



THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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"Put on the whole armor of God" (Ephesians 6:13) at

Summer 2018

IS AMERICA WAKING UP?



Bill Watson

Early in the 18th century, the United States experienced a "Great Awakening." It was a religious awakening. And again, in the 19th century, a second great religious awakening occurred, causing a reinvigorated enthusiasm to reconnect with Jesus Christ. Now, some are asking, "Is the United States reawakening again, once more? And if so—what kind of 'Great Awakening' is this one?"

by Bill Watson

Thomas Paine once said, "It is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be of the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it."

The words of Thomas Paine seem to be very fitting for our time. I say this due to the revival of a "political movement" that is gaining momentum in the United States; it's called *nationalism*, or as some have alternately labeled it, *populism*, that is presently capturing the attention of the American populace. However, it has caused a political *polarization* within the public square, and with such intensity that it's palpable—you can cut it with a knife. Yet, some would prefer to deny it's happening, but it is. *Lines are being drawn and sides are being taken!*

The Internet is *boiling over* with enormous varieties of speculation and conspiratorial jargon that is loaded with prodigious amounts of information and unfortunately, *disinformation*, too. We have a plethora of news outlets available over a vast network of different mediums to keep us all well informed, 24/7, all year. It's rather overwhelming when considering the content of information we have at our fingertips.

Combine this with a President who is *not shy* about using social media, and you have a recipe for controversy, intrigue, plots, and speculation, which occasionally is constructed from *classified disclosures never before available* to Mr. & Mrs. Joe Public—and frankly, some are finding out they "can't handle the truth!"

Part of this is due to the disclosures of *Wikileaks*, and former intelligence contractor, Edward Snowden, of the National Security Agency, along with a variety of investigative reporters who all contribute to this *new* kind of "Great Awakening," which is a *political* awakening, not religious, that has begun to reveal a level of *corruption*, *subterfuge*, and *intrigue*, *lying*, and *spying* within the United States government upon its own citizens and allies that is so large in size, that frankly, it's just incredibly shocking and in so many ways hard to believe!

Yet, as Thomas Paine said, "We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth..." And it is painful to recognize leaders of the United States that held and still do hold top level positions of trust in government, law enforcement, security and justice roles, with high level security clearances, who are involved in such nefarious and in some cases, illegal activity!

When you begin to realize the government of your beloved country has for decades, under both Republican and Democratic administrations, have been *betraying its citizens*, allies, and

Waking Up, continued on page 3



Also in this issue...

God's Plan For Man Revealed
Page 6 by Lloyd Cary—and Page 8,
How to Restore a Broken Connection

From Paradise to Peril
by Murray Palmatier
Page 9

Like a Thief in the Night
by Will Manares
Page 9

Primitive vs Modern Church
by Horane Smith
Page 10

The Law of Liberty
by Lanny Holt
Page 10

Where Our Responsibilities Lie
by George Roper
Page 11

Obits, Pages 12, 13

Church News, Page 15

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Open Church Policy

The *Church of God International* is an *open* church.

We have many people attending who are *new* in the faith. Some will not always keep each of God's laws as they should, and some will not believe everything we teach. We pray that they may be strengthened through the services we render and the examples we set as they come to a closer walk with their God. We request that you be neither judgmental nor base your standard for obedience on what you see your brother do. Christ is our standard, not weak and sinful men. Always remember that you will be judged for what *you* do, not what others do. Your job is to pray for them, set the right example, and please the Father in all that you do. Ω

— 2018 Holy Day Calendar —

New Testament Passover

March 29, 2018 (Observed at sundown)

Feast of Unleavened Bread

March 31 - April 6, 2018

Pentecost

May 20, 2018

Feast of Trumpets

September 10, 2018

Day of Atonement

September 19, 2018

Feast of Tabernacles

September 24 - September 30, 2018

More information will be forthcoming.

Last Great Day

October 1, 2018

Holy days are observed beginning sundown the previous evening and end at sundown on the days listed. Passover is observed at sundown on the day listed.

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Church of God International

3900 Timms Street

Tyler, TX 75701

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Our Great Commission

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of 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. Amen" (Matthew 28:19-20).

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THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS 3900 TIMMS ST., TYLER, TX 75701

Notice!

- It is the desire of the staff to publish *The International News* quarterly. We can do this only if *you*, the reader, help by submitting timely articles, reports, and pictures.
- With few exceptions, submissions should be from 800-1000 words in ether .doc, docx, rtf, or .txt format.
- Submissions may be sent either to vancestinson@cgi.org or lloyd Cary@gmail.com or, preferably, to *both*.

DEADLINE for the *next* issue is **August 15th 2018**.



We look forward to seeing you soon... *in print!*

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NOTICE: *The International News* welcomes submissions of articles, features, church news, pictures, or manuscripts. However, it cannot be responsible for the return of unsolicited materials. Materials submitted can sent through the postal service, but electronic submissions are preferred.

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Waking Up, continued from page 1



Hillary Rodham Clinton—Clinton Foundation

each others' political efforts by accessing private phone records, computer search engines and/or wide-reaching intercepts and surveillance activity, or controlling and making up data, or dossiers to favor certain political parties and entities, along with spying on world leaders that are supposed to be your friendly allies, and meddling in foreign civil unrest—it becomes a stunningly disappointing *reality check* of abandoned honesty, integrity, and respect for the rule of law.

Right or wrong, regardless of our opinion, information has now been *publicized*, revealing just how the United States has been working over the last few decades. Many of us find ourselves incredulous over *what* and *who* appears to be involved, and seems to be building toward the unsealing of over 28,000 sealed indictments since the current administration has taken position. By the way, that represents an increase from an average of just 1000 to 1500 annually! This is mind numbing! And the mainstream media is M.I.A.!

However, we are now beginning to see some names coming into the public eye and arrests for crimes committed. Most recently, New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman, accused of sexual misconduct, resigned. Founder Keith Rainer and movie star Allison Mack, who plays Chloe in the Superman series *Smallville*, has also been arrested and charged for “recruiting” on behalf of the executive training company, NXIVM, for *human sex trafficking*, money laundering, and tax fraud with suspected ties to the *Clinton Foundation*—and this is just the beginning!

Sources close to the FBI and DOJ claim many of those under secret indictments are judges, current and former politicians, and business executives, all in line to be revealed, as the courts begin processing these indictments for prosecution and bring these charges forward, incrementally, over the coming months and years! It's no wonder as to why approximately 50 senators and congressman have resigned or will not be seeking re-election. It's fair to say some may not want to endure the public embarrassment, or maybe made deals to stand down.

But whatever the reason, *stay tuned*, because it's going to become quite shocking for some of us when it's revealed publicly as to just who is, and was, involved in so much of this corruption, graft, and immorality for so long—decades long—especially here in the United States. The names that have been leaked and the charges they will face will be shocking for some to comprehend, while others will probably not believe the magnitude, scope, and degree of subterfuge, treason, and sexual misconduct that has taken place by both elected and appointed officials of trust, at some of the highest levels of leadership, from *both* sides of the aisle!

WHAT IS THIS REAWAKENING?

Thomas Paine said, “For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it.” Jesus said, “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

Admittedly, this was meant to be in context to His Word, the Gospel, but the *principle* still stands, and it doesn't dismiss this fact: “Truth” has a way of setting you free from the shackles of control, deceit, anxiety, danger, and harm. It can be *empowering*—this is undeniable, especially as a Christian!

There's an old saying that “Honesty is the best policy.” When you have nothing to hide and you can live a life of openness and transparency, then no one or nothing can control your behavior in what you do, say, or think—that should be the aspiration of every Christian today. But, sadly, too many of our political leaders, educators, and those running our large corporations, along with *some* in law enforcement agencies, do *not* adhere to the Christian values so critical to the character necessary when serving the *public trust*. John Adams said it very plainly when he explained, “Our Constitution was made only for a *moral and religious people*. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”

It would seem obvious, due to the liberty and freedom our U.S. constitution provides, that *trust* becomes a determining factor for the success of benefiting the greater citizenry. Otherwise, those of lesser character, untrustworthy, working self-serving agendas, can easily “game” the system and become very rich due to the access of power and influence, which comes with the positions of *privilege* while serving the public. That, unfortunately, is exactly what has been going on for the past 50–60 years. Far too many of our leaders, *both* Blue and Red, have been getting rich at the expense of the country's well being and the people they're supposed to serve!

The prophet Isaiah has a lot to say to the United States; and though he's speaking to ancient Israel, the *cultural parallels* are dead on and stunning! “Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity [perversity, evil, mischief], a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, ...from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it [they're irrational, and void of judgment—moral relativism is now the rule]; the wounds and bruises, and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment [no accountability]. Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire [literally, and culturally]: your land, strangers [foreigners] devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as over thrown by strangers [foreigners]” (Isaiah 1:4–7).

Jeremiah has a *similar* message for Judah some 120 years later, but prophetically speaking, is also very appropriate and cogent for our country today. You might as well consider him warning many presidents, congressman, senators and judges—prime ministers, ambassadors, and many political leaders throughout the land of North America and the British Commonwealth nations—that judgment is upon the land. Notice how Jeremiah's message is so germane for us *today*:

“*Declare* this [this is a declaration] in the house of Jacob [which did not exist at this time—they had been conquered 120 years before. You can make the case that this actually is directed to us, for today] and *publish* it [make it known] in Judah [in Jeremiah's time, as well as the future Israeli nation of the latter days], saying, Hear now foolish people, and without understanding [reprobates—void of judgment]; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not [you're in denial and blind]: Fear you not me? saith the LORD: will you not tremble at my presence [Do you not respect God, His laws, power, and authority?] ...But this people has a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone. Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the LORD our God [They are an arrogant people that does not revere or submit to



Alex Jones—www.infowars.com



William Jefferson Clinton—Clinton Global Initiative

Waking Up, continued on page 4

Waking Up, continued from page 3



Former FBI Director, James Comey



Keith Raniere and Allison Mack—Cult Leaders

God's instruction] ...Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you [We are limiting God from providing and protecting us because we choose to disregard His laws]. For among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that sets snares; they set a trap, they catch men [They purposely set people up for blackmail and extortion, to control their actions]. As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit [The houses of authority are full of leaders who deceive for self serving gain and are controlled for unethical and immoral purposes]: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich [They go into public service of trust and by exploits and subterfuge, blackmail, and extortion, become fat and rich]. They are waxen fat, they shine [They become prominent and popular]: yea they over pass the deeds of the wicked [They overlook lawlessness and ignore the rule of law for gain and power]: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless [The leaders don't care about the orphan, but exploit children for gain, trafficking them into slavery and illicit sexual service], yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge [They don't serve the needs of the poor; instead they take advantage of them for personal gain and power]. Shall I not visit for these things? says the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this [God fully intends to deliver justice for this injustice]? An astonishment and horrible thing is committed in the land [There is much evil in this described society]; The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means [The religious leaders are misleading the people and not instructing them in truth—why?—to maintain their own gain, prominence, and control]; and my people love to have it so [The people prefer it this way because it makes them *feel good*]: and what will you do in the end thereof" (Jeremiah 5:20–31)? Yes, that is the question for all of us to answer upon realizing the evidentiary *evil* that clearly surrounds us.

We are living in some very remarkably *parallel times*. It is obvious the United States and the United Kingdom, along with many of its commonwealth nations, suffer from the same *sycophant pathologies and activities*. Things we used to trust in and felt secure with are now beginning to unravel and come unglued because of disclosures made public that reveal those in public service *betrayed the trust* of the office they were elected and/or appointed to serve in. And *God is not amused* at this kind of political graft, corruption, and betrayal. As Hosea said during the time of the Assyrian invasions of the 8th century against Israel (not Judah): "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because you have rejected knowledge, I [God] will also reject you [the nation], that you shall be no priest [figuratively, a moral religious standard] to me: seeing you have forgotten the law of your God, I [God]

will also forget your children [future generations]" (Hosea 4:6). These are harsh statements from the God we embrace as a country!

God is *fed up* with a nation that does the things described above. And it has been His *pattern* to correct any nation that embraces His standards as the God of the land, which the United States has done since its inception. And though many of us would argue and have to admit the United States itself hasn't been *perfect* with human rights, it still doesn't dismiss this current fact: Its attraction is due to personal freedoms and liberties, compared to the rest of the world, that excel all other nations. Everyone wants to immigrate to the United States—even if it requires breaking the law to get in!

So What's Coming Up Ahead —Around the Next Bend

The United States is positioning for a correction in its course of interaction with the world's community of nations. It would appear by the actions of this President, that he fully intends to rebuild and reinforce the overall strength and posture of the United States on the world stage. His most recent passing of the Omnibus Budget Bill clearly indicates *military spending* is a top priority. The fact this \$1.3 trillion bill has *\$720 billion* earmarked for military expenditures plainly indicates he is refurbishing and expanding the military might of America, for whatever military action may be required. Actually, it appears he fully expects *preparedness for war is justified*, and that's why more than half of this Omnibus Bill is devoted to military spending!

We are living in a time when at least four or five nations of the world are fully able to destroy all life on this planet. Mankind has achieved, without a doubt, the level of destructive capability that is now *maximized*. We are in the end times, just by knowing this "factoid" alone!

With that in mind, the words of Jesus Christ should echo in our minds to *secure* us during these evil and perilous times. Notice, "Take heed that you be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draws near: go you not after them. But when you shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not immediately. Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: And great earthquakes shall be in different places and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven" (Luke 21:8–11). This is *what is up ahead*, around the next bend!

In addition, "And when you see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is near" (Luke 21:20). It goes on to



Anderson Cooper—CNN Anchorman



Wolf Blitzer—CNN Reporter



**Andrew McCabe—Deputy
Director of the FBI**



**Robert Swan Mueller—Former
FBI Director, Named Special
Counsel for Russia Investigation**

say that if you're in that area, get out, and if you're not in that area, stay out. Don't go to the Middle East (verse 21)! Don't believe and don't be deceived by those claiming to know Christ and then advise you to go to the Middle East for safety and protection—*that's nonsense!* Jesus says, "...and let not them that are in the countries [in and around the area] enter thereinto" (Luke 21:21). In other words, *STAY OUT OF THE AREA!*

Remember, Jesus said that wars and commotions will occur, but the end is not *immediately*. There will be nations rising against each other and great signs happening in the heavens, but Jesus will *still be delayed*—He will not come yet.

It seems we need to be aware that *preparing* for wars and commotions up ahead is an appropriate worldview and mindset to have. There are a lot of tensions building with nations having the full capability of unleashing weapons of mass destruction, causing damage of biblical proportions. This is not hyperbole, but unfortunately, our current reality. We need to be *mature* about it and learn to embrace our current state of affairs with *faith, confidence, and courage*.

Those of us who understand God's expectations know He is not amused at the leadership, or social and immoral conditions of those nations claiming allegiance to Him. So, it should be no surprise about what potentially is coming in the way of worldwide conflict—especially since Jesus warned us "nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom."

The United States is *relearning* to express assertive leadership after decades of appeasement, apologies, and accommodation at the expense of its own national well being and security. The question is, Will the world's community of nations, having been working an *agenda of globalism*, accept and adjust to this revived *nationalistic* approach the United States, United Kingdom, and a handful of others within the European Union are now adopting? That remains to be seen as to how it will all play out.

But we do know this: What's up ahead and around the next bend is a *globalist regime* in the form of a "Beast Power" that will ultimately manifest for a short time (Revelation 17:11–14). And a major obstacle blocking the way for that to occur is nationalistic nations adhering to the ideology of sovereign states with borders. This is contrary to the globalist ideology and agenda of a *One World Order*. The clashing of these two geopolitical worldviews—*Nationalism* vs. *Globalism*—is what presents the potential for *worldwide conflict* between these nations that disagree about which is the better ideology for solving humanity's global problems.

In the ensuing years, we will see how this comes together to fit the description of what our Bible explains as a "resurrected" end-time *Babylon* which will rule the vast majority of the world, and "mark" the people who are part of its neo-pagan religious socialist system. Until then, it's important we recognize that *enduring until the end is required*, if we expect to be saved (Matthew 24:13; Revelation 2:26). Ω

NOTICE:

The home office in Tyler would like to recruit the services of foreign-language writers and speakers. If you can offer any assistance, please call at 903-939-2929.

God's Plan For Man, Continued from page 7

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the LORD from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:3).

"And He [Christ] shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years" (Malachi 3:3–4).

Yes, the time is soon coming when God is going to set His hand to heal our world. In spite of the enormous problems we face today, a happy, prosperous future awaits the inhabitants of planet earth.

In the meantime, we have the responsibility of doing the Work, of submitting to God's rule now, of looking to and relying on Jesus Christ as Lord and personal Savior, of obeying the ten commandments of God, of keeping His annual feasts and holydays.

The Eighth Day

The eighth, or Last Great Day, immediately follows the the Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:36,39), and what a great day it will be! This is the time of the second, or general, resurrection. The scripture reads, "But the rest of the dead"—those not in the first resurrection that occurs at Christ's Second Coming—"lived not again until the thousand years were finished" (Revelation 20:5). This day pictures the time of the great "fall harvest," when all the billions and billions of people who have lived and died who never had the opportunity to hear and accept the only name under heaven by which men might be saved (Acts 4:12) will be resurrected to physical life and have their first opportunity to come to full repentance and receive salvation! Families and loved ones will be reunited. Parents, children, grandparents, and extended families will live again! The earth will be green and plush, having undergone a thousand years of restoration under the government of God. The people will be hungry for knowledge, wondering what has happened since their long dreamless sleep of death, and we who are now called and chosen will be there to guide and teach them. We will have been kings and priests in the kingdom of God for a thousand years (Revelation 5:10). How much worry and grief about who may or may not be in heaven or hell would be laid to rest if only people understood God's holydays! But now you know.

What About You?

God's holydays have been predetermined thousands of years before you were born! What about you? Will you keep His divine appointments? Are you called and chosen? Are you growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18)? Are you longing to keep His holydays just as Jesus and His disciples did? If so, we have great news for you! The *Church of God International* will be observing holyday services in various locations across the United States and around the world—and you are invited to attend! Just bring your smile, your Bible, and be prepared to learn and grow and enjoy God's Feasts! Ω

What in the World is God Doing?

God's Seasonal Plan Reveals All!

Don't you find it *strange* that for all mankind's fascination with the spiritual realm, he seems to *deliberately overlook* the rich typology seen in God's annual Sabbaths given to ancient Israel? Ironically, the mind of God is revealed in them. You owe it to yourself and your loved ones to find out!

Be sure to send for our free literature, *God's Seasonal Plan* and *The Fall Festivals*. If you are new to God's holydays, you'll be enlightened and amazed! If you are familiar with them, you will be given even deeper understanding.

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God's Plan for Man Revealed Through His Holy Days—What They Mean, What Will Surely Happen!

"Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a Sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation" (Leviticus 23:24). Why? What do the upcoming fall festivals mean to us—and to the rest of the world?

by Lloyd W. Cary

Bible prophecy is simply history written in advance. **Nothing more; nothing less.** As we look around at deteriorating world conditions, many wonder, "What on earth is God doing?" From a human perspective, the future has never been more erratic and uncertain. Somewhere in the world, a new "crisis" seems to appear weekly, if not daily. What are God's people to do? What is the next major event for God's people—in fact, for the whole world? God has revealed the answers! And He has "hidden" them in plain sight, right where most of mankind refuses to look—in your own Bible—away from the "wise" and "mighty" of this world (1 Corinthians 1:26–29; Romans 1:21:26 KJV). The ill-fated fact is, most people are biblical illiterates, and most who do study their Bibles are blinded by tradition and folklore because they suppose the "keys" to understanding God's plan are "done away." We are talking about God's holydays.

Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 are pivotal prophecy chapters. About one-third of the Bible is prophecy, and nearly one-third of those prophecies are for the latter days. Christ foretold the general overall scenario for the days shortly before His dynamic return: religious deception, wars, famines, disease epidemics, earthquakes, and so forth. Read more of the marks of the latter days in 2 Timothy 3:1–7: "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, high-minded, 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" (2 Timothy 3:1–7). We see these things happening in ever-increasing intensity. Christ warned, however, "All these are the beginning of sorrows," or "birth pangs," of the world (Matthew 24:8). Things are going to get worse! *Much* worse! Christ said, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (Matthew 25:13). As Christians, we are commanded to watch *both* world events *and* our own spiritual condition. World conditions are building up to a grand-smash earth-shattering crescendo. Christ warned that at the end of the age, "...there shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matthew 24:21). "And except that the Lord had shortened those days," Christ prophesied, "no flesh should be saved [alive]: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days" (Mark 13:20).

God's holydays, or festivals, as laid out in Leviticus 23, picture God's plan of redemption—what God is doing on the earth—demonstrated from the Sabbath and Passover on through to the Last Great Day. (If you have not already done so, please send for our free booklet, *God's Seasonal Plan*, which explains each in great detail.) The spring festivals, Passover, the Days of Unleavened Bread, and Pentecost, relate mostly to God's church, the firstfruits (James 1:18), and have been fulfilled in history. The rest, the fall festivals, consisting of the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Last Great Day, deal with the rest of the world and lie immediately ahead of us. And what awesome things they portend!

Many pray, "Thy kingdom come," or have said, "I can't wait for the Day of the Lord to come" without realizing what the answer to this prayer will entail! Amos 5:18 declares, "*Woe* unto you that desire the day of the LORD! To what end is it for you? The day of the LORD is darkness, and not light." It is often said, correctly, "Be careful what you wish for." Zephaniah 1:14, 15 goes even further: "The great day of the Lord is near,

it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers." This is quite a different scenario from the supposed "rapturing away of the saints." (Send for our free booklet, *Should You Expect a Secret Rapture?*; our brochure, *The Way of Escape—Divine Protection in the Last Days*; and our CD, *Where Is Your Place of Safety?*)

The Spring Holy Days—Passover, the Days of Unleavened Bread, and Pentecost

Moses wrote, "... It is the sacrifice of the LORD'S Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped" (Exodus 12:27). Passover reminds us of His great sacrifice for us so that we can have eternal life. For further details, send for our booklet, *Christ, Our Passover*; and our free CD, *Do You Understand God's Passover?*

Unleavened Bread reminds us to remove sin out of our lives. Eating unleavened bread for seven days reminds us of the purging out of the old leaven which typifies our sins. "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). Send for our CD by Mr. Wayne Hendrix, *Why Do We Keep the Days Of Unleavened Bread?*

Pentecost reminds us of the harvest time of God's first fruits and a memorial of the giving of the Holy Spirit to His people. These "early" harvest days are the beginning our journey into the Kingdom of God. Next we will see the later, or Fall Feast days.

The Feast of Trumpets—What it Means—What Will Happen

Trumpets have been almost universally a signal of *war*. The Feast of Trumpets that we celebrate reminds us in advance of both the coming "trumpet plagues" (Revelation 8–11) that will be poured out in the terrifying "Day of the Lord," and of our present job of lifting up our voice "like a trumpet" (Isaiah 58:1) to warn the nations of the soon-coming Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:21). The Feast of Trumpets will indeed be a day of fear and trepidation for mankind, but a day of rejoicing for the saints!

This is the time when Jesus Christ shall come again in clouds, riding upon a great white horse, descending with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God (Revelation 19:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:14–17). This will be at the last trumpet, "... for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:52)!

What a day this will be! The saints of God will be resurrected to immortal life—metabolically changed into spirit beings, born into the very Family of God—the time of our "spiritual birthday," if you will. At this time, those who will have received everlasting life will be given authority to rule and serve on the earth under Jesus Christ (Revelation 1:6; 2:6; 5:10; 20:6) for a thousand years.

The second coming of Christ is revealed in the book of Revelation as occurring in three sets of seven: the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven last plagues of God. In Revelation 5, we see a seven-sealed scroll or book that only Christ was deemed worthy to open. One by one, Christ strips opens the seals, as we see in chapter 6, verses 1 through 17.

Note that these seven seals are an expanded visionary description of the same series of events Christ described earlier in Matthew 24. The Bible interprets its own symbols, and Christ here reveals what these seals mean in His own words! The seventh seal is and consists of—constitutes—seven trumpets; and in turn, the seventh or last trumpet is and consists of—constitutes—the seven last plagues, which culminate in Christ’s second coming.

In Revelation 8:1–2, the time of the opening of the “seventh seal” marks the beginning of the Day of the Lord, the prophesied time of God’s wrath. Notice John’s description of this momentous event: “And when He had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.”

Christ will begin to directly intervene in world affairs at the seventh or last trumpet (Revelation 11:15–19). A trumpet is symbolic of war. The seven trumpets symbolize a series of plagues that are to fall upon the hostile powers that oppose and oppress God’s people. The first four plagues are poured out on the land, the sea, the rivers, and the atmosphere—the basic components of man’s life support system!

Christ Our Warrior-King

When Christ came the first time, He came as the meek and lowly Lamb of God whose mission was to die for the sins of the world. When He comes the second time, He is coming as a Mighty Conqueror—as King of kings, and Lord of lords (Revelation 17:14; 19:16). But before worldwide reconstruction can commence, Christ must deal with His enemies by waging war with the nations opposing Him. He will “destroy them which destroy the earth” (Revelation 11:18).

In Revelation 19:13,16, we see Christ returning as a mighty conquering Warrior-King: “And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God... And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords.” He will then execute the supernatural seven last plagues, which will ultimately bring rebellious mankind to its knees. We see here another Bible opposite. As shocking as it may seem to those who picture the Lord Jesus Christ as only a sweet, harmless, loving Lord Jesus who would never hurt anyone, the first thing He is going to do at His return is kill multiple millions of people! Revelation 6:17 declares, “... the great day of *His wrath* is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

John writes: “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself. And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” (Revelation 19:11–15). “And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth” (Zechariah 14:12). Christ will subdue all who resist Him. (See Psalm 110:6; Zechariah 14:3; 12:9; Isaiah 34:1–3; 66:15–16; Revelation 16, and 19:17–21 in your own Bible.)

The Day of Atonement

The next holyday, the Day of Atonement, falling between the Feast of Trumpets and the Feast of Tabernacles, is the one day of the year God’s people are commanded to fast, or humble themselves. Most professing Christians know little or nothing of the Day of Atonement, and the vast majority of those who do know of this day usually label it “Jewish,” “done away,” and not for Christians today. They could not be more wrong! Just what does the Day of Atonement picture? How does it fit into God’s plan? How does this day “connect” the Feast of Trumpets to the Feast of Tabernacles?

Christ will make all things right. Satan, the original sinner and our ultimate enemy, will be dealt with. We read, “... 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” (Revelation 12:9). The Day of Atonement foretells how this enemy of God and mankind will be dealt with, and ultimately, the whole world will be made at “at-one-ment” with God.

“Atonement” [Hebrew kippur, from kaphar, which means covering or expiation] as used in Leviticus 23:28, means to make amends for sins and shortcomings. In its broadest sense, it means “to make right.” The Day of

Atonement, described in Leviticus 16, was anciently the most important of all the ordinances given to Israel, because on that day, atonement was made for all the sins of the entire congregation. This day also portends tremendous prophetic significance to God’s people.

Notice how the observance is depicted in Leviticus 16:7–10: “And he [the priest] shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat.” Note the difference! “And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD’s lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.” (Emphasis mine.)

Note the fate, the end, of the two goats. First, there were two goats, and only *one* (not two) was representative of Christ, the one that, like Christ, was sacrificed (Leviticus 16:8). The other—the one *not* for the Lord—represented the *azazel*, or scapegoat—and was not sacrificed, but after confessing all the sins of Israel upon his head, was sent away “by the hand of a fit man” into the wilderness (Leviticus 16:21).

Now, is there any description in the New Testament of an event that occurs after the return of Christ coinciding with the above? Yes, there is! Letting the Bible interpret its own symbolism, turn to Revelation 20:13: “And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.”

Notice the similarities. Just as a “fit man” takes the scapegoat to the wilderness to let him go “unto a land not inhabited,” an angel (and angels are very “fit”) lays hold on Satan and casts him into the bottomless pit. This could mean nothing else.

Many are confused, even within the culture of God’s church, what the second goat, the *azazel* goat, represents. Some believe both goats represent different aspects of Christ’s one sacrifice. This theory dates back hundreds of years to the Catholic Church. Others believe the scapegoat represents none other than Satan the Devil. Satan the Devil is ultimately the one responsible for all man’s sins. He was the tempter in the Garden of Eden, the tempter of Christ Himself, and has influenced mankind ever since. The world cannot distinguish the difference between the true Christ and the false Christ—between the true God and the false god. They appear so much alike that man cannot differentiate between them—it required divine revelation demonstrated by the casting of lots (Leviticus 16:8). “And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers [yes, Satan has ministers!] also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” (2 Corinthians 11:14–15).

The day ultimately points to that time when the saints—God’s people from all ages—will become fully and finally at-one with God.

The Millennium Begins

“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). Once Christ, the Conquering King, destroys His enemies with the “brightness of His coming” (2 Thessalonians 2:8)—once Satan the Devil is put away for a thousand years (Revelation 20:2–3), He will establish world headquarters at Jerusalem, and then proceed to gather the peoples of Israel and Judah into Palestine to repopulate the land (Hosea 1:10; Ezekiel 37:21,22)—thus, Israel will be restored as a nation; the people “shall dwell safely all of them” (Ezekiel 38:8); and “Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls” (Zechariah 2:2–5). “And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem” (Micah 4:2).

The Feast of Tabernacles

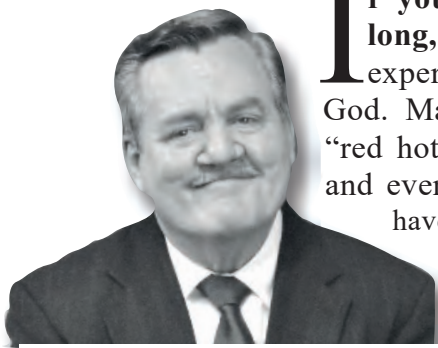
The Feast of Tabernacles will be reinstituted and enforced worldwide. Those nations who refuse to keep it will suffer the plague of no rain (Zechariah 14:16–19). At long last, all Israel will be reconciled with God, and will become the model nation she was intended to be.

Christ will, at that time, restore true worship, peace, and harmony in the land. The long-awaited Millennium—the prophesied thousand years of utopian peace, harmony, and global reconstruction—will then begin.

God’s Plan For Man, continued on page 5

How to Restore a Broken Connection to God

by Lloyd W. Cary



Lloyd W. Cary

If you have been a Christian very long, you've seen it. Perhaps you've experienced it: a "disconnect" with God. Many who were once hungry and "red hot" in the faith have cooled down and even "burned out" in the faith. They have lost their passion—their sense of urgency; religious enthusiasm. Through the centuries, the attrition rate of professing Christians has been appalling!

How about you, dear reader? Has the fire in your bones diminished to cooling embers (Jeremiah 20:9)? Let's take a travel back in our memory banks. Remember your first love (the passion—the unrestrained zeal you had for the Lord when you first gave your life to Jesus?) Remember the excitement and the enthusiasm you felt when God first called you into His Truth? You wanted to tell your parents, your mate, your children, your neighbor, and your boss. Perhaps your friend and acquaintances thought it strange that you no longer did the things you used to do. (1 Peter 4:4 KJV). Perhaps some of them thought you had become a religious fanatic or had "gone off the deep end" or even lost your mind! We are, in a sense, "marked."

As we continue the Christian walk, sometimes life's overwhelming disappointments and difficulties cause us to lose some of our passion. Our trials seem almost more than we can bear. We find ourselves growing weary in well doing (Galatians 6:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:13). We feel backslidden, cut off, disconnected from God.

Sometimes we even blame God for a loss, sickness, mishap, or even the death of a love one. We wonder, "Why, God? Why *my* loved one?" "Why do *I* have this difficulty?" "You could have prevented this tragedy." When Jesus's friend Lazarus died, some of the Jews complained, "Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?" (John 11:37). "Why did God let my baby die?"

God's Word assures us, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Deep down in our hearts we *know* God is not the One who caused our problems. Some simply turn around and walk away because they are upset or even angry with God if He didn't step in to halt the wickedness or the evil that interrupted the peacefulness of our lives. Consider the trials of Job.

Sometimes it's just the passing of time that causes our love for God to become routine and less passionate. There is a saying, "Familiarity breeds contempt." The Bible says, "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life" (Proverbs 13:12).

Sometimes we are offended by a brother. "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle" (Proverbs 18:19). You can't seem to break the barrier.

Sometimes we are disillusioned with God because Christ did not come back when we expected Him to. Date setters are forever doomed to disappointment.

Sometimes we reach our personal "sticking point"—that *one sin* we just *refuse* to give up—and we just shift into "neutral" and want to *coast* awhile. No one will "coast" into God's Kingdom!

There's nothing that Satan loves more than a neutral Christian! If your faith has become routine and you've lost your passion, it's time to change that. Don't live another day of dull, routine, passionless Christianity. Don't *quench* God's spirit; *stir up* God's spirit within you (1 Thessalonians 5:19; 2 Timothy 1:6; 2 Peter 1:13; 2 Peter 3:1).

If your faith has become routine and rudderless and you've lost your passion, it's time to stand firm. It's time to *reconnect* with God and His Work.

Here are three steps to help restore your connection with God:

1. Make up your mind that you are going to regain your passion. There's power in a made-up mind. It's time to turn, change, grow, and repent. *Recount* the cost (Luke 24:28). Decide today that nothing will hold you back from experiencing an increase in your faith and passion for God. Faith is believing what God says in His Word is true. Ask God for help.

Ask yourself, "How's *my* passion?" Are I *on fire* for God... or just lukewarm (Revelation 3:15–17)? Am I filled with excitement and purpose, or just going through the motions? There is no time like the present. There is no benefit for delay. Today's the day to begin pursuing an increase in passion. God is filled with so much passion for us that He deserves nothing less than fervent enthusiasm from us.

2. Confess that you have lost your enthusiasm and ask God to help you restore it. Too many Christians walk around in denial about their situation. "I'm hanging in there" is a tired Christian's lament. It pictures someone hanging onto the edge of a precipice with weakening fingertips. Going through religious motions can dull one's spiritual senses and blind him or her to their spiritual condition. But God can open your eyes! He *wants* you to see yourself as He sees you. If your joy is gone, if your dreams have died, if you have lost your passion, confess it to God today. You may also want to confess it to your pastor or close friend who can pray with you as you find your way back to the passion God wants you to have (Galatians 6:2). Christ's yoke is easy, and He yearns to share your burden (Matthew 11:28–30). Let Him help you.

How do we restore a broken connection with God? Begin by telling God you sincerely *want* to reconnect. Reread Psalm 51 with a humble heart. When David realized the affair with Bathsheba had broken his connection with God, he prayed, pouring out his heart and honestly telling God how he felt. That's the first step. Realize God is far more willing to embrace you and draw you to Himself than you are to be drawn, embraced, and forgiven. Reread the account of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11–32.



3. Take action. God will do His part to increase your passion, but He also expects you to do your part (Philippians 2:12). Through the pen of Jeremiah, God said, "And ye shall seek me, and find me, *when* ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13). We are reminded, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12).

We know, too, that "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:14, 17, 20, 26). When we have reconnected with God, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:1). When you declare a fast and set aside *time* to pray, you are taking the first step toward seeing your passion, enthusiasm, and joy increase.

Remember, God was not the one who moved. You did. So, like the Prodigal Son, come back. (Luke 15:20). "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself" (2 Timothy 2:13). Faithfulness is God's nature. His love never changes, and His desire for your fellowship never lessens despite your detour from His presence. Draw a line and step across it. Leave the past behind and choose to walk with the Lord. Get back to Sabbath services. If you have any dissension with a brother, forgive him (Matthew 6:14–15; 18:15). Dust off your Bible, and resume reading it, Underline it, memorize it (Psalm 119:11), and realize it is God's love letter to you personally. It's time to restore that broken connection. Love God and love His Word. Ω

From Paradise to Peril... and Back



Welcome back! When last we chatted, we introduced the Bible as the story about the destiny of man. We were introduced to the characters of God (Father and Son), Adam, Eve, and our Adversary, Satan the Devil.

Man enjoyed a close personal relationship with God while they tended the Garden, named the animals, learned of His ways, and planned to populate the earth. Then one day, the Adversary struck through a series of temptations that led to Eve, and then to Adam, partaking of the one forbidden tree in the Garden, forever changing the course of our history. The story of the fall of Adam and Eve is a great insight into the wiles of the Devil and how he twists the truth of God to achieve his goal of derailing man's journey into eternity. It also shows us that God wants people to *choose* to follow Him, and we make that choice through obedience to His laws.

After God tracked down an ashamed Adam and Eve, He pronounced a punishment on them that saw them forced to leave their beautiful home and the safe protection of God. We also see our first glimpse into the plan of salvation when the pronouncement against Satan included a prophecy about the victory of Jesus over Satan and sin—but we are getting ahead of ourselves here!

After the first family made a new home on their own, outside of Eden, their first children arrived, named Cain and Abel. They went on to have many more children, but not before another sad event ripped their family apart. Both young men prepared offerings to God with completely different results. After Cain's offering was deemed unacceptable by God, he took out his anger and jealousy on his brother by killing him. We learn about attitude and giving the best we can, from the heart, to God, through this sad story. What a tragic turn in our story, after such a beautiful beginning in Paradise!

After Eve was blessed with many other children, including a son named Seth, the story fast-forwards more than 1100 years to Noah, the 10th generation from creation. We find the evil that was introduced by Satan in the beginning had taken over the world so much, that God was sorry He created us. Imagine that we made God regret that He made us. But thankfully, He is a God of mercy and one who keeps His promises! The solution began first with Noah, a man who still followed God despite the many around him who didn't. God revealed to him that He was going to start over with Noah's family.

This incredible development would involve not only Noah, but also his wife, his three sons, and their wives. God revealed to Noah that He would start over by destroying all living things on earth with a flood. While this seems extreme, we cannot forget that God's reason for making man was to share His eternal glory with us. That our ancestors chose *not* to follow Him would not deter God from His mission. A global flood, and re-building with Noah's family, was just another part of the merciful process in meeting that goal.

The Apostle Peter called Noah a "preacher of righteousness." He does not go into any detail, but can you imagine spending over 100 years building a giant boat in a region that was not known for wet climates? When we consider the changes in life spans that have taken place, that would be like us spending eight to 10 years making the Ark. Imagine the interaction that would have taken place between Noah and his neighbors, those evil-minded folks that God was sorry He made. Imagine the ridicule and abuse he took; and yet he remained faithful to the task.

Once the ark was ready, God helped Noah round up pairs of animals to preserve the species once it was time to renew the earth. We also get a glimpse into another aspect of God's law—that of clean and unclean meat. Noah was to preserve seven pairs of clean and one pair of unclean animals. This helps us understand that God's law has been in effect since creation, and was not just given to Israel through Moses—but we'll get to that in future writings!

So, for 40 days and 40 nights, Noah and his family were kept safe in the Ark and waited for the rains to stop. It took more than three months for the water to subside enough that the Ark came to rest on Mount Ararat. Once it was safe, Noah departed the Ark and, with his family, made an altar and worshipped God by offering one of every clean bird and animal on the ark. After centuries of evil, this worship was a "sweet savor" to God! It was then that God made an unconditional covenant with Noah. He promised never to destroy the earth with a flood again.

But peaceful obedience would not last long...more on that, next time! Ω

Like a Thief in the Night

Jesus, speaking of His return to this earth, states, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matthew 24:36). And this is the reason that we are always waiting with patience for the return of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He will surely come quickly, as He has promised in Revelation 22:20, but this day is like a "thief in the night" because, for many, it will come *unexpectedly*.

We anticipate this event because this is our blessed hope (Titus 2:13). And this is the time of glorious celebration with the Lamb of God. This is the moment to rejoice and be glad. His return is imminent, and His angels will gather His brothers and sisters—all who are faithful until the end (Hebrews 2:11; Matthew 24:13, 31). "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Matthew 12:50). "For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother" (Mark 3:35).

At the return of Jesus Christ, He will reign in Jerusalem together with us (Jeremiah 3:17). Many who have carefully studied Revelation 20 have acquired a good understanding of the coming millennial reign of Christ.

We should always thank Jesus Christ and the Father for what They have done for our salvation. It is only through the blood of Christ that we are now brought near and are at peace with God (Ephesians 2:12–16).

While we are waiting eagerly and patiently, we must do what we can in propagating, sharing, telling, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, just as John the Baptizer and Jesus Christ did (Matthew 4:23; 9:35; Mark 1:14–15). Because the end will come only after the Gospel reaches the unreached (Matthew 24:14).

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Ω

Will Manares
Aklan, Philippines



Thy Word Is Truth (John 17:17)

The Primitive Church VS The Modern Church



Horane Smith

by Horane Smith

If, for argument's sake, the apostles Paul, Peter, James and John, should come back to earth and walk into a typical Christian church today, would they recognize some of their teachings? For example, should they walk into a Sunday service (except the annual Sabbath, the Feast of Pentecost, which is always on a Sunday), would they recognize what was happening? They observed the Sabbath, not Sunday, back in their time. What if they walked into a Christian's home and saw a Christmas tree in December; would they recognize it, or would they be surprised to see a symbol of idolatry in such a home? (Jeremiah 10:1-7).

These men would be appalled that Christianity has abandoned God's festivals of Leviticus 23, knowing nations must observe them when God's Kingdom is established on earth (Zechariah 14:15-21). Instead, Christianity embraces festivals borrowed from paganism, something He hates (Deuteronomy 12:30).

What if these great men of God walked into a Christian's home at Easter time and saw the decorated eggs, Easter bunny, and ham being served for dinner? Would they be astonished, as they never observed such a festival, never ate unclean meats (Acts 10:14) and they observed Passover, not Easter, in the first century (1 Corinthians 5:7)?

If these great men of God, some of whom wrote the books of the New Testament, saw or heard acknowledgement of a Trinitarian God, what would they have thought, as they didn't embrace the concept of God in that way? They were familiar with duality in the Godhead from the Old Testament writings, from which they preached (Genesis 1:26).

Suppose they were in a Sunday service and heard the preacher telling members that going to heaven is the reward for Christians. They would be utterly amazed, because some of them heard from the lips of Jesus that the Kingdom of God will be on earth and He's returning to "inherit the throne of his father David" in the New Jerusalem, and that all nations will come to worship Him in Jerusalem on the Sabbath, not Sunday (Isaiah 66:23).



These dedicated followers of God would find the ever-burning hell teaching strange, because some of them could recall Jesus' sermon (Matthew 5:20-30) when He referred to the hell (ever-burning fires of Gehenna, a literal place, a garbage dump in the Valley of Hinnom, just outside Jerusalem), knowing "forever burning" meant as long as they lasted. They knew about the lake of fire that burns with brimstone (Revelation 20:15) and that "the soul that sinneth shall die" (Ezekiel 18:20), and "the wages of sin is death," the second death or eternal death.

Of course, Christianity uses "progressive revelation," an interpretive way of rationalizing their own biblical contradictions in that God uses the New Testament to clarify or expand on certain teachings that might not have been that clear in the Old Testament. For example, the teaching of the Trinity is regarded as progressive revelation, but what happens when that teaching remains muddled, confusing, and with little biblical support, using spurious passages and interpretations that are not abundantly clear? Draw your own conclusion from the above whether these great men of God would recognize the Christian church today.

As we observed the birthday of the church on the day of Pentecost (one of God's seven annual Sabbaths of Leviticus 23 and the only such festival traditional Christianity seems to recognize while rejecting the others, another contradiction on their part), these are very, very, important questions to ask yourself if you are a Christian. It would be advisable to base your conclusions on the Bible, and not the traditions of men! For more on this subject, download FREE our booklet, *God's Seasonal Plan*. Ω

Ignite



Sparks

Youth News

Not much new to report regarding our youth for this edition. Just remember *Sparks* is the program for our children, *Ignite* is the program for our teens, and *Infuse* is the program for our young adults. We will have information in the next edition on our retreats for this year and where *Infuse* will be for the Feast. Look for more information on our cgi.org website.

One bit of new news for our brethren outside Canada is to check out the CGI Canada (cgicanada.org) website. Look for the Youth Materials site there for a plethora of information focused for our youth. Look for the link on "Groups" and under there you will find "Youth Materials."

If you have any ideas for our youth, please email me at mhjames6043@yahoo.com. Ω

The Law of Liberty

Jesus grouped the Ten Commandments into two categories: The first four tell the reader how to demonstrate love toward God; the last six tell the reader how to show love toward another person, whether man or woman, and are summed up by Jesus when He said to treat your fellow man as yourself.

The Law of Liberty is the Royal Law, the Word of Truth, the Perfect Law, the Ten Commandments.

James mentions two of the commands that are referred to as the "Law of Liberty." These two are the sixth and eighth commandments.

James said that breaking *one* of the Ten Commandments was counted as if he broke every one of them.

The readers of the letter of James, Jewish Christians, would have extrapolated that the Royal Law stated by Jesus— "You shall love God with all of your heart" and, secondly, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself"—referred to The Ten Commandments.

When James wrote about not showing favoritism, the word rendered as "assembly" in that sentence is *synagogue*. A synagogue is exclusively a Sabbath-keeping organization.

James probably did not even suspect that Satan would so thoroughly deceive the world into accepting a counterfeit Sabbath and convince them to forget that it was God who sanctified the Sabbath.

God said to remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy.

Almost all have *forgotten* that the Sabbath Day, now called Saturday, was *ever* holy. It is GOD's Sabbath Day; it NEVER *belonged* to the Jews. There were no Jews present at its creation. There was only "man" (Adam and Eve).

Jesus said that the Sabbath Day was made for MAN.

When Jesus descends to Jerusalem, and establishes a theocracy on this earth, He will require all nations to keep *all* of His Sabbaths.

God called the Sabbath the "test" commandment, to find out if the people would walk in His way or not.

In Revelation, those people who do *not* get the mark of the beast keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus Christ. That means, those with the beast's mark do NOT keep God's commandments or hold to the testimony of Jesus.

I wonder which of God's commandments Satan could deceive people on the earth into *not* keeping? Ω

Lanny Holt, Abilene, Texas

Where Our Responsibilities Lie

by George Roper



George Roper

As we attend our congregations, we become aware of the strengths and weaknesses that our church homes may possess. When we recognize various facets where we feel our group is under-performing, we have a tendency to feel that someone other than ourselves can better rectify certain aspects. We may carry a limited sense of responsibility in addressing a collective issue and feel that the onus of attending to any concerns lies solely with those designated by title. However, our

practice of gathering together is a collaboration. As individual members of a congregation, if we are conscious of an inadequacy, by whatever means our individual capabilities may allow, we should contribute to the rectification of such shortcomings. In so doing, utilizing every member's input mitigates the challenges that might confront us as a collective body.

The attack of Kitty Genovese is an occurrence that has come to exemplify the dynamic where members of a collective fail to take action to a universally recognized problem. Kitty Genovese was a 28-year-old woman who was attacked by an assailant outside of her residential complex in Queens, New York. On March 13, 1964, at 2:30 AM, Ms. Genovese had returned home from work when accosted. Purportedly, 38 neighbors heard and saw the vicious attack, none of whom did anything to assist her. The incident has grown to be recognized as the epitome of a behavior known as "diffusion of responsibility." Diffusion of responsibility is the process in which by-standers or individual members of a community fail to take action to resolve a dilemma, rationalizing that others are either more responsible or more inclined to respond. This account of Kitty Genovese has been cited in psychological studies, social case studies, and college level curriculum courses. Years later, the ex post facto examination of the story of Kitty Genovese has called into question the accuracy of how ambivalent Genovese's neighbors truly were. In retrospect, the *New York Times* may have exaggerated aspects about the case when the paper originally broke the story. Nevertheless, the retelling of Genovese's account has grown to be a parable of sorts, regarding the responsibility that one has towards one's neighbor.

Another example that shows the effect of "diffusion of responsibility" is that of Raymond Zack. Raymond Zack was a mentally ill middle-aged man. In the summer of 2011, on a late morning in San Francisco, California, Raymond Zack walked fully dressed into the waters of the San Francisco Bay. Zack walked roughly 150 feet from shore until the waters were chest high and proceeded to stand there in the below 60 F waters. Zack's caregiver called police and alerted them that she believed Zack was a danger to himself as he proceeded into the bay. As Zack stood in the cold waters, the police arrived on scene, but did not enter the water to retrieve Zack. Next, the fire department arrived on the scene, but did not pursue into the water either. The Coast Guard arrived as well, although their boats were unable to venture into the shallow end of the water. After a considerable amount of time had elapsed, a Coast Guard helicopter arrived at the scene. Zack stood in the frigid waters for an hour, all the while none of the responding agencies following in after Zack. In that time, a number of bystanders and local reporters had accumulated on the beach, observing what was taking place, but no one attempted to rescue Zack. Zack soon succumbed to hypothermia and lost consciousness. He floated face down for an additional 30 minutes, yet no one assisted Zack. The police, the fire department, the Coast Guard, and the bystanders were all waiting for the other to act. Every capable individual there waited for another to do something while the presenting problem worsened. This has come to be one of the most tragic examples of how damaging "diffusion of responsibility" can be among a group of people in a shared experience.

In our church gatherings, "diffusion of responsibility" can creep into our viewpoints and habits, affecting how we interact with each other. Quandaries that we encounter as a group can be overlooked by each of us individually as we wait for others to address them. We may reason that it is not our problem to take on, but acknowledge within ourselves that someone should certainly take the initiative to do so. It is at that very juncture that we should recognize that any effort we can give toward a particular issue would be helpful. Individually, our undertakings alone may not solve the issues we contend with, but if we all singularly contribute to rectifying a disadvantage, the approach toward resolution would come all the more quickly. Whether the issues that we encounter are minute or severe, a proactive response on our part is imperative.

The gambit of contentions that may confront us are varied and many. When we encounter them, we should not wait for someone else to make improvements. We should not simply gripe, independent of taking any action. Instead, we should proactively give of ourselves toward that which appears to be lacking. Were we to take issue concerning the selection of refreshments at services, then perhaps we should bring something. Were we to take issue concerning musical renditions performed at church, then perhaps we should contribute and perform ourselves. If we are not musically inclined, we should get involved in some way to contribute to what we feel is lacking. Perhaps we have a family member who is gifted musically; we should encourage them to share their talents with our congregation. In so doing, we pursue a course of action that serves to be beneficial to others, as opposed to taking no action at all.

In our congregations, we may observe other members having hardships of a personal nature. In such instances as well, we should not allow "diffusion of responsibility" to block us from lending assistance. To whatever degree difficulties may manifest themselves, from marital discord, to children misbehaving, to simply needing a ride to service, we should not turn a blind eye to one another. Rather, we should contribute toward the needs of each other. Christ draws attention to this fact as He encourages us to cultivate this behavior:

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me" (Matthew 25:31-45).

Some will counter that we hold no personal sense of obligation toward one another and that our altruistic responsibility ends at including others in our prayers. Although prayer and our ongoing trust in God is a necessary part of our Christian lifestyle, it does not absolve us from taking action to provide concrete assistance to others in need. James, the brother of Jesus, cautioned his contemporaries about utilizing the notions of "diffusion of responsibility" in their rationale:

James states, "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:15-17).

The actions that we take in responding to the needs of others are direct manifestations of our prayer life and our faith in God. Just as prayer and faith are essential components to the Christian lifestyle, the application of action in response to the needs of each other is also a necessary component to the Christian walk. As we follow in the footsteps of Christ, it is incumbent upon us not to allow a detachment to the needs of others to take hold within ourselves, but rather to accept the responsibility of chaperoning our brothers and sisters in Christ. When any one of us individually contributes to a function at church or provides a service to another, it is in that instant that such a church becomes immensely better than it was prior. When we embrace our responsibilities to each other, it helps the church function more productively and to our liking. It is through our actions with one another that the tremendous potential of a church filled with those who serve can be seen. Ω



Question: Why do we need ‘thee’ and ‘thou’ and ‘ye’? Isn’t this confusing?”

Answer:

Dear Friend, thank you for writing.

You asked, “Why do we need ‘thee’ and ‘thou’ and ‘ye’? Isn’t this confusing?”

One of the most criticized characteristics of the Authorized Version of the Bible is the use of English pronouns. Some unlearned persons go to great lengths to make fun of thee’s, thou’s, and ye’s. “Why not just use ‘you’?” they say. Yet this is one of the strongest points of the Authorized Version.

In most languages people understand whether the speaker is addressing *one* person or *many*. However, in modern English this distinction is lost—both singular and plural are translated “you.”

In the language of the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament, there is a very noticeable difference between the second person singular and the second person plural pronouns. The King James Bible preserves this distinction.

In classical English, this distinction is preserved, just as it is in the Hebrew and Greek. As a result, the old English used in the Authorized Version gives *a far more precise* translation than modern English. In our Authorized Version, THEE, THOU, THY, and THINE are always *singular*. YOU, YE, and YOUR are always *plural*. In other words, if the speaker is talking to *one* person, he uses “thee” or “thou.” If he is talking to *many* people, he says “you,” “ye,” or “your.”

An easy way to remember this is: if the second person pronoun starts with a “t” (in the English translation), then it is *singular*. [The letter “t” has *one* downstroke.] If it starts with a “y,” it is *plural*. [The letter “y” has *two* strokes]. This information helps us to better understand God’s Word.

For example, when Jesus spoke to Nicodemus, He said, “Marvel not that I said unto *thee*, *ye* must be born again” (John 3:7). What He said was, in effect, “Marvel not that I said unto *thee* [Nicodemus], *ye* [all of you] must be born again.” Jesus did not mean this only for Nicodemus. He meant it for *all* people of *all* times—from those who were present that night, even up to and including us today: *Ye* must be born again! (Please request our free booklet *Born From Above or Born Again?* if you have any questions about this important topic.)

In passing, it is interesting to note that, contrary to popular opinion, the word YOU is used in the Authorized Version of the Bible 2,004 times. The thee’s and the ye’s are used also for accuracy and directness of translation; perhaps the so-called “old” English could better be described as good old “Bible” English.

We hope this helps clarify the thee’s, thou’s and thine’s in your King James Bible. Ω

Yours in Christ’s service,

Personal Correspondence Department

What’s going on in your local Church area? Combined services? Public Bible studies? Potlucks? Church activities? Celebrations? Memorials? Visiting ministers? Birth or death announcements? Plans for getting *The Armor of God* on a free Public Access television station in your area? Let us know, and perhaps we will publish it under “Church News.” We’d love to hear from you!

The editor

In loving memory...



Clarence and Jean Williams
Newfoundland, Canada

“Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints” says the Psalmist (Psalms 116:15).

On March 10, just as the Sabbath was coming to an end, Clarence Williams, a pillar in the Body of Christ for nearly 45 years, died at the age of 83. He and his wife Jean had just finished their regular Sabbath routine of watching a live service feed at their home on remote Random Island in Newfoundland, the eastern-most province in Canada. He had just come inside after checking on their animals when he died quickly and painlessly of a heart attack.

For those who knew Clarence, he will be fondly remembered for his warm smile, generous heart, and fierce loyalty to His God and to His Saviour. Married for 59 years to the former Jean Currie, Clarence spent most of his life in Newfoundland, save for a few years working in Ontario. He began attending the *Worldwide Church of God* in 1972 and was baptized in November, 1973. Those of us in CGI got to know Clarence and Jean over the last number of years as they faithfully made the trek from their home each fall to attend the Feast of Tabernacles in Ontario.

Back home, he and Jean dedicated their retirement years to serving the small flock of brethren in Newfoundland. In addition, they would head to the local Senior’s Home (Miraquin Hilltop Manor) every Sunday and Wednesday to fellowship with the residents and sing hymns and other local music for them. After doing this regularly since 2003, the Manor held a tribute evening in Clarence’s honour on April 15. Fifty people came and heard other local singers pay tribute to him in song. They plan on hanging a plaque of dedication in his honour in the coming months.

The funeral was held on Friday, March 16 and was conducted by longtime friend and elder in the *United Church of God*, Mr. Ellsworth Stanley.

Those who knew Clarence will remember his weekly Sabbath emails where he would send greetings, Sabbath blessings, and a scripture against the backdrop of a beautiful scene. Sent less than 24 hours before his death, his last post was most apropos and serves as fitting final words of a life led in faithfulness to God:

“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).

Please continue to pray for his wife, Jean. We look forward to his bright smile and warm embrace in the Kingdom! Ω



Alice Bounds

Alice McKinney Bounds
(February 16, 1933 – April 8, 2018)

Funeral services for Mrs. Alice McKinney Bounds, age 85, were held on April 13, 2018, at the Bailey Funeral Home Chapel, Springhill, Louisiana, with Mr. Vance Stinson officiating. Interment followed in Rocky Mount Cemetery, Plain Dealing, Louisiana, under the direction of Bailey Funeral Home.

Mrs. Bounds was immersed into the watery grave of baptism in 1958, and after 50 years of faithfully walking the narrow path, she peacefully fell asleep in the Lord. She died, at age 85, on Sunday, April 8, in Plain Dealing, Louisiana.

She is survived by three sons, Kenneth Wayne Bounds (wife Vera) of Plain Dealing, Louisiana; Gerald David Bounds (wife Sheri) of Porter, Texas; Michael Dennis Bounds (wife Rebecca) of Cypress, Texas; 10 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; and a host of nieces and nephews.

Mrs. Bounds was preceded in death by her parents, Lochiel McKinney and Lois Martin; husband, Winifred Cullen “Dub” Bounds; son, Kevin Eugene Bounds; and four sisters.

She was a member of the *Church of God International* and was a homemaker. She enjoyed gardening and yard work, and she was an avid reader and skilled writer. She was a woman of faith whose exemplary love and devotion to God and family will remain in the memories of all who had the privilege of knowing her. As long as she was able to come to Sabbath services, she would always come with a smile and with warm greetings.

Her family and her brothers and sisters in Christ miss her dearly, but she would want all of us to “sorrow not, even as others which have no hope,” but to “comfort one another” by reminding each other of the wonderful hope we hold in common:

“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:16–18). Ω



Mrs. Alice Bounds (center) with her four sons (left to right), Kenneth, David, Dennis, and Kevin



Eugene Lucka

Eugene Lucka
(March 29, 1927 – January 14, 2018)

Eugene Richard Lucka, age 90, of Dublin, Ohio, died Sunday, January 14, 2018 at his residence. Funeral services were Saturday, January 20, at the Dwayne R. Spence Funeral Home in Pickerington, Ohio, with Mr. Tony Buchert officiating. Interment was at Mt. Auburn Memorial Park in Stickney, Illinois.

Mr. Lucka was born March 29, 1927 in Chicago, Illinois to the late John and Magdaline (Flowarzny) Lucka. He was a retired electrical engineer and member of the *Church of God International*.

He was preceded in death by his wife Claire Marie Lucka in 2000, son Martin Lucka, and sister Violet Reutel.

He is survived by sons Richard (Karen) Lucka of Pickerington; Curtis (Sheryl) Lucka of Maple Park, Illinois; and Jeffrey Lucka of Lancaster, Ohio; grandchildren, Breanne (Matthew) Koll; Kristen (Christian) Hallows; Daniel Lucka; Kevin (Heather) Lucka; Heather (Jordan Hermiller) Lucka; great-grandchildren, David, Claire, Audrey, Audrey, Hayden, and Mackenzie; nieces and nephews.

James Pollitte of Maysville, Kentucky, writes, “Eugene was a fine and spiritual human being, and I and our congregation will miss him. Although I am a minister in another congregation, I had many occasions to be with Eugene over the years and know he truly was a Christian brother in every sense.”

Rest in peace, Brother Eugene...till we meet again. Ω

Have you missed a past sermon or Bible study? Do you want to look for more or hear a message again? Don't forget to check out our online archive and listen to a message of your choice during the week.

● Go here to access the sermon archive:
<http://www.cgitoronto.org/media/sermons>

● Go here to access the Bible Study archive:
<http://www.cgitoronto.org/media/bible-studies>

Festival Coordinators: As a gentle reminder, it would be well to ask for volunteers who will take notes and pictures for the upcoming FEAST ISSUE of the *International News*.



“Why does God allow suffering? It seems that God could devise a system to draw us to Him without having to inflict pain on us, or our loved ones, or our pets, or our ‘neighbors.’ Even as limited as our intelligence is, I think God could have devised a way for us to understand without pain. Angels do not suffer—they believe in God.”

Dear Friend,

Thank you for writing. It is our good pleasure to hear from those we serve.

This is a very good question—one that has haunted mankind from time immemorial. If God is all powerful and all good, it is asked, why does He *allow* pain, suffering, and evil to exist in the world? The question implies that allowing pain and suffering and evil is somehow incompatible with God’s goodness. However, this is not the case.

First of all, it is commonly *assumed* that this is God’s world. Yet His Word, the Holy Bible, reveals that *Satan* is the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4). There is no “contest” between God and the devil. *If* there were, it would appear that the evil one is winning hands down, and God would not be all powerful! Adam and Eve made a *choice* in the Garden of Eden when they went “independent” from God and *chose* the tree of the knowledge of good and evil over the tree of life (see Genesis 2:15–17; 3:1–6). Their progeny has been going the way contrary to God’s revealed laws and commandments ever since (1 John 1:8). At various times God announced, “Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; *A blessing, if ye obey* the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: *And a curse, if ye will not obey* the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known (Deuteronomy 11:26–28). Again, He said, “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore *choose life*, that both thou and thy seed may live” (Deuteronomy 30:19). It is man’s ways, so contrary to God’s ways, that have brought the world to its present condition. God has always revealed His ways—His laws, His commandments, His statutes—to mankind. Yet He observed, “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD” (Isaiah 55:8,9).

Secondly, suppose God had taken the only alternative, *FORCING* man, *against his will*, to live according to His laws? Can you imagine, for instance, the utter frustration of a person wanting to light up a cancer-causing cigarette and, *lo!* some invisible angelic force suddenly prevented him from moving his hand to his face? Or a person wanting to say an unkind word to another human being and was suddenly struck dumb? Mankind, with his present nature, would rebel and tell God to go mind His own business and “stop shoving Your religion down our throats!” Thus, God has given mankind *free moral choice*.

Thirdly, many skeptics have set up a humanistic syllogism in blaming *God* for man’s suffering. It goes something like this: “Pain is bad. A loving God would eliminate all pain. He has not done so. So therefore there cannot be a God like the one you Christians worship.” Think for a moment! It is true that pain isn’t fun. It was not meant to be! But pain is there for very good and helpful reasons. Have you ever thought of the *downside* of insensitivity to pain? It warns. It protects. It teaches. We normally avoid painful situations that are necessary for our growth and development. Far from being an argument against God’s creative power and redemptive love, pain attests His goodness as a natural alarm to our physical bodies; a warning that something is amiss. It is also a great incentive for mutually caring about others, as in helping less fortunate persons in the community. And, most of all, pain and suffering are reasons to seek the One who alone can deal with our eternal needs. In Romans 8:22 we read, “For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.” In other words, all nature struggles under the burden of suffering and distress which *sin* has caused.

Fourthly, the Scriptures make it plain that God did not create the world in the state we find it now, but evil came as the result of the selfishly independent nature of man. Man has brought evil upon *himself* by egoistically choosing his own way apart from God’s way. Remember, mankind has separated himself from God, not vice versa (Genesis 3:8). Jesus, through His selfless suffering and sacrifice, shows us the way back.

And lastly, God’s plan for man is to ultimately reproduce His own kind—the God kind—through mankind. This involves a change in human

nature by developing godly *character*—the ability to think and act as God thinks—along with a metabolic change from physical to spiritual by means of a resurrection. Godly character cannot be created automatically by fiat—it must be developed through sometimes painful experience! It is rightly said that experience is not always the *best* teacher—but it is the *dearest*! And righteous character cannot be instilled without free moral agency: the desire to choose right over wrong, every time.

You also noted, “Angels do not suffer—they believe in God.” True, good angels do not suffer. They are “locked in” to God’s ways. But in Matthew 8:29 we read where certain demons cried out to Jesus, saying, “What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to *torment us* before the time?” These words show they recognized Jesus Christ and anticipated His final triumph and judgment. Second Peter 2:4 and Jude 6 show that a time of torment is coming for evil spirits. Although these wicked angels (demons) are not physical and do not have physical nerve endings as do human beings, there *is* a torment and suffering awaiting them. In Matthew 25:41, Jesus says to the wicked regarding the Day of Judgment, “Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, *prepared for the devil and his angels*.”

God has given mankind approximately 6,000 years to go his own way and learn through the lessons of “aversion therapy” and the school of hard knocks that “it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps” (Jeremiah 10:23) apart from God.

The good news is that, although evil is here and it is real, it is also *temporary*! Jesus is coming again, this time to enforce His rule, and as a result, utopia will envelop the earth (See all of Zechariah 14; Isaiah 2:3; Jeremiah 50:4–5; Psalm 110:2). May God haste that day!

Be sure to request our free booklets, *Man’s Awesome Destiny*; *Does God Love The World Enough To Save it?*; and *How To Build Godly Character*. You might also enjoy the cassette tapes or CDs (your choice) *Is God The Author Of Evil?* by Vance Stinson; and *God’s Desire For Repentance*, by Charles Groce. These will help answer some of these age-old questions in the light of God’s Word.

Thank you once again for writing. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to write.

Personal Correspondence Department

Question: Why have the majority of Protestant denominations accepted the Roman Catholic “Sabbath” on Sunday? Roman Catholicism has changed the true Sabbath and are amused that we Protestants observe it. I wonder about the leadership of Protestant churches accepting this. Larry ~

Answer: Dear Larry,

You asked, “Why have the majority of Protestant denominations accepted the Roman Catholic Sabbath on Sunday?” The basic reason is that the lay people do not know their Bibles and do not stand firm on *Sola Scriptura*—on the Scriptures *only*. We should have a *Bible* reason for everything we believe (John 5:39; Mathew 4:4; Matthew 15:3; Mark 7:9, 13; John 17:17).

Christ warned repeatedly, “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, 11, 24; 2 John 10).

When the apostle Paul departed from Miletus, he warned, “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).

Historically, Jesuit priests and other wolves, under the guise of ecumenism, *infiltrated* Bible believing churches and national republics in order to gain control and, over time, destroy, deceive, and convert the people. (Bible examples: Luke 20:20; 2 Peter 2:1–3; and Jude 3–4.)

We urge you to request our free literature, *How to Be a Real Christian*; *Doctrinal Dilemmas*; *Who Changed the Sabbath?*; *Who Changed Passover to Easter?*; and *World In Transition*. All our materials are *free* of charge as per Matthew 10:8.

We strongly recommend that you peruse our updated web site at <http://cgi.org/>. We have hundreds of sermons, *Armors of God*, Web chats, booklets, and CDs uploaded for your further study. Ω

Personal Correspondence Department

=====Church News=====

MIKE AND VICKIE ROY ACCEPTED
INTO THE DEACONATE

It is with great joy we announce the ordination of long-time servants of God, Mike and Vickie Roy, into the deaconate. On the Sabbath of February 24, 2018, along with Morgan and Brenda Pinkerman, we had the privilege of being present for services in St. Petersburg, Florida to participate in, as well as witness, this very special moment.

Mike and Vickie stepped into the role of hosts for the congregation over eight years ago when Robert and Terry Balsamo relocated to California, which left some enormous shoes to fill, but they did indeed fill them. Their love for God and His people, for their spiritual family, is evident and appreciated in all they do. That love, which has only strengthened over the years, is unequalled. As hands were laid upon them, the love and unity felt within their congregation, their church family, was tangible. Mike and Vickie very humbly accepted the ordination of Deacon and Deaconess, remaining committed to the servant leadership qualities they both display in every aspect of their service.

May God continue to bless them. Ω



Baptisms

TWO ADDED TO BODY OF CHRIST IN KENYA—March 27, 2018, brethren in Kenya joined the heavenly hosts in rejoicing as two repentant believers, William Obura Ose and Linet Akoth Ondoro, arose from the watery “grave” of baptism to a new life in Christ. Zablon Ngonda Anyumba, who serves several small CGI groups in Kenya and one in Tanzania, performed the two baptisms, which took place in the Nyamome River. Ω



Counting Your Blessings

- Health is a blessing that money cannot buy. —*Izaak Walton*
- To be alive, to be able to see, to walk—it's all a miracle! I have adopted the technique of living life from miracle to miracle. —*Arthur Rubenstein*
- To have a full stomach and fixed income are no small things. —*Elbert Hubbard*
- Think of the ills from which you are exempt. —*Joseph Joubert*
- He who limps still walks. —*Bertolt Brecht*
- Even though we can't have all we want, we ought to be thankful we don't get what we deserve. —*Anon*
- I have gout, asthma, and seven other maladies, but am otherwise very well. —*Sydney Smith*
- Double—no, triple—our troubles and we'd still be better off than any other people on earth. —*Ronald Reagan*
- By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. —*Hebrews 13:15*
- Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. —*Revelation 11:17*
- If only the people who worry about their liabilities would think about the riches they do possess, they would stop worrying. Would you sell both your eyes for a million dollars—or your two legs—or your hands—or your hearing? Add up what you have, and you'll find that you won't sell them for all the gold in the world. The best things in life are yours, if you can appreciate yourself. —*Dale Carnegie*

- I like living. I have sometimes been wildly, despairingly, acutely, miserable, racked with sorrow. But through it all I still know quite certainly that just to be *alive* is a grand thing. —*Agatha Christie*
- Most people have an almost infinite capacity for taking things for granted. —*Aldous Huxley*
- When you pray for anyone you tend to modify your personal attitude toward him. —*Norman Vincent Peale*
- Everybody lives for something better to come. —*Anon*
- For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion. —*Ecclesiastes 9:4*
- Our thanks to God should always precede our prayers. —*lwc*
- Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. —*Psalms 95:2*
- Thou who has given so much to me, give one thing more: a grateful heart. —*George Herbert*
- Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. —*Psalms 139:23–24*
- As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them. —*John F. Kennedy*
- Feeling gratitude is like wrapping a present and not giving it. —*William Ward*
- This a wonderful day. I've never seen this one before. —*Maya Angelou*



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