who reject the next Manifestation when He appears have also rejected the earlier Manifestation in Whom they claimed to believe: 'Verily it is incumbent upon you to recognize your Lord at the time of His manifestation, that haply ye may not enter into negation, and that, ere a Prophet is raised by God, ye may find yourselves securely established upon the sea of affirmation. For if a Prophet cometh to you from God and ye fail to walk in His Way, God will, thereupon, transform your light into fire. Take heed then that perchance ye may, through the grace of God and His signs, be enabled to redeem your souls.' (Selections from the Writings of the Bab, p. 147). 'Be thou assured in thyself that verily, he who turns away from this Beauty hath also turned away from the Messengers of the past and showeth pride towards God from all eternity to all eternity.' (Baha'u'llah, "Tablet of Ahmad")

The Manifestations are one in essence, but each has an individual mission. Each Manifestation is the return of the Ones that went before (not in the sense of reincarnation, which is fallacious), but in the sense of Their being the complete reflection of the attributes of the One and Only God.

'And when the days of Moses were ended, and the light of Jesus, shining forth from the dayspring of the Spirit, encompassed the world, all the people of Israel arose in protest against Him. They clamoured that He Whose advent the Bible had foretold must needs promulgate and fulfil the laws of Moses, whereas this youthful Nazarene, who laid claim to the station of the divine Messiah, had annulled the law of divorce and of the sabbath day--the most weighty of all the laws

of Moses. Moreover, what of the signs of the Manifestation yet to come? These people of Israel are even unto the present day still expecting that Manifestation which the Bible hath foretold! How many Manifestations of Holiness, how many Revealers of the light everlasting, have appeared since the time of Moses, and yet Israel, wrapt in the densest veils of satanic fancy and false imaginings, is still expectant that the idol of her own handiwork will appear with such signs as she herself hath conceived! Thus hath God laid hold of them for their sins, hath extinguished in them the spirit of faith, and tormented them with the flames of the nethermost fire. And this for no other reason except that Israel refused to apprehend the meaning of such words as have been revealed in the Bible concerning the signs of the coming Revelation. As she never grasped their true significance, and, to outward seeming, such events never came to pass, she, therefore, remained deprived of recognizing the beauty of Jesus and of beholding the face of God. And they still await His coming! From time immemorial even unto this day, all the kindreds and peoples of the earth have clung to such fanciful and unseemly thoughts, and thus have deprived themselves of the clear waters streaming from the springs of purity and holiness.'

'In unfolding these mysteries, We have, in Our former Tablets which were addressed to a friend in the melodious language of Hijáz, cited a few of the verses revealed unto the Prophets of old. And now, responding to your request, We again shall cite, in these pages, those same verses, uttered this time in the wondrous accents of Iraq, that haply the sore athirst in the wilds of remoteness may attain unto the ocean of the divine presence, and they that languish in the wastes of separation be led unto the home of eternal reunion. Thus the mists of error may be dispelled, and the all-resplendent light of divine guidance dawn forth above the horizon of human hearts. In God We put Our trust, and to Him We cry for help, that haply there may flow from this pen that which shall quicken the souls of men, that they may all arise from their beds of heedlessness and hearken unto the rustling of the leaves of Paradise, from the tree which the hand of divine power hath, by the permission of God, planted in the Ridván of the All-Glorious.'

'To them that are endowed with understanding, it is clear and manifest that when the fire of the love of Jesus consumed the veils of Jewish limitations, and His authority was made apparent and partially enforced, He the Revealer of the unseen Beauty, addressing one day His disciples, referred unto His passing, and, kindling in their hearts the fire of bereavement, said unto them: "I go away and come again unto you." And in another place He said: "I go and another will come Who will tell you all that I have not told you, and will fulfil all that I have said." Both these sayings have but one meaning, were you to ponder upon the Manifestations of the Unity of God with divine insight.'

'Every discerning observer will recognize that in the Dispensation of the Qur'án both the Book and the Cause of Jesus were confirmed. As to the matter of names, Muhammad, Himself, declared: "I am Jesus." He recognized the truth of the signs, prophecies, and words of Jesus, and testified that they were all of God. In this sense, neither the person of Jesus nor His writings hath differed from that of Muhammad and of His holy Book, inasmuch as both have championed the Cause of God, uttered His praise, and revealed His commandments. Thus it is that Jesus, Himself, declared: "I go away and come again unto you." Consider the sun. Were it to say now, "I am the sun of yesterday," it would speak the truth. And should it, bearing the sequence of time in mind, claim to be other than that sun, it still would speak the truth. In like manner, if it be said that all the days are but one and the same, it is correct and true. And if it be said, with respect to their particular names and designations, that they differ, that again is true. For though they are the same, yet one doth recognize in each a separate designation, a specific attribute, a particular character. Conceive accordingly the distinction, variation, and unity characteristic of the various Manifestations of holiness, that thou mayest comprehend the allusions made by the creator of all names and attributes to the mysteries of distinction and unity, and discover the answer to thy question as to why that everlasting Beauty should have, at sundry times, called Himself by different names and titles.' (Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitáb-i-Iqán, pp. 17-22)

The different relationships that each Manifestation has with God Almighty are not contradictions, but are an example of how God's action cannot be tied up by our own limited understanding:

'Were any of the all-embracing Manifestations of God to declare: "I am God!" He verily speaketh the truth, and no doubt attacheth thereto. For it hath been repeatedly demonstrated that through their Revelation, their attributes and names, the Revelation of God, His name and His attributes, are made manifest in the world. Thus, He hath revealed: "Those shafts were God's, not Thine!" And also He saith: "In truth, they who plighted fealty unto thee, really plighted that fealty unto God." And were any of them to voice the utterance: "I am the Messenger of God," He also speaketh the truth, the indubitable truth. Even as He saith: "Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but He is the Messenger of God." Viewed in this light, they are all but Messengers of that ideal King, that unchangeable Essence. And were they all to proclaim: "I am the Seal of the Prophets," they verily utter but the truth, beyond the faintest shadow of doubt. For they are all but one person, one soul, one spirit, one being, one revelation. They are all the manifestation of the "Beginning" and the "End," the "First" and the "Last," the "Seen" and "Hidden" --all of which pertain to Him Who is the innermost Spirit of Spirits and eternal Essence of Essences. And were they to say: "We are the servants of God," this also is a manifest and indisputable fact. For they have been made manifest in the uttermost state of servitude, a servitude the like of which no man can possibly attain. Thus in moments in which these Essences of being were deeply immersed beneath the oceans of ancient and everlasting holiness, or when they soared to the loftiest summits of divine mysteries, they claimed their utterance to be the Voice of divinity, the Call of God Himself. Were the eye of discernment to be opened, it would recognize that in this very state, they have considered themselves utterly effaced and non-existent in the face of Him Who is the All-Pervading, the Incorruptible. Methinks, they have regarded themselves as utter nothingness, and deemed their mention in that Court an act of blasphemy. For the slightest whispering of self, within such a Court, is an evidence of self-assertion and independent existence. In the eyes of them that have attained unto that Court, such a suggestion is itself a grievous transgression. How much more grievous would it be, were aught else to be mentioned in that Presence, were man's heart, his tongue, his mind, or his soul, to be busied with anyone but the Well-Beloved, were his eyes to behold any countenance other than His beauty, were his ear to be inclined to any melody but His voice, and were his feet to tread any way but His way.' (Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Iqán*, pp. 178-180)

In the matter of recognition, had I been a devout Jew of the time of Jesus, I would have been taught certain things about what the Hebrew scriptures said about the Messiah. The self-same Elijah (Elias) the prophet, who had bodily been carried into the physical heavens, would return to prepare the way for the Messiah. The Messiah would lead the Jews in a triumphal defeat of Israel's enemies. The Messiah, according to the prophet Isaiah (7:14), would come with certain signs: 'Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.' For me, if I clung literally to these expectations, Jesus would clearly be a false messiah. Not only did he not lead my people out of bondage, he was crucified, he came from Nazareth (from which no good came) and had the wrong name. He did things on the Sabbath that the religious leaders forbade, and prohibited divorce. Jews did not become believers in Jesus by searching the Hebrew scriptures and finding Him to be their literal fulfilment. They experienced Jesus Himself and knew that He came from God. The scriptural confirmation became evident after their faith was kindled. God Himself in countless places has stated that only He knows the meaning of the scriptural prophecies, which can only be understood on the day of fulfilment when He reveals their

meaning. 'And he said, Go thy way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end' (Dan. 12:9). 'Be watchful lest the concerns and preoccupations of this world prevent you from observing that which hath been enjoined upon you by Him Who is the Mighty, the Faithful. Be ye the embodiments of such steadfastness amidst mankind that ye will not be kept back from God by the doubts of those who disbelieved in Him when He manifested Himself, invested with a mighty sovereignty. Take heed lest ye be prevented by aught that hath been recorded in the Book from hearkening unto this, the Living Book, Who proclaimeth the truth: "Verily, there is no God but Me, the Most Excellent, the All-Praised." Look ye with the eye of equity upon Him Who hath descended from the heaven of Divine will and power, and be not of those who act unjustly.' (Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, 66-67) Jesus was the Living Book of His time, and only He could tell the Pharisees, Sadducees and Jewish people what the written Book meant. In His day, Muhammad was the Living Book, and in this current dispensation, Baha'u'llah is that Living Word.

The Gospel of John records that Jesus said: 'Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.' (John 3:11-13) Jesus clearly indicated that He had spoken of the divine reality that he knew and had seen, yet the world received not His witness. He then stated that His ascension to heaven was possible because He came from heaven and was at that time in heaven. If He came from heaven (but He was born of a woman), and was at that time in heaven (yet sat in a chair and spoke in the flesh), what then was the heaven to which He would ascend and from which He would return?

Now Elijah (Elias) was expected before the Messiah. John the Baptist was asked about this in John 1:19-21: 'And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.' But when Jesus spoke of the Baptist (Matthew 11:10-15) He said: 'For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.' Why would John the Baptist say he was not Elias, and Jesus say that he was? Did either John or Jesus speak falsely?

In the book of Ezekiel, referring to the messianic Jerusalem and the temple, he writes (43:1-5): 'Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east: And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory... And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east. So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house.' In the Arabic Bible in use in the 19th century, this passage read very interestingly: 'Afterward he brought me to the Bab, even the Bab who looketh toward the east: And, behold, Baha'u'llah of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his

Baha... And Baha'u'llah came into the house by the way of the Bab whose prospect is toward the east. So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, Baha'u'llah filled the house.'

I am attaching a communication on similar issues that I had with a Christian minister in Florida.

If you really are interested in examining the Baha'i teachings in relation to Christianity, I suggest you obtain one or more of the following books: *The Prophecies of Jesus* by Michael Sours (Oxford: Oneworld, 1991); *He Cometh with Clouds: A Bahá'í View of Christ's Return* by Gary Matthews (Oxford: George Ronald, 1996) and *Every Eye Shall See: Bible Evidence for the Return of Christ* by Gary Matthews (Knoxville, Tenn.: Stonehaven Press, 1999). These are all available from the Baha'i Distribution Service, 1-800-999-9019. Also, if you want clear expositions of basic Baha'i teachings, I suggest *The Bahá'í Faith: The Emerging Global Religion* by William Hatcher and Douglas Martin (Rev. ed, Wilmette, Ill.: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1998). I do not recommend anything that has been written by Christian authors to disprove the Baha'i Faith, or to teach Christians how to "witness" to Baha'is. The motive of saving the flock from going astray has led these authors to write patent falsehoods and to distort the truth. More importantly, the kinds of errors and conscious untruths transmitted betrays a complete lack of willingness to understand the religion they are studying. In their fear of losing Christians to Baha'u'llah, they have betrayed Jesus' own principle of honesty and freedom from malice.

Sincerely,

Bill

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Bill's attachment

Dear _____:

I apologize for the inordinately long time it has taken me to get back to your letter of 3 May 1999. My job and Bahá'í duties were considerable, and so I have only now had an opportunity to be able to reply. In my first letter to you, I did not notice a misspelling, which you faithfully reproduced in your reply to me: the forerunner of Bahá'u'lláh was known as the Báb, which my computer misproduced as B0b.

The Bahá'ís consider as authentic Word of God (Scripture), the following

- Bahá'í Scriptures

Authenticated writings of Bahá'u'lláh

Authenticated writings of the Báb

Authenticated writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

- Islamic Scripture

The Qur'án

- Christian & Jewish Scripture

The Bible - i.e. the Gospels (New Testament) and the Torah, Prophets and Writings (Old Testament)

The following are the remnants of Scriptures, but which are not authentic in their present form:

- Buddhist scriptures
- Hindu scriptures
- Zoroastrian scriptures

You ask about when one should interpret certain words such as "Glory of the Lord" or "Glory of God" as Bahá'u'lláh and when it is simply to be taken in its plain sense as the literal glory of the Lord, and likewise with the word "gate" as the Báb or as a literal gate. This question of what is interpreted literally and what symbolically relates to your other questions about how Bahá'u'lláh and Jesus can both be Christ, and interpretation of Acts 1:11 and Revelation 1:7. Every word of scripture has many meanings:

They [the Manifestations of God] speak a twofold language. One language, the outward language, is devoid of allusions, is unconcealed and unveiled.... The other language is veiled and concealed, so that whatever lieth hidden in the heart of the malevolent may be made manifest.... In such utterances, the literal meaning, as generally understood by the people, is not what hath been intended. Thus it is recorded: "Every knowledge hath seventy meanings, of which only one is known amongst the people. And when the Qá'im [the Promised One] shall arise, He shall reveal unto men all that which remaineth." (Bahá'u'lláh, *Kitáb-i-Iqán: The Book of Certitude*, 254-255)

Bahá'u'lláh also wrote in another scripture that harmonization of esoteric meaning with the vehicle of that meaning is the hallmark of a scholar.

Those who wrote commentaries on the Qur'án¹ fell into two sorts. The first neglected the literal sense in favor of an esoteric exegesis. The other interpreted literally and ignored its metaphorical dimension. Were We to review all their sayings and statements, thou wouldst be overtaken with

fatigue and unable to read what We have written for thee. Therefore, We have declined to mention them here. Blessed are they that cling both to the literal and to the esoteric, for those are His servants that have believed in the universal Word. Know that whoso clingeth to the outward sense of the words, leaving aside their esoteric significance, is simply ignorant. And whoso concentrateth on the metaphorical sense to the exclusion of the prosaic meaning is heedless. Only the one who interpreteth the verses esoterically while harmonizing this reading with the literal meaning can be said to be a complete scholar.

Let us consider the questions of a confirmed Jewish believer of Jesus' time. Isaiah had made a prophecy about the signs of the Jews' redemption: Isaiah 7:14 "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." The writers of the Gospels quoted this as a prophecy of Jesus. As a Jew, I would ask: If this is indeed the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, tell me why the savior was named Jesus, not Immanuel?

Let us consider another problem. It was clear in Jewish scripture that before the appearance of the Messiah, Elijah [Elias] would come. Clearly the same individual Elijah did not reappear from the heaven up to which he was carried. When John the Baptist was asked by the priests who he was, what did he answer?: John 1: 21 "And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No." But what did Jesus say?: Matt. 11:14-15 "And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Matt. 17: 10 "And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist." As a Jew of Jesus' time, how can one not laugh at Jesus' assertion that John the Baptist was the return of Elias? A Jew would know that Elias was taken bodily into heaven and therefore could only return in like manner. How can John the Baptist at one and the same time not be Elias and be Elias?

What of another problem? It was ridiculous to Nicodemus that Jesus could speak of ascending unto heaven. John 3:13 "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." Jesus stated clearly that He was ascending unto heaven, that He had already come down from heaven, and that He was even at that moment in heaven. What then is the heaven to which he was ascending and from which he would in like manner return at the end of the age? If you can answer these problems, perhaps you can answer your questions about Acts 1:11 and Rev. 1:7.

What then are the eyes that shall see Him? Matthew 13:15-16 "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear."

How do you know that you are not deceived? How did you know that you were not deceived when Jesus came into your heart? Apply the same criterion.

Salvation is by two things: faith followed by deeds. In Whom must we have faith? Let me place to you an analogy. In the school system, all the teachers have studied more or less the same body of mathematics. A child is taught in second grade that you cannot take away a larger number from a smaller number; you cannot subtract 20 from 10. Knowing this is the way for the child to obtain the teacher's goodpleasure in arithmetic. In sixth grade, the child learns from a new teacher that there is something called a negative number; subtract 20 from 10 and the answer is minus 10. If the child's response in sixth grade is, "But the only right answer is that you can't subtract 20 from 10" what will be the result? The child must learn

from the teacher, and also from the process of growth and learning as he grows in understanding. With God, who is sole master of all knowledge and creator of all existence (and therefore cannot be encompassed by the human mind), you must have faith in his current message. That means to be saved by the divine Savior of the age in which you live. To recognize Him is to recognize and be saved by all the others as well, for they are true, and their messages were to prepare the way for the other Saviors that followed. Thus, in Jesus' time, to reject Him meant not only that one missed His salvation, it meant losing Moses too, for Moses testified of Jesus. Acceptance must then be followed by obedience to His commandments, testifying to the change of heart.

Because no human being is perfect in faith or in the deeds that are to follow upon faith, God has created atonement. The suffering of Jesus and others is the way God preserves humanity from the penalty of its sins. Bahá'u'lláh wrote:

That which thou hast heard concerning Abraham, the Friend of the All-Merciful, is the truth, and no doubt is there about it. The Voice of God commanded Him to offer up [his son] as a sacrifice, so that His steadfastness in the Faith of God and His detachment from all else but Him may be demonstrated unto men. The purpose of God, moreover, was to sacrifice him as a ransom for the sins and iniquities of all the peoples of the earth. This same honor, Jesus, the Son of Mary, besought the one true God, exalted be His name and glory, to confer upon Him. For the same reason was Husayn offered up as a sacrifice by Muhammad, the Apostle of God.

No man can ever claim to have comprehended the nature of the hidden and manifold grace of God; none can fathom His all-embracing mercy. Such hath been the perversity of men and their transgressions, so grievous have been the trials that have afflicted the Prophets of God and their chosen ones, that all mankind deserveth to be tormented and to perish. God's hidden and most loving providence, however, hath, through both visible and invisible agencies, protected and will continue to protect it from the penalty of its wickedness. Ponder this in thine heart, that the truth may be revealed unto thee, and be thou steadfast in His path. (Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, XXXII)

I leave you with one final thought, which is that unity among people of faith is paramount in these days when the world struggles to find its values. True understanding comes from humble relationship:

It is Our wish and desire that every one of you may become a source of all goodness unto men, and an example of uprightness to mankind. Beware lest ye prefer yourselves above your neighbors. Fix your gaze upon Him Who is the Temple of God amongst men. He, in truth, hath offered up His life as a ransom for the redemption of the world. He, verily, is the All-Bountiful, the Gracious, the Most High. If any differences arise amongst you, behold Me standing before your face, and overlook the faults of one another for My name's sake and as a token of your love for My manifest and resplendent Cause. We love to see you at all times consorting in amity and concord within the paradise of My good-pleasure, and to inhale from your acts the fragrance of friendliness and unity, of loving-kindness and fellowship. Thus counsellethe you the All-Knowing, the Faithful. We shall always be with you; if We inhale the perfume of your fellowship, Our heart will assuredly rejoice, for naught else can satisfy Us. To this beareth witness every man of true understanding. (Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, CXLVI)

Sincerely yours,

William

Bill, (reply to second message)

Thanks so much for all the information. I really would like to get one of the overview books published by Baha'i writers. You're right; I do not want to be dealing with a "straw man". I am convinced of the uniqueness of Jesus in human history and of the uniqueness of the Jewish people. And I'm sure that direct quotes from Baha'i writings will provide adequate contrasts, so that I don't need any professing Christian's second hand information. And, again you are right in that to be true to the Jesus of the Bible is to reason with others, motivated by love, and with respect for the people and the facts. I'm no scholar but I want to be accurate.

Speaking of straw men, I've already got some glimpses that Baha'i writers have misunderstood the Christianity of the Bible and have actually reacted to and responded to what I call Christendom. I have found this with skeptics such as Bertrand Russell and Isaac Asimov. They claim to explain, "Why I am not a Christian", and then never deal with the central issues of the Gospel spoken by Jesus Christ.

Similar to you, I'm busy as a worker bee, husband, dad, and disciple of Jesus. There is much I need to evaluate and consider and discuss with many people of a variety of flavors, but examining the Baha'i Faith is a priority I would like to pursue by the grace of God.

Thanks again,

Jim Baumgaertel

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Press Release of July 1988

LOCAL CASES HELP PROMPT EEOC "NEW AGE" POLICY

The government Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in Washington, D.C. issued a policy memorandum last February (1988) to its field offices providing guidelines regarding the involvement of corporation employees in New Age seminars. The commission ruled that those who are opposed for religious reasons to such New Age techniques as meditation, guided visualization, bio-feedback, yoga, self-hypnosis, and inducement of altered states of consciousness should not be forced to attend corporation sponsored seminars and workshops at which such techniques are offered. Because they refuse to attend, they must not be discriminated against but should be offered alternative motivational seminars which are not offensive. The commission warns against using training programs based upon religious beliefs, stating, "Religiously based training programs discriminate against individuals who have no religious faith as well as those who have differing religious beliefs."

The policy memo, in its introduction, states, "Employers are increasingly making use of training programs designed to improve employee motivation, cooperation, or productivity through the use of various so-called "new age" techniques." The introduction references a New York Times article (April 17th, 1987) entitled, "Gurus Hired to Motivate Workers Are Raising Fears of Mind Control" which included the cases of Jim Baumgaertel, who objected to several courses at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, and Steve Hiatt, a Tacoma car dealer, who was fired for refusing to participate in a Pacific Institute training program.

The EEOC memo used a New York Times quote from Baumgaertel saying that, "One employee objected that a training program he was ordered to attend using meditation and guided visualization could change a person's view of reality and religious beliefs." Baumgaertel said he is pleased that his case and Hiatt's have been a factor in prompting new EEOC policy in this area, and that this is a good policy for the private sector. In government, though, accommodation of an individual's beliefs are not enough. Baumgaertel says that New Age beliefs should not be taught at all by government because of the "Establishment Clause" of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. He says his organization, "Citizens Against A State Religion" intends to continue to raise this issue nationwide.

Citizens Against A State Religion - 7/25/88

[EEOC Notice N-915.022](#)

[Confronting "Motivational" Training Programs](#)

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<http://procinwarn.com>

Summary of the Class Action Complaint

1. The Puget Sound Naval Shipyard (PSNS) Employee Development Division (Code 180) has been conducting courses that include religious practices, teach religious dogma and manipulate the religious beliefs of PSNS employees and, therefore, is in violation of the First amendment of the U.S. Constitution.
2. This letter constitutes a formal written class complaint of religious discrimination. The protected class being represented are all those PSNS employees who have taken PSNS courses where New Age/Eastern Mysticism/Human Potential/Occult practices or dogma were taught or are being taught, whose religious beliefs differ from the "New Age" point of view, including bible-believing Christians and others with Judeo-Christian religious traditions. This class is so numerous that a consolidated complaint of the members is impractical. The questions of fact documented in this letter are common to the class.
3. Acting as agent for the class is James Lawrence Baumgaertel, Port Orchard, Washington; employed at PSNS in the Nuclear Engineering Training Branch Code 2340.3. The claims documented here are typical of the class. The agent will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the class.
4. The agent's requested resolution is to
 - a. Prohibit the practice or promotion in PSNS training programs of any form of meditation, guided visualization, or other psycho-technologies that induce altered states of consciousness.
 - b. Prohibit the teaching of all New Age, Eastern Mysticism, Human Potential, or Occult religious dogma in any PSNS courses.
5. Adverse effects and religious discrimination
 - a. Certain personnel management policies and practices, which the agency has authority to rescind, and which are documented later in this letter, have been and are adversely affecting the previously defined class of people by:
 - (1) Creating a work environment that is hostile to their religious beliefs and therefore, oppressive.

(2) Inducing altered states of consciousness that:

(a) are not fully explained to the student.

(b) are initiated without each student's specific informed consent.

(c) induce in a student, without his/her knowledge, a higher state of suggestibility.

(d) may cause unknown spiritual and emotional effects

(e) may promote changes in the student's view of reality and religious beliefs.

b. And, these policies and practices discriminate against the defined class on the basis of their common religion (Bible-believing Christian and other Judeo-Christian religious traditions) by promoting and endorsing religion in violation of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, specifically New Age, Eastern Mysticism, Human Potential, and Occult religious views and practices which are mutually exclusive, with, and hostile towards, Judeo-Christian views.

c. In the context of this complaint, it is not my intention to attack anyone else's religious beliefs. I support the right of Americans to believe whatever they want. What I am opposing is the U.S. Government's promoting or endorsing of a particular set of religious beliefs or practices or excessively entangling itself in the religious beliefs of its employees. And I am exposing such promotion, endorsement and entanglement for what it is, regardless of the attempt to disguise it as neutral, secular, and scientific.

6. The Problems

a. "Train the Trainer"

(1) As a shipyard instructor I was required to attend the "Train the Trainer" course on 20 November 1986. The course was taught by Robert W. Pike of Resources for Organizations, Incorporated, 6440 Flying Cloud Drive, Suite 130, Eden Prairie, Minnesota, 55344

(2)Description of the Meditation and Guided visualization Sequence

Right after lunch, as the class assembled in the classroom, the instructor turned off the lights. He told the class to place their

feet flat on the floor, take two deep breaths, and close their eyes. He said, in a low, soothing voice, "...rid your minds of all negative thoughts... all hate, all doubt ...". he said he was going to take the class on a trip to Maui and began to tell the class to visualize walking on the beach, feel the sand between the toes, and the breeze on the face, etc. At the end of the sequence he said, "I will count backwards from five to one. When I get to one, you will open your eyes and you will return to full alertness." I did not participate.

(3) After he brought the class back to "full alertness", he proceeded to express at length his views on the preceding guided imagery technique and a host of other views, all the time maintaining this quiet, soothing tone.

(4) I raised the question of the guided imagery being an example of an Eastern Mysticism religious practice. Mr. Pike responded that in the course of his research he has found meditation of this sort in all of the world's religions, including Christianity.

(5) In addition to the meditation and guided visualization technique, Mr. Pike's curriculum included various New Age concepts which he gently introduced. (These will be discussed later.)

b. Instructor Training

(1) I was also required to attend a week long "Instructor Training" course (26 to 30 January 1987).

(2) I had asked not to be required to attend this course until my concerns from the November '86 "Train the Trainer" were resolved. I was still required to go, but with permission to excuse myself during any meditation or guided visualization. I did attend.

(3) The course was taught by ---- of ----- Learning Resources. She had formerly been a PSNS employee in the Employee Development Division. In fact, she had been the coordinator for the November 1986 "Train the Trainer" course.

(4) During her presentation and in her curriculum she interjected various New Age themes. (To be discussed later.)

(5) Also in her curriculum is included a deep breathing exercise for "How to

Avoid Anxieties and Relax!!" (The significance of this will be discussed later.)

c. "Increasing Human Effectiveness" courses

(1) ----- (head of Code 180) teaches this course in the After Hours program. "This course provides students with insight into their personality factors that influence their attitudes and work performance. It also provides tools for improving self awareness and personal discipline. Class size limited to 20. Purchase of a workbook, costing approximately \$20.00 may be required."

(2) In the past, during work hours, Increasing Human Effectiveness (I.H.E.) was taught by Edge Learning Institute. The Edge Learning Institute's "Increasing Human Effectiveness" curriculum includes the following (to be covered in more detail later):

(a) Numerous statements on issues that are inherently religious.

(b) Quotes from one of the most widely known promoters of New Age religion: Marilyn Ferguson.

(c) Explanations of human personality and living that are nearly verbatim from the dogma of reincarnationists and karma.

(d) Discussion of the "sixth sense" and psychic phenomena.

(e) That there is no absolute truth or reality, that each person creates his own reality.

(f) Meditation and guided visualization, with a defense of Transcendental Meditation (T.M.)

(g) An explanation that suggestibility is enhanced during relaxed states of consciousness.

d. "Psychology of Personal Adjustment"

----- Code 180.1 after hours course. "Personality dynamics, emphasizing common motivational problems and individual solutions, why people act as

they do and methods of improving effectiveness. personal skills of adjustment and growth in coping with everyday problems leading to more effective living. Several psychological viewpoints will be discussed in terms of such concepts as motives, thought processes, conditioned responses, habits, communication patterns, meditation and authentic living. The purchase of a book may be required."

e. Stress Management courses

Meditation and Guided Visualization.-----, EEO Counselor "inner resources"

f. Shift Test Engineer (STE) Briefing Principles Course

August 1984 Professional Development Institute P.O. Box 4086 Bellevue, WA Endorses: Deep breathing exercises Mental Imagery for relaxation Visualization for success Positive thinking

g. Office of Personnel Management director Constance Horner quoted in "Weekly Federal Employee's News Digest" "Our government has paid considerable attention to employee rights and protections but not to 'human enhancement' issues," Horner said. "Before they were solved at home, or perhaps in the church. Now they're addressed in the workplace, if at all, in bits and pieces." Horner stressed the need for federal managers to develop more of a people orientation to bring "high touch" and not just "high tech" to the management of the future.

h. the following people are in the places of authority that are responsible for or in some way relevant to these issues:

(1) -----, Head, Employee Development Division, code 180. Teaches the After Hours Course "Increasing Human Effectiveness". Works for Code 150 director of Industrial Relations

(2)-----, Supervisor, Management and Human Resource Development Branch Code 180.1. (Works for Code 180) Teaches the After Hours Course "Psychology of Personal Adjustment". Was responsible for the "Train the Trainer" course.

(3) -----, Supervisor, Apprentice Program Branch Code 180.2. Responsible for After Hours Course Program (works for Code 180). Teaches the After Hours Course "Mathematics Review"

(4) -----, former PSNS employee in Code 180.1. Was responsible for "Train the Trainer" course on 20 November 1986 Now, an outside contractor ----- Learning Resources, Bainbridge Island, WA Taught the "Instructor Training " course 26 to 30 January 1987. Teaches the After Hours Course "Pre-Retirement Preparation"

(5) ----- works for Code 180.1 Was responsible for the "Instructor Training" course 26 to 30 January 1987. He is the Project Leader for Code 2300 (Nuclear Engineering Department, of which I am a member)

(6) -----, EEO Counselor, works for Code 108, the EEO Division My EEO counselor Teaches the After Hours Course "Job Forms and Applications"

(7) -----, Acting Deputy EEO officer Acting head Code 108 EEO division Reports Administratively Code 150 Director of Industrial Relations

(8) -----, Director of Industrial Relations, Code 150 Responsible for Code 180 the Employee Development Division and (administratively) Code 108, the EEO Division Reports to the shipyard Commander, the EEO Officer. Teaches the After Hours Course "Careers in Management"

"A new program for employees who are looking forward to becoming supervisors. Through Careers in Management's video-taped programs, participants will assess the amount of personal satisfaction they will get managing others, evaluate and plan for improved performance in their present jobs, identify and plan for improving the skills they will need to be effective as supervisors. Class size is limited to 18."

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"New Age Religion" at PSNS

Some of the following examples seem innocuous by themselves, but taken in the context of the broad pattern, I believe they are significant.

a. "Train the Trainer" course

(1) Meditation and Guided Visualization (described earlier)

(2) On page 52 of Mr. Pike's text, *Creative Training Techniques*, under "Things to Remember", he warns, "Avoid any identification with sensitivity training, 'T' groups, psychodrama, body awareness, religious training, or any of the sales, personality, or skill courses being offered."

But then he goes on to say, "Most of these programs are excellent but they have different objectives and techniques."

(3) On page 63 as examples of role playing are the following exercises that promote the concepts of "self-love" and self-image reprogramming.

"LIVING UP TO YOUR POTENTIAL"

"Do one of the following:

A. You are given access to your personnel file. In it is a glowing letter of recommendation about you written from your boss. It is the most tremendous letter you can imagine getting. Assuming this were true, write out in the space below what you would want the letter to say.

B. You are in your hometown. An old friend of both you and your spouse is having lunch with you. The friend says, 'Do you have any idea how much you are loved?' and hands you a letter. It was written by your spouse to the friend extolling your virtues. Assuming this were true, write out what you would like the letter to say in the space below.

"ACHIEVING YOUR EXPECTATIONS"

"Group Leader: Read aloud and discuss.

1. What are your feelings about the letter that you have just written? How would you feel if such a letter were written about you? How would it affect your expectations for yourself? How would it affect your relationship with the person that wrote it?
2. In writing that letter you were, in a way, writing out your own ideal expectations for your life -- painting a picture of the person that you would like to be. What could you do to move closer to this ideal?
3. We hear a lot about the expectations of others and their effect on our ability to perform, but how about our own expectations? How do they affect how we perform?
4. Do you have expectations of the kind of person you would like to be and what you would like to achieve? What are they?
5. What would it take to achieve these expectations?
6. How do expectations relate to goals and goal-setting? How could goal-setting help you to realize your expectations?
7. How could affirmations help you to realize your expectations? What are some affirmations that you could put to use in achieving your expectations?"

(4) On p. 66 is another "positive thinking" tidbit: "Even energy, as an example, can be managed. It's being discovered that we burn three times as much energy when thinking negatively as when thinking positively and in control of our emotions and actions. Let me say that again, we burn three times as much energy when thinking negatively than thinking positively and in control of our emotions and actions."

(5) On p. 87 is a suggestion involving an abdominal muscle tensing and Mental exercise for "Just Before You Speak." Note the similarity between this and the one described in "Infiltrating the New Age into Society."

"JUST BEFORE YOU SPEAK"

"Here are two useful tips for final preparation and eliminating butterflies:

1. Sit in Executive Posture, doing a silent version of the steam kettle exercise. Press against the chair with your lower back, directing your tension into your vital center. Keep your upper abdominal muscles taut. This leaves the butterflies no place to flutter around in.

2. Permit only positive thinking. Avoid succumbing to the negative by repeating to yourself any one of these positive catch statements:

I am

Poised, prepared, persuasive, positive, powerful.

Composed, confident, convincing, commanding, compelling.

Effective, energetic, enthusiastic, enjoyable.

Imaginative, informative, instructive, inspirational,
impressive.

Zestful, zippadeedoo, zing and zowie!"

(6) On page 91, in describing "The law of the Lesson" and that "The truth or content to be taught must be learned through the truth or the content that is already known," Mr. Pike also introduces the reader to concepts of being open to totally new understandings of the human personality:

"I was in a seminar that was dealing with some new concepts in the psychology of personality. I happen to be extremely interested in psychology. Some of my academic background lies in psychology and counseling so I was really interested in what this individual had to say.

"She began her presentation by pointing out that she was just finishing her doctorate from a well-known university and then she moved into her presentation by saying, 'In order to really understand what I'm about to say, for the next 90 minutes you have to be willing to forget everything that you've ever learned about Freud, Jung, Adler, Maslow, MacGregor, Rogers. Because if you think about their concepts of personality, you'll have difficulty grasping this one, because when I first looked at it I couldn't understand it. It didn't fit with my concepts and it was only after about 9 or 10 months of struggling with these new ideas that someone had given me

that I finally came to see how they worked and how they would apply.' And from that basic introduction she launched into her content.

"Do you know how difficult it is to NOT think about things that you already know? And not make comparisons to things that you already know? The almost universal consensus of the group at the end of the 90-minute presentation was that it was literally impossible to set aside what we knew and forget about it so that we could learn some new concepts that might conflict.

"A much better approach might have been to say something like, 'As I have examined various models or concepts of personality, the psychology of personality, I have found many of them helpful and yet parts of them to cause me problems. For example ...' Then she could have done a brief review of the concepts of personality, saying for example, 'Freud has these things to say in his concept of personality which are very helpful, but the things that have caused me problems with it were this and this.'

"And to repeat that process for Jung, for Maslow, for Adler, etc., then saying, 'That's why I'm interested in this NEW approach that I want to present to you today because while it may seem very, very different, I think you'll see how it answers the problem that I have raised, the problems that I had in reviewing these other concepts of personality.

"In this way we acknowledge the benefits that can be gained from our prior knowledge. And at the same time we're made aware of potential problems in these and we're now open to something that may give us an answer to those problems."

(7) Mr. Pike introduced the class to Tony Buzon's book about "using both sides of your brain" which is similar to Marilyn Ferguson's book mentioned by Richard Watring.

(8) Mr. Pike introduced the class to Maxwell Maltz's book, Psycho-Cybernetics which is also the book that, as Dick Sutphen explained, helped to get Americans to "look within."

b. "Instructor Training" course

(1) On page 19 of Mrs. ----- 's text, "Designing and Delivering Effective Training Programs," she introduces the class to a deep breathing exercise. Note the similarities with the deep breathing technique discussed by Dick Sutphen in "Infiltrating the New Age Into Society."

"HOW TO AVOID ANXIETIES AND RELAX!!"

"Seasoned speakers use a variety of relaxation methods. Just prior to speaking (a few moments before actually speaking) you might try the following:

- * Place your hands on table, palms down.
- * Uncross your legs under the table (if applicable).
- * Avoid focusing your eyes on any one object.
- * Let your body go completely limp.
- * Slowly inhale, and hold air in your lungs for several seconds.
- * Just prior to feeling uncomfortable, slowly exhale.
- * Wait several seconds, keeping your body limp.
- * Repeat the procedure several times.
- * Just before speaking, repeat the procedure one more time."

(2) During the class a film from the toastmasters was shown in which the listener is told to "Take responsibility for effectiveness in communication, for your life."

(3) On page 32 in item #20 on "How to Win An Audience", she states in all capitals: "EFFECTIVE SPEECH IS NO LONGER A LUXURY, IT IS A NECESSITY! THE WORLD NEEDS BETTER SPEAKERS. THE FUTURE BELONGS TO GOOD SPEAKERS. THE WORLD CAN BELONG TO YOU!"

(4) During the class she introduced the Buzon book title on "Memory."

(5) She discussed: the importance of "feeling good about yourself"; the Socratic concept "It is best to discover for yourself."

(6) She spoke of thinking of yourself as "confident and relaxed" and "you will become." She said "I visualize myself as a millionaire." "You have to believe it."

(1) A civil service employee took this course 20-21 July 1981 as taught by Dick Anderson of Edge Learning Institute (formerly United Learning Institute). The employee's course evaluation stated there was a "constant hint of Christianity" as if clothing "New Age" theology in Christian terms makes it more palatable. Also, the statement was made that "all disease is caused by the mind."

(2) Another civil service employee took the PSNS "Increasing Human Effectiveness Course" as taught by Dick Anderson of E.L.I. in 1986 during working hours. He stated that he was taught that we are ultimately controlled by our subconscious that must therefore be reprogrammed. The class was led through meditation and guided visualization. The employee stated that the training was very similar to the following:

"The 'perennial wisdom' is really the bedrock of all the world's spiritual traditions. Our training uses the perennial wisdom to teach that we all have an incredible Source of power within us that quite literally has the answers to all our questions.

"We try to teach corporate employees, teenagers, and others in our courses that getting closer to their Source entails letting go of this fear and learning to trust that Source of love, wisdom, and energy. And that letting go is a choice they can make."

This was taken from an interview in the February 1987 issue of "Science of Mind" magazine. The interview is with Larry Wilson, founder of Wilson Learning Corporation, author of THE ONE MINUTE SALESPERSON, and promoter of "Human Potential" spiritual philosophy. The interviewer was Ron Nelson and the article is entitled "Changing the Game In Business: Exploring Spirituality and Human Potential."

The article also says, "The heart of our new management training represents a return to the ancient spiritual wisdom about the true identity and power of the individual. The students are "empowered" to "get in touch with their creative Source." He teaches that, "fear is a choice", each person has a "deep purpose", "we can create visions that align our goals with our deepest purpose", and "we can take action to realize our vision."

Mr. Wilson goes on to say, "Now that was by no means an easy concept to sell to hard-headed businessmen at that time. They didn't believe it. So I had to package my ideas as sales training around more conventional techniques. But that was really a Trojan horse. You see, business has this thing called bottom-line profit that provides instant feedback on its activities. What doesn't work tends to get changed pretty fast in business, unlike other segments of our society -- like government and religion -- that don't have the same incentive to change with the times.

"The challenge facing business today is to take people on a massive scale and retrain them to respond differently so they will recognize the power they inherently have within themselves to make a difference within the organization, instead of just doing what they're told.

"That changes everything. Once a sufficient number of employees get in touch with their true potential, the organization changes."

Mr. Wilson says that "a company must fulfill three roles ...", first be a "business organization," second "a life time educator", and third, "The company must be part 'church'. It must involve itself in the spiritual growth of its employees."

"Words like values, mission, and purpose are being increasingly heard on the corporate scene. All of the things we used to pay attention to only on Sunday, in church, are things we now want in our lives all week long.

"So, if employees want lifelong learning, the company provides it. If they want to develop their higher, spiritual selves, the company helps them do that, too.

"If the churches don't recognize this increasing desire people have for a spiritual connection with their higher Source -- instead of just religious rules and regulations -- they may get left behind in the 'marketplace' of spirituality, which has grown up without a lot of direction from most organized religion.

"The corporation is going to have a profound impact on all of these institutions.'

"What about the impact of business on government?"

"Larry: 'I think it will be just as far-reaching.'"

According to the magazine, "The Science of Mind, a philosophy of successful living, teaches how you can use spiritual understanding to experience happiness, health, prosperity, peace of mind, and greater self-awareness."

(3) The following items were taken directly from the tapes and booklet of Edge Learning Institute's course "Increasing Human Effectiveness" taught by Bob Moawad.

(a) We need to get our lives in "alignment" with certain "immutable laws" ... the "Laws of human effectiveness."

(b) In the context of a humorous situation about making mistakes he

interjects the statement that "God grades on a curve."

(c) He says that our "Awareness" is the automatic product of our total heritage and entire life experience."

(d) We must watch out for the wrong "mindset" and we must have "an open mind" and be willing to "accept change."

(e) Defines "Luck" as "That which takes place when preparation meets opportunity."

(f) He quotes the teachings of Buddha: "All that we are is the result of what we have thought; it is founded on our thoughts, and is made up of our thoughts." Mr. Moawad states that "We are what our thoughts make us."

(g) He states "You might be looking at your world a little different after this seminar."

(h) Bob Moawad speaks of our brain in the computer terms "GI-GO", "garbage in -- garbage out."

(j) He quotes Marilyn Ferguson from her book the "Brain Revolution" about the "unlimited", "infinite" capacity of the human brain.

(k) He says he is not a fan of Freud or Pavlov or Skinner but that his views come from elsewhere.

(l) He describes his model of human personality in terms of "conscious", "subconscious" and "creative subconscious."

(m) Mr. Moawad says this is a "Responsibility Psychology Seminar." We learn to "accept life the way it comes to us" and that we "can design our life so it comes to us they way we would like to get it."

(n) He says "the choice is ours", if we "want to take that power", the "power of choice."

(o) Mr. Moawad talks about the "sixth sense": perception, and "close encounters with the sixth sense."

(p) He again quotes Marilyn Ferguson as saying we may actually have 27

senses.

(q) He says that from our perceptions all data is run through our "subconscious data base."

(r) Mistakes are one way to expand my awareness.

(s) He calls the subconscious a "robot."

(t) He says, "truth" and "reality" depend on the person. "There are as many realities as there are people."

(u) We are missing a lot of opportunities because of our conditioning. Because of our blind spots called "Scotomas" and "flat earth" ideas.

(v) He talks about the "power of the subconscious" and the need to reprogram it by getting new attitudes to the subconscious through words or "self talk". He says "Words are neither true or false."

(w) We need to create a new "Self Image." He says that "What you see is what you get, " literally.

(x) He talks about "constructive visualization."

(y) This seminar, he says is based on "self image psychology" and this seminar is about "mental well being."

(z) He says the "subconscious stores imagery as truth."

(aa) He talks about the use of "positive opposites," "Random self talk," and "affirmations."

(bb) Bob Moawad then speaks about the ability of the power of thought to control objects external to the mind. He refers to the book "The Psychic Side of Sports" by Mike Murphy of Esalen Institute, described on pages 87, 98, and 137-140 of Marilyn Ferguson's book, THE AQUARIAN CONSPIRACY. An incident that is described by Bob Moawad from Murphy's book is about John Brodie, a former football quarterback. He threw a pass intended for Gene Washington. The defender was Pat Fisher. Fisher said, "I had the ball intercepted but it jumped over my hands.!" Game films confirmed that the ball did jump. Brodie said, "I think you can stretch out a thought; that ball was going to get there." Bob Moawad said, "They

should have given him 15 yards for witchcraft!" Then he said, "The power of the mind seems almost magical ..."

(cc) Bob Moawad states that the imagination has the greatest impact in reprogramming the subconscious when the person is in a relaxed state and when "first person imagery is used."

(dd) He takes the class through a guided imagery sequence.

(ee) He encourages "self love" and tries to justify it by using a Biblical quotation.

(ff) He describes how Morris Fishbein was asked "If you could be reincarnated as anyone you wanted, who would you like to be?"

(gg) In discussing "thought patterns of winners" and the use of "affirmations" to reprogram the subconscious he says that "Religious people call it prayer. We're saying design, design thought patterns you dwell on."

(hh) We must "Imprint a new reality," "reprogram." We can "Imprint our goals during deep relaxation techniques" because this "greatly enhances our receptiveness."

(ii) Don't try hard to change behavior, use Affirmative Reminders to "change the picture."

(jj) Moawad says he is sometimes asked about his "Deep Relaxation" techniques, "Isn't this like Transcendental Meditation, or T.M.? Isn't this some cult trying to take over Christianity?" He replies that healthy skepticism is good, but "I don't know if I've really discovered any documented evidence that T.M. is some Eastern Religion way of taking over Christianity. I know a lot of people that practice T.M. with regularity who are very espoused in their Judeo-Christian beliefs.

"But examine for yourself different meditative, relaxation, self hypnotic techniques. We hypnotize ourselves all the time. We go into an altered state of consciousness all the time. So why get all concerned? That's one reason why I call it deep relaxation. Aren't those nice non-threatening words? I'm not going to call it meditation. I'm not going to call it self hypnosis, after the seminar somebody that's gone through the process with me: 'Gee, Bob, that's a lot like self hypnosis.' Don't tell anybody; they love 'relaxation', but their not gonna get into that hypnotic stuff. And I haven't studied hypnosis.

All I've done is just observe a variety of techniques and have you noticed the seminar, the seminar is eclectic, we've just tried to gather data, I'm not a psychiatrist, I'm not a psychologist, I have a Masters degree in education, I hope that my skill is in communicating some concepts, so you can understand them and apply them and accept them a little bit better than you did coming into the sessions."

(kk) Bob says that this is a seminar where the word "educate" really goes back to the derivative, "educio", "to pull from within", not to transfer information, but "to pull from within."

(ll) Bob Moawad then leads the class in meditation and guided visualization. He leads them into a "hall that leads nowhere." He defines "mantra" as "a mental clearing device."

(mm) He says that "each time you use this exercise you will go to an even deeper state of relaxation."

(nn) During the guided visualization he states the affirmation on behalf of the students, "I am my own expert, I make me." "It feels tremendous being accountable for my life." "This opens up the channel between conscious suggestion and subconscious receptiveness." "I will count from one to five ... eyes open, I feel tremendous!"

(4) Edge Learning Institute teaches the same philosophy/theology as Pacific Institute of Seattle.

(a) Bob Moawad of E.L.I. used to be employed by Pacific Institute.

(b) In a letter dated 22 September 1982, from John H. Wold, Director of Human Resources of Drake Willock, Inc. to Jerry Crawford of United Telephone of the Northwest, the following statement is made: "You also asked that I make a comparison between Lou Tice's 'Achieving Your Potential' training program and Bob Moawad's 'Human Effectiveness Training'. Let me compare them by saying that the content of both training programs is exactly the same."

(c) Ron Medved of Pacific Institute is quoted on p. 349 of Marilyn Ferguson's THE AQUARIAN CONSPIRACY.

(d) Steve Hiatt, who now owns a car dealership in Tacoma, was fired in 1984 from another company for refusing to participate in a Pacific Institute

sales training program called "New Age Thinking." The case is currently in litigation in Tacoma as a religious discrimination case.

(e) Mr. Hiatt says that the Pacific Institute "New Age Thinking" program uses all the same ideas as E.L.I. in promoting its human potential philosophy/theology: Scotomas, flat worlds, truth is a product of our conditioning, reprogramming the subconscious, affirmation, visualization, imprinting, create your own reality.

(f) Mr. Hiatt quotes P.I. as saying: Religion was the cause of all wars; the Jews are great warriors because they THINK they are God's chosen people; The Affirmation and Visualization techniques are the same as that used by Hitler and Jim Jones but P.I. is using them for the right reasons; the real reason they were there at the seminar was to save the world. The instructor said he hated religion.

(g) Mr. Hiatt quotes "Pacific Northwest Magazine" as saying that 10% of Pacific Institute's business is with the U.S. Government.

(h) Mr. Hiatt states that P.I.'s suggested reading list recommends books that promote pantheism, reject the deity of Jesus Christ, and explore supermind power, parapsychology and the metaphysical.

(j) Mr. Hiatt says "It should be noted that there are many other motivational companies presenting courses which include similar theology. One is Edge Learning Institute who claim their course material is identical to that of Pacific Institute's."

(5) Edge Learning Institute published a "Scripture Correlation" of their course material, compiled by Jerry Melchisedeck. It begins by saying that "We do not sell religion nor do we teach theology. We are a private educational consulting firm. Business leaders WHO ASK should be told that Edge concepts are correlated with scripture. We should always be ready to give the reason why the concepts we teach give hope to so many people." But then it goes on to claim each of their concepts are supported by certain listed Bible verses.

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Comparison with Biblical Christianity

9. To show how the preceding Human Potential/Eastern Mysticism/New Age/Occult teachings cannot be considered neutral, "psychological" techniques in relation to many peoples religious beliefs, the following is to provide a comparison with Biblical Christianity.

- a. There is one God and he is personal.
- b. There is one reality, and it is created by God.
- c. God loves each of us and has a plan for each of our lives.
- d. But "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."
- e. "And the wages of sin is death."
- f. "But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
- g. God became a human being for 33 years; died on a cross, in our place, for our sins.
- h. He rose again on the third day to demonstrate the defeat of sin and death and to show that we, too, can have eternal life.
- j. "To those who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave them the right to become children of God."
- k. "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the son of God that you may know you have eternal life."
- l. "All who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved."
- m. "It is appointed unto man to die once, and then the judgment."
- n. Sin has separated humans from God and they are doomed to an

eternity in hell.

o. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

p. A person must repent of his sin, accept Jesus as savior, and ask Jesus to be the Lord of his life.

q. After a person becomes a Christian, his goal is not "self-love" or "self-actualization", or "self-realization." His goal is to "die to self." "It is no longer I who live but Christ in me."

r. The goal of the Christian is to be like Jesus; to live moment by moment, relying on God's grace, the power of the Holy Spirit to enable him to say yes to the Lord and no to sin.

s. The Lord disciplines those he loves. He breaks us and remakes us.

t. The Sovereign God of the universe has a plan for each of our lives. It is not one we conjured up in our own minds.

u. Fulfillment comes in surrendering our lives to God, and seeking His plan for our lives.

v. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Not, "I can do all things through the psychic power of my own mind."

w. Prayer is not meditating on a mantra, or guided visualization through "a hallway that leads no where." Prayer is not repetitious affirmations and "self talk." Prayer is not the reprogramming of the subconscious or the working out of one's karma. Prayer is talking to God, "one who sticks closer than a brother." "He will never leave you nor forsake you. Cast all your cares on Him for he cares for you." Prayer is communicating to God gratitude, adoration, praise, requests, supplications and intercessions.

x. Faith is having confidence in God, not in the occult powers of my own mind.

y. God promises that "all things work together for good for those who love him and are called according to his purpose." "There is a way that seems right to a man but in the end it leads to

destruction." My own "inner wisdom" my own "vision from within" will "lead nowhere" but destruction.

z. God's plan for my life is found outside of my own "wisdom". It is found in his written word, in prayer to him as He reveals his will in conformance with His written word (the Bible).

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"Altered States" & Psychology

10. Altered States of Consciousness

I am convinced that guided imagery alters the state of consciousness and effectively hypnotizes or makes more hypnotizable. It places the person in a more highly suggestible state. This "certain amount of open-mindedness on the part of the participant" places him in a position where his belief systems can be manipulated. I believe this, in effect, is mind control.

I have included, as enclosure (1), a survey of a study completed in 1984 that supports this, and chronicles the origins of the use of such techniques in our society. [1998: This enclosure, a survey conducted by Rich Watring, is not included on this website but if you have any questions about it, please [email me](#).]

11. The head of the Employee Development division (Code 180) in memoranda dated 21 January and 20 February 1987 stated the "guided visualization" and "imagery techniques" used in PSNS courses are not religious practices. They are simply "well accepted psychological techniques" used for relieving stress. She goes on to say that she needs a "certain amount of open mindedness on the part of the participant."

a. I don't doubt that these techniques relieve stress.

b. I agree that it would be nice if more PSNS employees had less stress.

c. I agree that there may be a large number of psychologists and psychiatrists who have embraced these techniques and their associated philosophies/theologies.

d. The question before us is, do those facts, alone, justify the U.S. Government's promotion and endorsement of what are, clearly, practices and philosophies that touch on, impact, interact with, civil service employee's states of consciousness, belief systems, theologies, and spiritual condition?

e. Code 180 "assures" us that these practices are "well accepted psychological" techniques. It is, as if, the fact that some psychologists accept these techniques should be enough to convince us that the techniques are neutral, objective, purely physiological, purely secular.

f. It is clear to me, as a result of my investigations, that if there is an "off the wall" theory or "hair-brained" practice, there must be a group of psychologists, somewhere, who will embrace it.

g. Several years ago, according to author and lecturer, David Hunt, there was the largest convention of psychologists and psychiatrists ever assembled. Seven thousand met in Phoenix, Arizona.

(1) The purpose was to examine where psychology had come from and where it was going in the 100 years since Freud. No one could agree on either point.

(2) A panel of four experts on schizophrenia was convened to discuss the disorder. Three said the disease didn't even exist. R.D. Lang said it didn't exist until someone invented the word. Another said that it may make the Hinckley's feel good to have their son [who attempted the assassination of President Reagan] diagnosed as a schizophrenic when he's really just a "bum".

(3) R.D. Lang also stated that "I cannot think of one thing that psychology has offered the human race that is of any benefit in the area of interpersonal relationships in its entire history.

(4) Dr. Joseph Volpe said, "Who would have imagined that the evolution of psychology would come to this, a "Babel" of conflicting voices."

h. The word "psychology" comes from the root "psyche" which is Greek for "soul." Just because some branch of the pseudo-science of psychology embraces some theory or practice, it is by no means justification for the U.S. Government to endorse it, to promote it, to indoctrinate its employees with it.

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Conclusions: State Supported Religion?

- a. Psychology is an extremely diverse field. Some psychologists try to stay with the scientific, the objective. Others are willing to crawl "out on a Limb" into the areas of the metaphysical that are every bit as religious as the Yogis, Gurus, Ascendant Masters, and the Shamans.
- b. We cannot be so naive as to assume anything labeled "psychology" is neutral, objective, secular, scientific, medical ... or safe.
- c. We must distinguish and discriminate among "psychological" disciplines as to what is appropriate for government to endorse or promote.
- d. Regardless of who is "pushing" it now and for what alleged reasons, Meditation and guided visualization originated in Eastern Religious Mysticism. And just because a Carl Jung or a Carl Rogers as psychologists, tell us to "look within to our higher self" should not automatically cloak it with secular credibility.
- e. If man has a spirit, what effects does meditation and guided visualization have on it? If the answer is unknown, how can government risk using it?
- f. If the answer is: "man has no spirit"; then that is, in itself, a religious statement that government has no business making.
- g. Even if there are benefits of stress reduction, government has no right to meddle in areas that, at the very least, touch on the area of man's spiritual condition and religious belief systems; and at the worst constitutes mind control through altered states of consciousness with a possible eventual shift in world view and belief system.
- h. The area of stress inevitably deals with relationships; how one deals with the cares of this world, these are areas that at least overlap with religious beliefs. The government has no business "playing church" in its employees lives. To avoid excessive entanglement with religion, government should leave these areas to be resolved by its employees through avenues in their

private lives.

j. The first clause of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution reads: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

k. In 1963 the U.S. Supreme Court declared Bible reading and classroom prayer in the public schools unconstitutional.

l. In 1969 the U.S. Supreme Court in *Torcaso vs. Watkins* stated that government cannot "aid those religions based on a belief in the existence of God as against religions founded on different beliefs. Among religions that do not teach what would generally be considered a belief in the existence of God are Buddhism, Taoism, Ethical Culture, Secular Humanism and others.

m. In the 1963 decision the court also held that the state may not establish a "religion of secularism."

n. In 1979 a final decision reached in the Third District Court of Appeals, *Malmak vs. Yogi* (592 F 2D 197), the court held that Transcendental Meditation (T.M.) is a religion, (even though the T.M. people insist it is purely scientific).

o. "In 1985 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled to affirm a federal appellate ruling striking down an Alabama law that authorized a daily one-minute period of silence in public schools for "meditation or voluntary prayer." According to the high court, the law was unconstitutional because it endorsed religion as a "favored practice." (1986 World Almanac).

p. I support the right of individual Americans to believe whatever they want. I support the right of private corporations to endorse or promote, but not force religion on their employees. I oppose the government's endorsing or promoting religion even if their employees can opt out.

q. The danger we face is the establishment of a state religion of "Human Potential" ideology beyond the wildest dreams of the New Agers.

Items that should be investigated and monitored for New Age/Eastern Mysticism/Human Potential/Occult:

- a. What OPM director, Constance Horner plans to do to help federal employee's "High Touch needs."
 - b. All PSNS contractor organizations that have or are training PSNS employees.
 - c. The entire list of After Hours and during hours courses.
 - d. The PSNS Apprentice program courses.
 - e. All off station courses, seminars, conferences, conventions that are attended by PSNS managers.
-

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Bad message return path

Christian Cheap Shots:

"You're a legalist and a Pharisee!"

"You're licentious and don't care about truth!"

And nobody even tries to speak the truth in love...

Holiness - Freedom

Legalism -
Licentiousness

Disputable Matters

[Walking in the Spirit](#)

[Abide in the Vine](#)

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Unless otherwise noted, the ministries I link to are, for the most part in my view, "speaking the Truth in Love" (Ephesians 4:15).

If you think I'm wrong to link to any of these sites... or if you think I need a stronger disclaimer about one of these sites... please let me know and tell me why.

Some of the links at the end are for information and research purposes only. Not only do I not endorse these sites, but I warn against what they stand for. May the Lord give you discernment.

By the way, if you see my articles on other websites or links to my site from other websites, realize that I don't necessarily endorse those sites.

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<http://www.housechurchportal.net>

<http://www.ntrf.org/>

<http://www.ex-cult.org/Groups/Amway/otherside/links.htm>

<http://www.brethrenonline.org/>

<http://www.xenu.net/index.html>

http://brethrenpedia.quist.ca/wiki/Main_Page

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<http://www.comnet.ca/~jmsinclair/>

<http://www.geocities.com/hebrews928/pkpath.html>

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<http://www.thecoffeeoasis.com/>

[http://www.meysen.ac.jp/engli/
eoppo02.html](http://www.meysen.ac.jp/engli/eoppo02.html)

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com/](http://www.beyondmormonism.com/)

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Items from Media Spotlight

The Bitter Heart

A Testimony by Jean Dager

"Over the years I've known people who are bitter about life. This includes believers as well as non-believers in Jesus. I'm sure we all can say we have met such people from time to time. Perhaps they even have good reason to be bitter: a stressful marriage; a painful and sorrowful past; loss of material wealth due to the treachery of others; ill health; disappointment over failed plans, or myriad other reasons."

[*See the entire article*](#)

(pdf file 140 kb)

From 3/2006 [*Media Spotlight*](#)

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[THE SCRIPTURES: WHAT WILL I DIE FOR?](#)

Diocletian's edict that all the sacred books of the Christians should be burned was a fiery trial for the saints of God. Since the copies were hand written and not the common possession of all as our printed Bibles are to us today, the leaders of the churches were particularly sought after and afflicted in [...]

[West African Mission Update - December 2006](#)

Steve & Patricia Phillips Steve has recently completed a book entitled: Black but Lovely: Thoughts on the Song of Songs. This and his other publications can be read and/or copied by visiting the website: <http://www.procinwarn.com/West-Africa/west-africa.htm> and selecting from the titles presented. ~ News From Patti ~ Dear Brethren, I have recently returned from a trip to Nigeria. Steve [...]

[Whatever happened to conviction of sin?](#)

Brethren, Whatever happened to conviction of sin? Has it been relegated to the trash heap of Christianity, along with simplicity, reverence, and the fear of God? As possessors by God's grace of the most profound truth in existence, we are going to be held accountable by Him for what we have done with this in [...]

[FURNACE OF AFFLICTION - Chapter 5](#)

BEHOLD, I HAVE REFINED YOU, BUT NOT AS SILVER; I HAVE TESTED YOU IN THE FURNACE OF AFFLICTION [Isa.48:10] Life made bitter by grueling taskmasters makes tears your food, night and day. It is what Israel knew, enslaved in the iron furnace of Egypt under the Pharaoh who knew not Joseph. But the Israel of God knew him. They could [...]

[PERPETUA - CASSIAN - EULALIA - JUSTUS](#)

PERPETUA c.202 AD A beloved African sister of wealthy and noble birth, highly educated and honorably married, was taken captive by persecutors of the faith. Only twenty-two years old and with babe at her breast, she was begged by her aged and pagan father to deny Christ because of the shame that she was bringing upon [...]

[Sufficiency](#)

Brethren, In 2 Corinthians 3:5 Paul explains in lucid terms that his sufficiency, his wherewithal, was not from himself, from his fleshly man, but was from God. He states plainly that the Lord was the one who had made him a minister of the new covenant. In Corrie ten Boom's magnificent little volume The Hiding [...]

[CHRIST'S SCHOOL OF SUFFERING - Chapter 4](#)

ALTHOUGH HE WAS A SON, HE LEARNED OBEDIENCE FROM THE THINGS HE SUFFERED [Heb.5:8] In all their affliction He was afflicted [Isa.63:9]. Truly Christ Jesus our Lord was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief [Isa.53:3]. From birth there was no room for Him except the welcome afforded by sheep and oxen [Lk.2:7]. Chief priests and scribes may know ancient prophecies [...]

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Savior. In fact the entire Old Testament points to Jesus. "God will provide the lamb" (Genesis 22:8).

6. We cannot save ourselves by our good works, trying to be a good person, or thinking the right thoughts. We go from being enemies of God to becoming a child of God by humbling ourselves before God, [repenting of our sin](#), receiving God's forgiveness because of what Jesus did for us, putting on Jesus' righteousness instead of a righteousness of our own, and asking Jesus to be the Lord of our lives for ever and ever, instead of trying to be the god of our own lives.

What I'm saying here is from the Bible and has nothing to do with the evils of historic "Christendom" or modern American religious right-wingers. And it doesn't depend on whether or not Jim Baumgaertel is a self-righteous holier-than-thou, religious hypocrite zealot! Jesus wants to set me free of all of that! It is simply a matter of each of us realizing that we were once lost but now we're found as we put our trust in the Lord Jesus.

I invite you to receive Jesus as your Savior and Lord.

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that **while we were still sinners, Christ died for us**. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Romans 5:8-10

"But **as many as received Him**, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name." John 1:12

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For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Romans 6:23*

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From Port Orchard, Washington State, USA

Welcome to a site devoted to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It's my desire that the Lord would use these pages to proclaim His Gospel, to invite people to put their trust in Him, to build [His Ekklesia](#), and to warn of false gospels, false messiahs, and counterfeit religious systems.

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CHRISTMAS

"Dear brethren, The following is an article that I was asked to write for a state-wide newspaper in Benue State, Nigeria. It will be published this week. I thought you'd like to see it. Love, Steve and Patti" [Missionaries to West Africa]

CHRISTMAS

**This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance,
That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners**

I Timothy 1:15

From a regal throne at the right hand of the Majesty on high to the dust and dung of a village stable; so did the Son of God enter this world. Christ, the very lamp and glory of heaven, became knit together in the darkness of a mortal womb and was brought forth into the blackness of Bethlehem 's night.

The Sovereign over myriads of bright spirits and innumerable starry hosts, now lay sucking at a mother's breast. And He who is the fearful and adoring object of every worshipping heart above, discovered that there was no room for Him at the Inn .

And yet He came. He abandoned all glory and renown, endured every humiliation of human flesh, and suffered the indignity of contradicting sinners against Himself by finally dying the death of a cross. All that we lust after – power, position, possessions, and prominence – He forsook. All that we flee from – shame, impoverishment, sorrow, and affliction – He willingly endured.

Jesus was born to die. The flickering lantern above Bethlehem 's cradle, cast the shadow of a cross

upon this Babe sent from the Father's bosom. Even an angelic messenger sounded this same note that very night: **There is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord** [Lk.2:11].

Truly, Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. How great must be our depravity that it required Christ to come into this world to rescue us from our wretchedness! Behold the wickedness that so saturates us that the Immortal must don frail flesh and die! Think of the indelible stain of our iniquity that Jesus must become sin for us to purge the blot of its guilt!

Witness the power of evil that holds us captive in its iron grip so that Omnipotence alone can snap its chains and loose the prisoners from that dungeon of doom! And ponder in solemn silence that it is eternal love exclusively which is able to transform our hating and hateful hearts from enmity against God and man!

Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! [Jn.1:29].

Yet even so, when He came to Bethlehem, there was no room for Him at the Inn. All rooms were occupied. None were concerned that there was no place found for Christ in their midst; that He must be cast out as an unwelcome intruder.

Actually, there was one room available to Him, but it was not offered. It was that of the Innkeeper himself. He could have admitted Christ to dwell in the place that he had reserved for himself. The man could have vacated his own comforts to occupy that lowly stable instead of Jesus.

But he did not. Christ was sent away while the man retained his own place with no regard for Him who knocked at his door seeking entrance.

If we are honest, we are all close relatives of that Innkeeper. Have we not done the same? Have we not kept Christ outside of the dwelling of our hearts for long? Have you not heard Him approach you more than once saying: **Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him** [Rev.3:20].

What place does the Lord Jesus have in your life? Have you received Him for who He is, as Lord

indeed?

He awaits your reply.

**He died for all, that those who live should live no
longer for themselves,
but for Him who died for them and rose again [2
Cor.5:15]**

[Steve Phillips](#)

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Tells Merkel in Cairo that Egypt is working to free both Israeli and Palestinian "detainees"; says talks not feasible during PA clashes.

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[Jehovah's Witnesses](#) [Biblical scholar says Jehovah's Witnesses wrong about blood transfusions](#)

Bible scholars know that Jehovah's Witnesses - theologically a cult of Christianity - are wrong about blood transfusions.

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[Netherlands](#) [Amsterdam: In the Heart of Sin City](#)

The modern Dutch consensus is that making outlaws of prostitutes and soft-drug users only pushes them underground and into the hands of real criminals. Better to control and regulate such behaviors by legalizing—or in the case of cannabis, tolerating—the otherwise objectionable. The Dutch word for this is gedogen, which has no equivalent in English yet roughly means permitting what is officially illegal.

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[Children of God / The Family](#) [Revenge Against Religious Sect](#)

Two decades after the Children of God cult officially renounced adult-child sex in response to allegations of sexual misconduct, a new British documentary, Cult Killer, is reviving questions.

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[Jehovah's Witnesses](#) [Father recalls breaking with faith for daughter](#)

Lawrence Hughes walked into a Calgary hospital room in February, 2002, with a Bible in his hand, ready to do everything he could for his dying daughter, Bethany — everything, that is, short of allowing her to have a lifesaving blood transfusion.

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Friday February 2, 2007

[Aum Shinrikyo](#) [Faith in Aum guru resurges as Joyu moves to form his own group](#)

The Aum Shinrikyo doomsday cult may be gone, but it certainly is not forgotten. Now, Aum's charismatic former

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Replanting trees consumed in last summer's war is both an act of defiance against Israel's enemies and an old-time expression of Zionism.

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spokesman is in the final stages of creating a new religious group based on his own teachings.

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[World of Pentecost Church Church members sue pastor for lost money](#)

An East Side pastor drained nearly \$1 million from his church, according to a lawsuit filed by some members of his congregation.

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[Jehovah's Witnesses B.C. officials will seize sextuplets again if need arises](#)

Officials say that sextuplet infants, seized by the B.C. government for blood transfusions over the objections of their Jehovah's Witness parents, could be taken again if the need arises.

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[Jehovah's Witnesses Canada parents fight for babies](#)

The couple, who have not been identified, say their religion forbids blood transfusions. They are seeking alternative treatment for the infants.

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[Jehovah's Witnesses Jehovah's Witnesses say they seek best treatment](#)

The group that speaks for Jehovah's Witnesses in Canada has issued a statement urging people not to jump to conclusions about their faith.

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[Jehovah's Witnesses B.C. government relied on two medical experts in deciding to seize sextuplets](#)

Two medical experts helped advise the B.C. government to seize three sextuplets and give two of them blood transfusions over the objections of their Jehovah's Witness parents.

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[Jehovah's Witnesses Ethicist says B.C. blood feud may save children and Jehovah's Witness parents](#)

The four babies are the survivors of Vancouver sextuplets born last month almost three months premature. The parents are Jehovah's Witnesses who say they were horrified when the government seized custody of three of them and gave two blood transfusions, a procedure their religion forbids.

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[Hate Groups, Scientology Controversial Scientology group speaks out at Oxford Careers Fair](#)

Scientology front group spreads its quackery at Oxford University Alternative Careers fair.

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Thursday February 1, 2007

[Witchcraft Reality show to feature Witch School](#)

The witch school that moved into Hoopeston's elephant building three years ago may soon be the site of a reality TV show on the Sci-Fi channel.

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[Unification Church, Emmanuel Milingo Controversial excommunicated archbishop surfaces in Seoul](#)

Former Roman Catholic Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo, a resident of Zambia that shocked the world by getting married - an act against church doctrine - has been secretly staying in Seoul to study the religion of the Unification Church, founded by the controversial Reverend Sun-myung Moon.

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[IPIC International Gregory Setser gets 40 years in import scam](#)

Targeting mostly Christian investors, including televangelist Benny Hinn, through churches and other groups, Mr. Setser claimed that his company, IPIC Investments, could produce up to 50 percent returns by buying cheap, foreign-made products that would be sold to major U.S. retailers such as Michaels, Hobby Lobby and Costco.

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[Australia Australia PM questions Jesus Loves Osama sign](#)

Many Australians will question the priority of churches which have posted signs saying Jesus loves Osama, Prime Minister John Howard says.

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[Gilbert Deya Ministries Kidnap-charge pastor up for extradition](#)

A controversial preacher who claims to help infertile couples have so-called miracle babies by prayer faces an extradition hearing next month.

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[Jehovah's Witnesses Lawyer angry at B.C. for seizing 3 of sextuplets](#)

The Jehovah's Witness parents of the four surviving sextuplets born in a B.C. hospital are accusing the province of violating their parental rights by seizing three of their children in order to administer blood transfusions.

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[Jehovah's Witnesses B.C. government has seized 3 sextuplets for blood transfusions](#)

The B.C. government seized three sextuplets last week, allowing doctors to give them blood transfusions against the wishes of their parents, the family's lawyer says.

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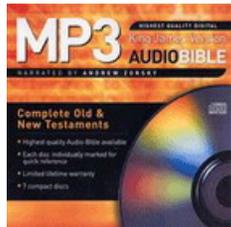
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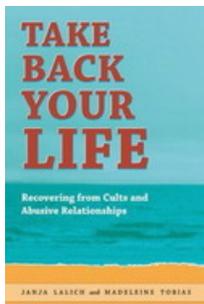
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よいニュース

私はイエス・キリストのよいニュースを考慮するように誘い、主にイエス・キリストあなたの生命を手渡すように誘う。

"これはすべての受諾、その忠実な格言そして価値がある **sinner** を救うためにキリストイエス・キリストは世界に入って来た、私が主である。"1つのティモシー 1:15

イエス・キリストは言った、"確実に、私はあなたに変えられなければ、言う **小さい子供としてなる**、決して天国に入らない。"Matthew 18:3

すべてを作成した神は彼が作成したものをによって彼自身を明らかにした; ユダヤ人の人々の歴史によって; 私達のなる1つによって及び33年間私達の中で歩き、十字に彼を釘付けすることを私達を許可する; 彼の死および復活によって; 66冊の本の独特なコレクションによって聖書と呼ばれた; そして私達の中心への神聖な精神の証明によって。

私が聖書からのそれを理解するので福音(よいニュース) はこれである:

1. 神は彼と愛関係の為に私達を作成した。
2. ロボットを愛することができないので彼は私達に彼を拒絶する機能を与えた。
3. 私達のそれぞれはself-centeredness から彼を拒絶し、暴動及び私達は神の敵に似合った。それぞれ私達は私達の自身の生命の神であることを試みることを選んだ。地獄はそれらを作成したそれらを愛し、神に手渡したいと思っていない彼らの自身の生命の神のを、主張する人々のための場所である; すべての永遠のための彼の言葉の彼とありたいと思わない。
4. 神に彼の準備に既に誰でも救助する計画が答えるあった。均一私達が永遠の死刑(死)

の神値したけれども、彼自身に、私達の1つはなり、私達の場所で死ぬ。彼は私達のために死ぬことを来、彼はあったことを彼が彼が言ったかだれだったこと人間にショーに、客観的に、再度立上がった。

5. 私達に彼のholinessを示すために神は旧約聖書の法律を与えた; 私達が私達の自身の努力の彼のholinessに決してかなうことができないことを私達に示すため; そして私達がaを必要としたことを私達に示すため

救助者. 実際は全体の旧約聖書はイエス・キリストを指す。"神子ヒツジ"を提供する(起源22:8)

6. 私達はよい人であることを試みるかまたは右の思考を考える私達のよい仕事によって私達自身を救うことができない。私達は神の子供になることに神の敵であることから神の前に私達自身をhumblingによって行く、[私達の罪の後悔](#)、どんなのためにイエス・キリストが私達のためにしたか神の許しを受け取り、私達の専有物の正義の代りにイエス・キリストの正義に置き、そして私達の自身の生命の神があることを試みるかわりにのための私達の生命の主そして、であるようにイエス・キリストに頼む。

私が聖書からあるおよびここで言っている何を歴史的な"Christendom"または現代アメリカの宗教right-wingersの悪とは全く関係ない。そしてそれはジムBaumgaertelがself-righteous holier-than-thou、宗教hypocrite熱狂者であるかどうか左右されない! イエス・キリストは私をそのすべての自由に置きたいと思う! それは私達が主にイエス・キリスト私達の信頼を置くと同時に私達が一度失われたが、今私達があることをわかっている私達のそれぞれの問題単にである。

私はあなたの方としてイエス・キリストを受け取るように誘う救助者そして主。

"しかし神はそれの私達の方に彼自身の愛を、示す **間私達は静かなsinners、私達のために死んだキリストだった**. 大いにそして、彼の血によって今正当化されて、私達は憤りから彼を通した救われる。のために私達が敵だったときに和解させていた彼の息子の死による神に和解したら、大いに多く、私達は彼の生命までに救われる。"Romans 5:8-10

"しかし **彼受け取られる多数**、それらに彼は彼の名前を信じるそれらへ神の子供に、なる権利を与えた。"ジョン1:12



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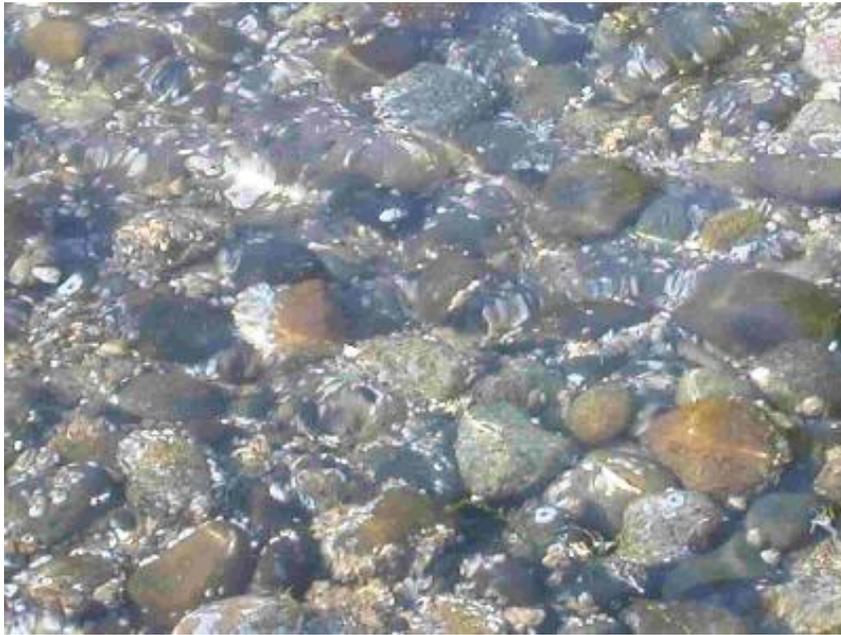
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"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God
is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
Romans 6:23



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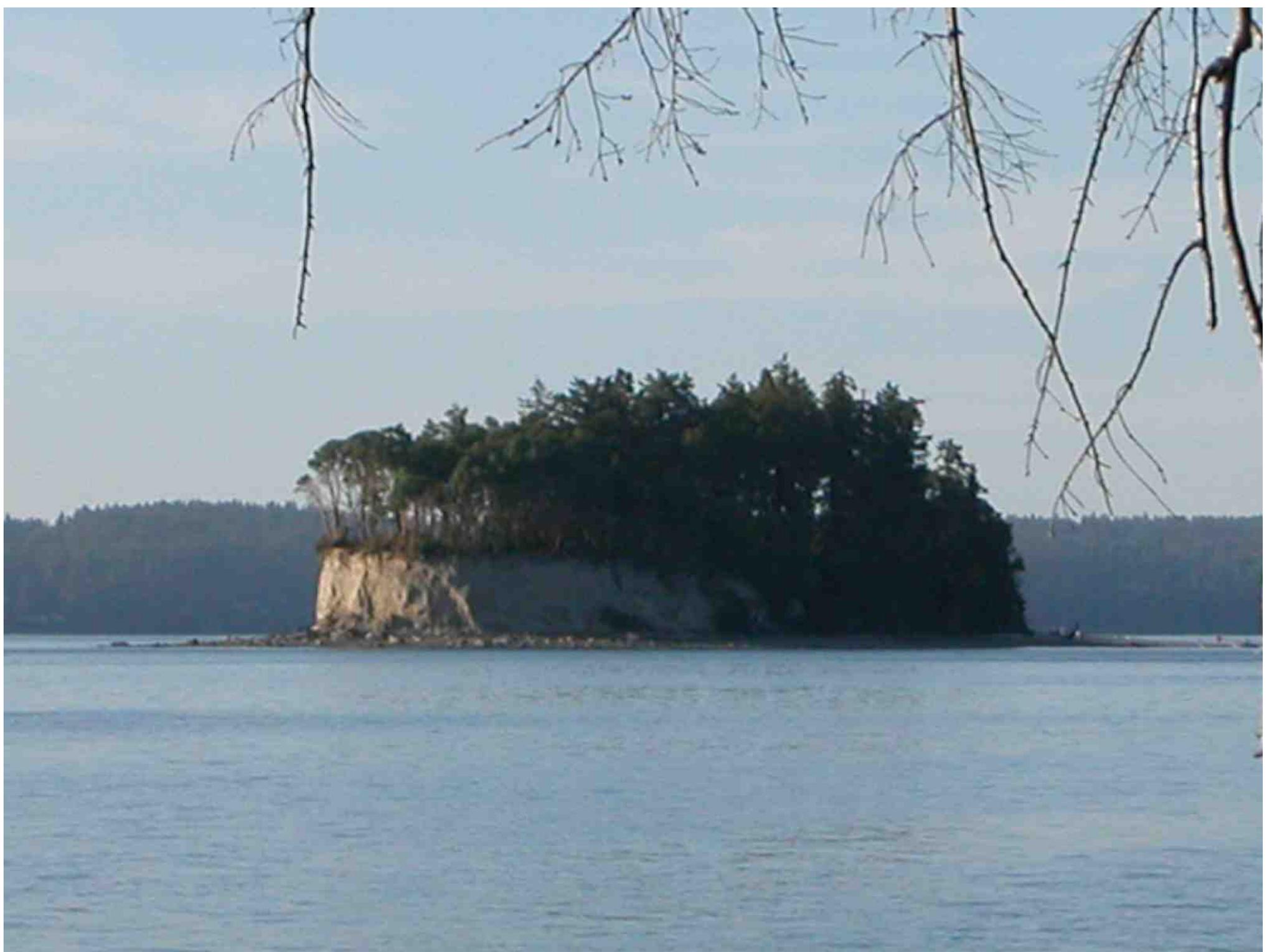
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Jean's Turn

THE BITTER HEART

by Jean Dager

Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby be defiled. (Hebrews 12:15)

Over the years I've known people who are bitter about life. This includes believers as well as non-believers in Jesus. I'm sure we all can say we have met such people from time to time. Perhaps they even have good reason to be bitter: a stressful marriage; a painful and sorrowful past; loss of material wealth due to the treachery of others; ill health; disappointment over failed plans, or myriad other reasons.

I can understand non-believers who have no relationship with God being bitter. But I'm especially saddened when a fellow believer has a bitter heart. Especially if that person is one who regularly reads the Bible, has an active prayer life, and tries to be a witness for Christ to others. I read a page from A.W. Tozer's *Christian Leadership*, and I believe he shed a bright light on this subject when he said:

Resentment simply cannot dwell in a loving heart. Before resentfulness can enter, love must take its flight and bitterness take over. The bitter soul will compile a list of slights at which it takes offense and will watch over itself like a mother bear over her cubs. And the figure is apt, for the resentful heart is always surly and suspicious like a she-bear.

Few sights are more depressing than that of a professed Christian defending his supposed rights and bitterly resisting any attempt to violate them. Such a Christian has never accepted the way of the cross. The sweet graces of meekness and humility are unknown to him. He grows

every day harder and more acrimonious as he defends his reputation, his rights, his ministry, against his imagined foes. (emphasis added)

I can surely see why there is the need to examine ourselves often to guard against falling into the sin of harboring ill thoughts against others or piling up resentments.

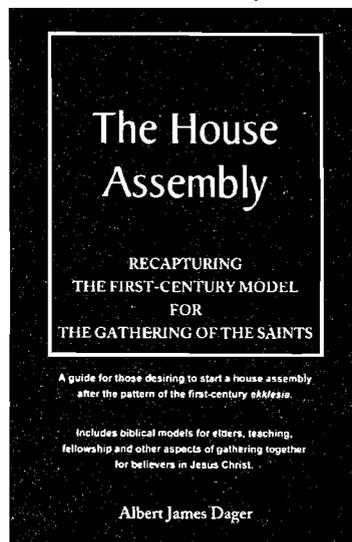
Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:13-14)

Hardened and embittered spirits darken the light of Christ's love shining within us. A loving heart will always strive to be forgiving of others as Christ forgave us, and to live as much as possible with a joyful and cheerful countenance. Tozer, in his wisdom, admonishes the brethren to "die to self and rise with Christ into newness of life." ❖

Many Christians are experiencing in their churches the inevitable results of religious institutionalism: false teachings; abusive pastors; denominational tradition; anecdotal sermons; favoritism; unaccountability of pastors; constant fund-raising programs and many other issues that suck the financial, emotional and time resources of the people.

Is this what Jesus had in mind for His people?

Many believers are meeting in their homes and finding a new freedom in Christ that they could never experience in the traditional church setting. In this provocative book, Al Dager offers biblical guidelines for reestablishing the first-century model.



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