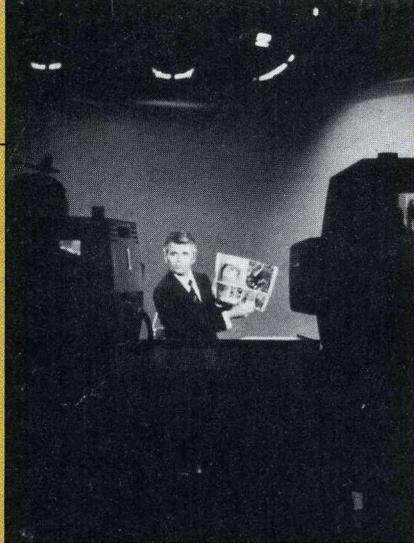


GNN

The Good News

THE
GARNER TED ARMSTRONG
TELEVISION TEAM

JULY 1974



ABOUT OUR COVER

With cameramen silhouetted in foreground, Garner Ted Armstrong brings the advance news of the wonderful world tomorrow. The exciting story of the team effort required to produce this telecast is this month's featured "Update."

Joe Clayton — GN

GN

The Good News

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Mike Hendrickson — GN

Is Christ Divided?

by Garner Ted Armstrong

Religion today seems to come in every size and shape. The many faces of religion represent every persuasion from the staid, straitlaced types to rock opera with all the gimmicks of modern-day evangelism. Religion has been so heavily influenced by the gospel of Madison Avenue that you can shop for it in much the same manner as for clothes, detergents and deodorants.

The basic questions in this hodgepodge of confusion are: Is God the author of dozens of

different religions? Did God create what appears to be a modern, religiously oriented, evangelical, salvation supermarket? Is God's Church divided up into hundreds of differing sects? Is His one true Church made up of many segments, brackets, splits, divisions, organizations and sub-groupings? Has God Himself raised up all of these different churches, sects and denominations? In short "Is Christ divided?"

(Begin article on next page)

As you look around the world today and ask the question "Is Christ divided?" you find yourself forced to admit that the only honest answer is a resounding "yes." He is not only divided, but fragmented into hundreds of different parts — that is, if what you see represents *true* Christianity!

A Confusing World of Religion

Many even take a broad world view far beyond the bounds of a divided Western Christianity. They philosophize that if some fellow who believes in prayer wheels and the creaks and strains of the mountain is faithful to his God as best he knows how, he's going to "get to heaven" — no matter what his particular brand of religion.

It's comforting for people to think that it makes no difference what your degree of ignorance, awareness, intelligence, or education. Whether you live in the Orient or Occident, if you measure up to your chosen philosophical or religious standards, then there's some great awesome Being in the great somewhere who is going to reward you exactly proportionate to somebody else sporting some other religion.

But how does this square with what the Apostle Paul said about Jesus Christ in Acts 4:12? "... There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

A Divided Christendom

Even narrowing it down to the religion using the name of Christ, there are in the Western world of Christianity nearly 250 different recognized denominations (most of them professing to use the Bible as their guide) — and enough other schisms and splits, or independent organizations to make up more than 400 different "bodies of Christ." It's hard to keep track of exactly how many because sometimes they appear and disappear. The 1971 edition of *The Yearbook of American*

Churches lists some 230 denominations in America alone (Constant H. Jacquet, Jr., ed. [New York: Council Press], p. V).

In his book *The Small Sects in America*, Elmer T. Clark wrote: "It is difficult to see how the [many] voices speaking to the American conscience in the name of God could be more completely confused" ([New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press], p. 15, emphasis mine).

Today, religion is in chaos. There are literally hundreds of differing groups, with different beliefs, different books to which they attribute divine authority, different customs, different methods of church government and organization, different goals, different places of worship, different doctrines — carloads and myriads of insurmountable, irreconcilable differences.

Why?

I know a man who as a young boy trudged down a country road toward a small church building some distance away. A neighbor friend stopped in his car and offered the lad a ride. Grateful for the ride and for being able to avoid the dirt of the road, the boy seated himself comfortably beside his neighbor.

Shortly, the car pulled to a stop in front of the small churchyard. The neighbor opened the door and allowed the boy to get out. Struck with a sudden thought, the boy asked the driver of the car, "Why don't you get out and come on in with me to church?" The man answered, "Sorry, sonny, but *my* church is a mile further on." The boy hesitated, and then finally got out of the car.

Still thoughtful, he entered the small church building — to hurry to the matronly woman who was the children's teacher. He explained how his neighbor had delivered him to the church — and how the same kindly man had continued down the road some distance further to enter his own, a different, church.

"Why is it," asked the boy of his teacher, "that he doesn't just come

in here to our church, instead of going so much farther to another?"

The teacher could not answer!

Can you?

Why is it that there are multiple dozens of different churches, sects and denominations teaching doctrines exactly the opposite of, or at least in variance with, the other denominations — and yet all claiming the same authority, the same originality, the same authenticity?

Some of these churches have split right down the middle over such questions as whether it's right to have music in church services. Others have split up over the way people dress. A lot of people seem to believe in "yardstick" religion. They, mentally, spend their time running around checking hemlines and hair lengths.

Mainstream Christianity

Still people like to take comfort in the broad, general mainstream of evangelical thought that parrots the immortality of the soul (we have a new booklet* on that subject thoroughly disproving any such doctrine), the idea of going to heaven or hell, and the automatic switch that is thrown once you say the magic words: "I accept Jesus as my Saviour."

There are a great many people who seem to believe that they can rely and depend upon the comfortable "churchianity" of our society — as typified by our little wall calendars with the New England scene showing the proverbial little steeple poking up through the autumn leaves. Churches and religious occasions seem to be as comfortable to small-town U.S.A. as post offices, fire departments, parking meters, billboards and the local grocer. It just wouldn't be American and Americana without all of these little old church buildings around.

Someone who seems to go against the grain of organized, mainstream

*The title is *Do You Have an Immortal Soul?* A free copy may be obtained by writing to the address of our office nearest you. See communications box on the inside front cover.

evangelical Christianity is immediately faced with the question: "Why, all these churches can't be wrong, can they?"

Now wait just a minute! Let's turn that question around. Can they *all* be right?

Utterly impossible! If any one of them is right — and they all differ (spanning every conceivable range, color, shading and extreme of emotion) — then that *one* being right automatically renders all the others wrong.

In the conflicts, schisms, splits, divisions, arguments, personal interpretations and private philosophies making up our Western world of Christianity — from the total respectability of mainstream churches to the mavericks sneeringly called fanatical sects — one stark, clear fact stands out. Somebody, sooner or later, has to rationalize or justify in his mind the fantastic disarray of disorganized and confused religions in Christendom with the question the Apostle Paul asked in I Corinthians 1:13 — "Is Christ divided?"

The answer Paul really wanted from the Corinthian church brethren was, "No! Christ is *not* divided and *can never be*."

"One Body"

Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus: "There is *one body*, and *one Spirit*, even as ye are called in *one hope* of your calling; *one Lord*, *one faith*, *one baptism*, *one God* and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph. 4:4-6).

Is Christ divided? Not if there is *only one body* as it says in Ephesians 4:4!

But how is the Church ONE BODY? "For as the body is ONE, and hath many members, and all the members of that *one body*, being many, are one body: SO ALSO IS CHRIST" (I Cor. 12:12; see also verse 27 and Rom. 12:4-5).

Read it again! All the members of Christ's body *are one*. They are one in spirit, one in purpose, one in real unity and harmony. Together they

are accomplishing the ONE GREAT WORK of which Jesus spoke.

Just as Jesus accomplished *the Work of God* in His physical body while personally here on this earth, so today He accomplishes the activities of God through His spiritual body.

And that body is the Church of God — of which Jesus is the Head! Notice the scriptural proof: "And he is the head of *the body*, *the church* . . ." (Col. 1:18). ". . . Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of *the body*" (Eph. 5:23).

Paul also wrote in Ephesians: ". . . And gave him [Christ] to be the head over all things to *the church*, which is his body . . ." (Eph. 1:22-23).

How is the Church of God of *one Spirit*?

It is the receiving of the Holy Spirit that makes a person a member of that *one true body*. "By *one Spirit* are we all baptized into *one body*, whether we be Jews or Gentiles [regardless of racial or national origin], whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to *drink into one Spirit*. For the body is not one member, but many" (I Cor. 12:13-14).

But are, then, the different members of this *spiritual body* utterly divided in their doctrinal beliefs? Or to put it another way, I again ask: "Is Christ divided?"

No, of course not! Remember, all the members are *one body* (verse 12), and all are partakers of *the same Spirit* — that "one Spirit" spoken of in Ephesians 4:4.

Even the various and sundry spiritual gifts of God are given *by the same Spirit* (see I Cor. 12:4,9,11).

"One Faith"

The true Church of the living God has "one faith" — which means ONE BODY OF BELIEFS, one *system of doctrines* — not dozens of differing doctrines all opposed to each other.

Remember, the Church of God is *one body* — not a man-made organization of "believers" devising their own system of doctrines — not the repository for a conglomeration of

many conflicting, differing ideas, all somehow being "one church."

There is only *one* true body of beliefs or system of doctrines: it is "one faith" — or "the faith." The Apostle Paul, once the avowed enemy of true Christians, ". . . now preacheth *the faith* which once he destroyed" (Gal. 1:23).

Paul toured the Asian cities of Lystra, Iconium and Antioch urging true Christians to "continue in *the faith*" (Acts 14:22). He spoke of the churches as being "*established in the faith*" (Acts 16:5). Felix, governor of Caesarea, heard Paul ". . . concerning *the faith* in Christ" (Acts 24:24).

The expression "one faith" or the term "the faith" make up the sum total of all the doctrines (biblical truths) that comprise the true Christian religion.

The individual doctrines or beliefs of God's Church are just particular points of truth *about the purpose and plan of God*. *One faith* means one harmonious truth believed and practiced by the one body — the true Church of God.

Unless an individual point of truth (a single doctrine) fits harmoniously into the whole of the doctrine of Christ — unless each major truth you have previously learned only further serves to elucidate, clarify and explain the whole of the plan of God — then it is *not* "a point of truth," but rank error.

John wrote: "Whosoever transgresseth ["commits sin" — I John 3:4], and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. [But] he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not *this doctrine*, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed" (II John 9-10).

"One Baptism"

According to the divinely inspired Word of God there is *only one valid, authorized, right baptism* — not dozens of different modes and methods.

Today there is everything from dry cleaning to sprinkling and pour-

ing — and even running around under a hose.

No, I'm not kidding. One particular evangelist, on a hot day in Brooklyn, secured permission from the city fire department to turn on a street-corner fireplug, and then sprayed his whole crowd of avid followers with a fire hose.

But this baptism was *not* the one valid baptism. There are *not* even two or three different manners in which it may be done — each one "as acceptable as the other."

God did not leave it up to this world to devise some form of man-made religious rite, attaching the name of Christ to it and calling it Christian.

A full, in-depth explanation of that *one method* of baptism is available in our two booklets entitled *All About Water Baptism* and *What Is a Real Christian?* Send for your free copies.

How Can It Be?

Prior to writing about one body, one Spirit, one faith and one baptism, the Apostle Paul talked about "Endeavouring to keep *the unity of the Spirit* in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3).

And to the Christians at Rome, he wrote: "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be *likeminded* one toward another according to Jesus Christ: That ye may *with one mind and one mouth* glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 15:5-6). Later in the very same book Paul again exhorted them to "Be of *the same mind* one toward another..." (Rom. 12:16).

Since the Bible places such evidence, such emphasis, such continued repetition, on this subject of the *oneness (the unique unity)* of the Church of God, how can it be that every last one of the choices in the dazzling supermarket of Christianity claims to be the true Church?

It's time you answered this and the following questions for yourself: Where is God's true Church today? Is there only *one* true Church? Or is

there one huge church divided up into hundreds of differing sects and disagreeing denominations?

The Worldwide Church of God

What about the Worldwide Church of God? Are we who sponsor the publication of this *Good News* magazine just another voice among hundreds; just another label on the supermarket shelf; just another size, brand name, or product which may be "better suited" to some people than others? Are we (if we ran an ad on the Saturday church page where you can see all the different brands of religion conveniently lumped together) to be classified and categorized with all the different persuasions of Christian churchianity?

Or are we the very servants of the living Jesus Christ of Nazareth — preaching His word (II Tim. 4:2) and fulfilling His great commission (a warning and a witness) through and to His own body — the Church of God? (Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10; John 21:15, 17.)

If you honestly and sincerely do not know, then you owe it to yourself (and most of all to your Creator) to prove it once and for all. (Thousands reading this *Good News* magazine have already proved it for themselves.)

How You Can Prove It

My father and I have always said on *The World Tomorrow* broadcast, the telecast, and in the pages of our publications: "Don't believe us, believe what you read in your own Bible!"

Isaiah wrote: "To the law and to the testimony: *if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them*" (Isa. 8:20).

The Apostle Paul urged: "*Prove all things; hold fast that which is good*" (I Thess. 5:21). Luke wrote in the book of Acts concerning the Bereans who "... received the word with *all readiness of mind*, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).

But the text goes on: "*Therefore many of them believed*" (verse 12). In other words, because of their honest, forthright, open-minded zeal in wanting to prove the truth, these Bereans believed.

You too can prove where God's truth is available. You can prove, and come to really know, what is the only true religion which Jesus Christ of Nazareth brought to this earth from His Father.

Where Is God's True Church Today?

We of this worldwide Work of God have prepared a special booklet in order to help you find the true Church. Its challenging title is *Where Is God's True Church Today?*

It shows how the Church that Jesus built (Matt. 16:18) upholds God's law (the Ten Commandments), preaches the correct gospel, understands His plan of salvation, bears the fruits of God's Spirit, keeps God's Sabbath and has the correct biblical name (the Church of God).

Write immediately for your free copy of *Where Is God's True Church Today?*

Just send your request to:

The Good News

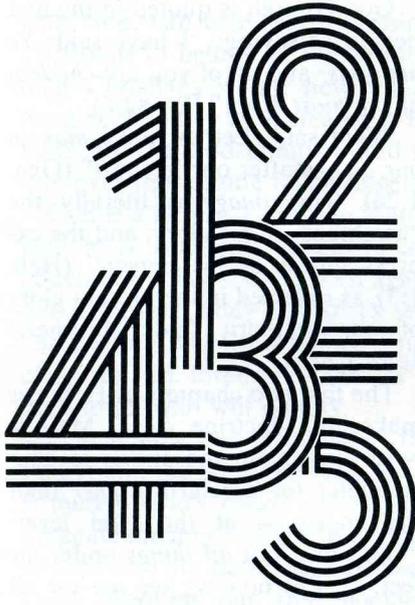
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Personal Counsel

Many hundreds have written asking if we have representatives in their areas to counsel with them personally and to answer their questions. The answer is yes, we do.

The Worldwide Church of God stations ordained ministers in most communities in the United States and British Commonwealth. These men of God can visit you, *if invited*, directly in your own home.

So if you do have questions, please feel free to write us and request a private appointment. Of if you would prefer faster service, please dial this toll-free number in the *continental* United States: 800-423-4444.



Five Doctrines Which Identify God's Church

by Gary L. Alexander

WHY were you born?
After death, then what?
What is man's destiny?

These are the most important questions of your life, yet they are often lost in the shuffle of most religious debates.

A cloud of superstition has crept over the main denominations of Christianity. This cloud of counterfeit doctrines prevents mankind from seeing the clear scriptures which outline God's master plan for man.

In place of the five fundamental biblical doctrines which identify God's true Church, man has concocted five *false doctrines*, which are commonly *assumed* to be in the Bible.

Following is a two-pronged presentation of each of the five fundamental doctrines: first an explanation of the true biblical teaching; then a study of the counterfeit.

The "Plan for All Seasons"

The plan of God, expressed in the four following doctrines, is pictured by the first doctrine: the weekly Sabbath (Ex. 31:13-17) and the annual holy days (Lev. 23), which picture that plan of God through seven steps and three annual seasons.

The "plan for all seasons" begins with the Passover in early spring. This solemn memorial service pic-

tures the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who died to pay the physical and spiritual penalty for man's sins. This initial holy day is immediately followed by the Days of Unleavened Bread, picturing sin (as leaven) being removed from the lives of newly baptized Christians.

The third holy day, Pentecost, comes during early summer. Just as the early summer harvest is a small foretaste of the great autumn harvest, Pentecost pictures the relatively "small flock" of called-out Christians who receive God's Holy Spirit during this 6,000-year age of man's rule.

There are four more holy days clustered in one month of autumn. The first is the Day of Trumpets, representing the trumpeted end-time *warning* to the world and Christ's subsequent return to earth at the "last trump." The Day of Atonement follows nine days later, picturing the Christian's resurrection to sonship (being "at one") with God the Father.

Five days later is the seven-day Feast of Tabernacles representing the millennial fall "harvest" of human beings and the rule of God for 1,000 years.

The last holy day, called the "Last Great Day," represents the time following the millennium when every human being who has ever lived (not having a chance for salvation in this age) will be resurrected to life and given his first chance to live the way of life God intended — on a beautiful, rebuilt planet earth.

(For an in-depth scriptural study of these *biblical* holy days and festivals, request our free booklet entitled *Pagan Holidays or God's Holy Days — Which?*)

The Counterfeit: Sunday and "Hallow Days"

In place of God's "plan for all seasons," mankind has forgotten the Sabbath and remembered Sunday. Then man replaced the holy-day cycle with a series of meaningless "hallow days," replete with their pagan origins overlaid with the trappings of modern materialism.

God's Sabbath was given to remind man of the seventh-day rest at the time of creation (Gen. 2:2-3; Ex. 20:8-11); but it also pictures the future 1,000-year "day of rest" after 6,000 years (six millennial "days") of man's misrule. The weekly Sabbath is God's *sign* to identify His people (Exodus 31).

Sunday — the day of the sun — carries no spiritual meaning. Contrary to popular assumption, Jesus Christ was resurrected on a *Sabbath* (Saturday) afternoon. Sunday observance clouds this fact, and thus confuses the understanding of God's great plan. (For proof of this fact, send for our free booklet *The Resurrection Was Not on Sunday.*)

Likewise, the annual holidays kept by modern "churchianity" portray no transcendent plan of salvation. Christmas is (at best) a materialistic "birthday party" celebrated on the wrong day; and (at worst) an unadulterated carry-over from pagan sun worship originally practiced at the time of the winter solstice.

Easter, the other major "Christian" holiday, tries to picture Christ's resurrection — but on the wrong *day* of the week, wrong *time* of the day, with wrong *symbolism* (eggs, buns and Easter hams!) and even the wrong *name* (named after the Babylonian sun goddess *Ishtar*).

The other "Christian holidays" don't even come as close as Easter does in picturing any part of God's plan on earth. New Year's is in the

dead of winter, while God's calendar year starts in early spring. Halloween pictures demons more than it pictures God, and Valentine's Day is yet another remnant of Roman revelry.

Each of the above-listed "hallow days" has pagan roots. Many other days are *uninspired* at best. They picture political, national, or sectarian memorials, *not* the plan of God, the plan for all seasons. (For more information request our free booklets *The Plain Truth About Christmas*, *The Plain Truth About Easter* and *Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?*)



Man's Destiny — To Become God

The Pharisees of Jesus Christ's day thought it was blasphemy that Jesus called Himself the "Son of God." At least they recognized the shocking seriousness of the claim; but today the expression "Son of God" connotes any kind of "religious type" of person.

The literal meaning of the words "Son of God" are lost on most people. But consider for a moment what a *son* is and what *God* is. A son of a human being is fully human, as his father is; and he grows up to assume the same adult responsibilities of fatherhood. A true Christian is a "son of God" in the same way. He will become God, as God is God. Notice these plain scriptures:

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are *the sons of God*. . . *we are the children of God*: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. . ." (Rom. 8:14-17).

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the *sons of God*. . . and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we *shall be like him*; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:1, 2).

God Himself is quoted in the first person as saying: "I have said, *Ye are gods*; and all of you are *children of the most High*" (Ps. 82:6).

"God said, Let us make *man in our image*, after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26). This *image* is literally the "brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person" (Heb. 1:3), as reflected in the present glory of our firstborn "elder brother," Jesus Christ.

The first two chapters of Hebrews make this doctrine clear. Man is born *lower* than the angels to gain character for a rebirth *higher* than the angels — at the God level: "Thou hast put *all things* under his feet. . . But now we see *not yet* all things put under him" (Heb. 2:8).

The Counterfeit: A Closed Trinity

According to a recent Gallup poll, the concept of the Trinity — "God as three persons in one" — is believed by 83% of professing Christians, whether Catholic or Protestant. Yet for all that belief, few Christians can explain this enigmatic doctrine.

"The mind of man cannot fully understand the mystery of the Trinity. He who would try to understand the mystery fully will lose his mind. But he who would deny the Trinity will lose his soul." Or so the *Handbook of Christian Truth* tells new converts.

Besides being difficult to *understand*, the Trinity is also difficult to *find* in the Bible! The word "Trinity" nowhere appears in Scripture, while the sole "proof text" (I John 5:7) was added by later copyists, who first forged the spurious verse as late as the eighth century A.D.

The Trinity is not a biblical term nor a biblical doctrine. It is a conspiracy of Satan the devil — using some dishonest "church fathers" of the Middle Ages — to convince man that his true destiny is impossible to achieve. The Trinity is a scheme to close the Godhead to mankind.

If Satan and his demons, who disqualified themselves from ruling

with God, can convince professing Christians to believe in the Trinity, then Christians would never dare imagine that they were created to be born into the God family – and to rule over those same fallen angels!

God is a family, a *growing* family with more sons and daughters begotten every day – to be born again into a spiritual body at Christ's second coming. The God family is not *closed* to just three members. It is *open* to all who will qualify.

God is now *two* members – the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is merely God's *nature* sent to impregnate the minds of the thousands of sons who are destined to become God. (Request our free booklets *Just What Do You Mean... Born Again?* and *Is God a Trinity?*)



Destiny of the "Saved": Rulership on Earth

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5).

Very few Christians believe these plain words of Jesus Christ, yet the entire Bible is filled with rulership over planet earth as the reward of the saved.

Words cannot be clearer than these scriptures in the book of Revelation: "And *we shall reign on the earth*" (Rev. 5:10); "And they lived and *reigned with Christ a thousand years*" (Rev. 20:4); "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I *give power over the nations*: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron..." (Rev. 2:26-27).

From Genesis to Revelation, the hope held out to Christians is the reward of earthly rulership in the afterlife. Adam, the first man, was created to have *dominion over the earth* (Gen. 1:26-30).

All the prophets of God spoke of God's Kingdom *on earth*. Read chapters such as Isaiah 2, 11 and 35; or Ezekiel 36 and 37. Read Amos 9, Micah 4, or Zechariah 14 in the

"minor" prophets; or Jesus Christ's own prophecies in Matthew 24 and 25. He constantly spoke of His return to *earth*.

True Christians are learning the principles of rulership in this life, so that they can later serve as educators, mayors and ministers to the millions of physical human beings who will live on over into that Utopian age.

The Counterfeit: Heaven as Reward of the Saved

The Bible nowhere promises heaven as a reward of the saved (request our free booklet *What Is the Reward of the Saved?*), yet millions of Christians carelessly take this "reward" for granted. It would seem that their eternal place of residence would deserve more study and proof than most Christians give it.

The scripture used most often by the "heaven-bound" is actually a greater proof text for an earthly reward. Jesus said; "In my Father's house are many mansions. . . . I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2).

Certainly, if this were the only verse in the Bible, heaven might be suspected of being the "place" being prepared. But the *clear* verses throughout the Bible indicating an earthly reward include the very next verse:

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will *come again*, and receive you unto myself; that *where I am, there ye may be also*" (John 14:3). Christ was speaking on the *earth* ("where I am") and of His return from heaven *to earth*.

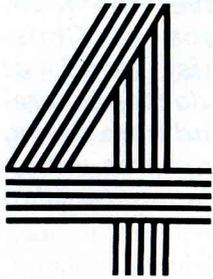
Despite all the humorous stories of "Saint Peter and the pearly gates," the popular songs about "seventh heaven" and "cloud nine," or the Negro spirituals about "that hebbeny land," jokes and music don't take the place of clear biblical truth on the subject.

Even if a Christian *could* go to heaven, would he really want to be there? On the way up to heaven, he would theoretically pass Christ coming down! Further along in time, he

A cloud of superstition has crept over the main denominations of Christianity. This cloud of counterfeit doctrines prevents mankind from seeing the clear scriptures which outline God's master plan for man.

Modern Christianity occasionally stumbles over these amazing truths, but it quickly picks itself up and carries on as if it had never seen them.

would pass "the holy city, new Jerusalem, *coming down* from God out of heaven . . . [and] a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is *with men*, and he will dwell with them . . ." (Rev. 21:2-3).



The Reward of the Unsaved: A First Chance

What happens to the billions of "heathens" who lived before Christ was born, or, for that matter, *after* His death? Are atheists behind the Iron Curtain, or animistic savages in Africa, lost forever unless a missionary reaches them in time to mumble a few saving words about "the Lord"?

The doctrine presented by modern Christianity teaches that those people are either "damned for all time" in a burning hellfire, or, at the other end of the doctrinal spectrum, they are saved if they were "sincere." A "good" pagan will be saved, a "sincere" atheist will make it, or a "dedicated" Hindu will go to heaven, say these permissive pastors.

No major church promulgates the beautiful "middle-ground" truth that God will mercifully resurrect *all* human beings to a *first chance* to live under God's laws in the Kingdom of God on earth.

God is neither cruel (to send all heathen to hell), nor wishy-washy (to allow an alien set of beliefs to occupy a position of rulership in His Kingdom). He is merciful, but firm. He will give all of the 50 billion people who have lived and died during the last 6,000 years a *first chance* to understand.

Perhaps you may wonder, "Will there be enough room on earth?" Yes, there should be about an acre per person once the earth is remade to be livable everywhere.

Or possibly you might wonder, "Will there be enough teachers?" Yes, after 1,000 years to prepare a perfect world, there will be *millions* of trained servants.

The Apostle John describes this time: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it . . . And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God . . ." (Rev. 20:11, 12). This "White Throne Judgment" is further described in Ezekiel 37. For additional details about this fantastically *encouraging* doctrine, request the reprint article "Is This the Only Day of Salvation?"

**The Counterfeit:
Ever-Burning Hellfire**

If a man lives and dies without even hearing of Jesus Christ, "Christian" theology has it that he is destined to sizzle in hellfire forever.

Is this the fate of the unsaved?

If so, who could serve such a cruel God?

Thankfully, the above scenario is more a reflection of the nightmarish fantasies of Dante Alighieri than of the Creator God.

Confusion about "hell" has arisen from the original meaning of the word itself. The Hebrew word *sheol* and the Greek *hades*, translated into English as "hell," simply mean the "grave." When you read the biblical word "hell," it is most likely translated from *hades* or *sheol*.

When God says in both the Old and New Testaments that Jesus Christ's "soul was not left in *hell*, neither his flesh did see corruption" (Acts 2:31 and Psalm 16:10), the Hebrew and Greek words (*sheol* and *hades*) mean a literal "grave," not an ever-burning hellfire. The "corruption of flesh" is a further contextual indication that "hell" simply means "grave site."

A further point of confusion arises from a secondary meaning of "hell" in the Scriptures. The Greek word *Gehenna* refers to a literal valley of burning refuse near Jerusalem. In biblical use, *Gehenna* refers to the literal *burning up* of dead humans who have deliberately and permanently rejected God.

"And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be *ashes* under the soles of your feet . . ." (Mal.

4:3). And, "... Fear him which is able to *destroy both soul and body in hell*" (Matt. 10:28).

This is a hellfire of a short duration, intense heat, and specific time and purpose in the future, "in the which . . . the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up . . . [and] all these things shall be *dissolved*" (II Pet. 3:10-11).

That *all-consuming* hellfire is the last recorded specific event of God's master plan on earth!

But there will be more: "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be *no end* . . ." (Isa. 9:7).



The Nature of Man

The final theological doctrine unique to God's Church concerns the nature of man. As with previous doctrines, the Bible is quite clear about the spiritual and physical makeup of man; but organized religions have instead added superstitions about immortal souls, pagan dualism, and the trappings of spiritualism, ESP and the occult.

Read these clear scriptures from the book of Ecclesiastes: "For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man has no pre-eminence over a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again" (Eccl. 3:19-20).

"For the living know that they shall die: but the *dead know not any thing*" (Eccl. 9:5). "... There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (verse 10). "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish" (Ps. 146:3, 4).

As the saying goes: "Man, like Rover, dies all over." "... For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:19).

"But there is a *spirit in man*..." (Job 32:8). That spirit is *added* to the human brain at birth to give man a conceptual preeminence over brute beasts, which are activated only by instinct. This spirit is NOT the *man*, but a *part* of man.

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but [by] the Spirit of God" (I Cor. 2:11). This *second* spirit, the Holy Spirit, is only added to those few human beings now called and begotten by God the Father. "... If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9).

The basic nature of man, then, is entirely physical, with a separate "spirit in man" added at birth and taken away at death.

The Counterfeit: Immortal Souls and Dualism

The words "immortal soul" are nowhere found together in the Bible. In fact, the word "immortal" appears only *once* in the Bible; and in this instance it refers to "the only wise *God*" (I Tim. 1:17). At the end of the same book, Paul proclaims "Jesus Christ... *only* hath immortality" (I Tim. 6:14-16). Mankind is made *mortal*, that is, capable of eternal death.

Confusion again arises from the translation of the original Hebrew and Greek words. *Nephesh* in Hebrew and *psuche* in Greek (both translated "soul") refer to lower life forms as well as to humans. The *soul* means only the life essence: the breath, the blood and the brain waves.

"The soul that sinneth, IT shall die" (Ezek. 18:4, 20). Souls can DIE. When a headline says, "Plane Crashes — Hundreds of Souls Lost," that is the proper use of the word "soul" — to mean LIFE. (For an in-depth discussion of this subject, request our free booklets *Do You*

Have an Immortal Soul? and *After Death — Then What?*)

The companion belief to the immortal soul is the distaste for the "inherent evil" of the physical human body. This is called "dualism," or the *dual* nature of man — in simple terms, a good spirit versus a bad body.

This doctrine is likewise as pagan as belief in the immortal soul. Man was made in *God's likeness*, as well as in His image. Therefore, the body modeled after God cannot be considered inherently evil. God looked upon the newly created man, Adam, and said he was "*very good*" (Gen. 1:31). This "body-is-evil" philosophy is yet another carry-over from pagan dualism — originating in Babylon, refined in Egypt, and transported to modern "Christianity" via Hellenism, or Greek philosophy.

One Way

Taken as a whole, the five doctrines listed above are unique to the *Church of God*, which was founded by Jesus Christ nearly 1,950 years ago. Other churches believe some of these doctrines, but most major bodies believe *none of them!*

To paraphrase Winston Churchill, modern Christianity occasionally *stumbles over* these amazing truths, but it quickly picks itself up and carries on as if it had never seen them. The counterfeit doctrines are too much a part of its heritage to be rooted out in the face of clear biblical truth.

The purpose of this article has not been to prove each doctrine personally to each reader, but to familiarize you with the total package and the most succinct scriptures for each doctrine. If you have any questions on the specific doctrines involved, write for the in-depth biblical literature (booklets and reprint articles) mentioned in this article. It is available *free* on request — made possible by the tithe-paying membership of the Worldwide Church of God and our faithful co-workers. □

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win

THE BATTLE

The battle for the control of your mind goes on relentlessly. Are you winning, or losing? This revealing article shows some basic steps which will bring success!

by Charles F. Hunting and David R. Ord

HAVE you ever done things you deeply regretted later? Have you said things you desperately wish you hadn't? Do you sometimes have *thoughts* you wish you could remove? Are there times when you find yourself confused and uncertain? Circumstances in which you feel inadequate? Let's face it. These things happen to most of us all too frequently.

But does it have to be this way? Does God *intend* that we be wide open to, and unable to rid our minds of, wrong influences? Does He intend that our minds should be prey to all that causes agonizing hours of mental torment — and sometimes even permanent damage? The answer is NO! God *doesn't* intend these things — and He shows us that we *can* control our emotions, thoughts and actions. He reveals in the Bible *how* we can win the battle for our minds. Every action originates in the mind. We think; then we *act*. But we are often only vaguely aware of forces that *influence* our thinking.

Eve was created with the ability to think. But when she first tested out this great power endowed on her by the Creator, she did not do so

independently. Her thinking was *influenced*. The force which acted upon her mind — subtly and cunningly — was *Satan*.

Most of us have laughed at comedian Flip Wilson's parody on the housewife with a tremendous urge for impulse buying. Her excuse was, "Well, the devil made me do it." Of course, the answer is intended as somewhat of a joke.

But Satan's influence is no laughing matter! He *is* powerful, cunning and influential. The Apostle Paul called Satan "the prince of the *power of the air*" (Eph. 2:2). He is *broadcasting* his wrong attitudes twenty-four hours a day.

There is a spirit in man (see Job 32:8; I Cor. 2:10-12) which imparts the power of intellect to the human brain. Satan is able to communicate to humanity through this spirit. The spirit in each human being — unless we determine through God's Holy Spirit to jam or reject its impulses — is tuned in on the devil's wavelength. Satan is powerfully able to influence our minds.

Satan is the "god of this world" (II Cor. 4:4); he fosters a *way of life* which we could, if we are not wary, *unknowingly* follow.

mining

FOR YOUR MIND

Satan's *way* is the way of death. Unless we know how to fight that way, we shall lose the battle for life — *eternal* life! We are engaged in a literal life-and-death struggle. To win, it is vital that we recognize how great Satan's influence is, and understand the basic steps we must take to ensure victory.

If you are losing the battle, or occasionally stumbling in the fight, these steps will provide an *escape* from Satan's influence.

A Way of Escape

It is not enough to eliminate the obvious sins in our lives. We must also *actively resist* the wrong influence of this society.

God tells us: "*Resist* the devil, and he will flee from you." But how? The same passage answers: "*Draw nigh to God*, and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:7-8).

We are in a *spiritual* battle requiring spiritual help. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but . . . against spiritual wickedness [wicked spirits, marginal rendering] in high places. Wherefore take unto you the *whole armour of God*, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day . . ." (Eph. 6:12-13).

God is a spirit (John 4:24). He is *able* to provide the spiritual help we must have. We must seek help from Him.

But just *how* does a person go about seeking God?

God Sets the Terms

God inspired Solomon to write: "Keep my commandments, and *live . . .*" (Prov. 7:2). He also said: "The commandment is a *lamp*; and the law is *light . . .*" (Prov. 6:23).

Most of us understand that God's law illuminates a *way of life*. We may even understand that it is for our good. But how many of us have realized that there is in this continuous battle for the control of our minds one commandment which is of *greater importance* than all others?

A lawyer came to Jesus and asked: "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" (Matt. 22:36.) Christ immediately answered: "... Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the *first and great commandment*" (verses 37, 38).

Christ pointed out something that ought to have been so obvious, yet it

wasn't! They had never grasped that one commandment is truly greater than all the others!

What about us? We don't bow down to false gods. We don't rely on talismans, idols, icons, or images. We may never use profanity. We may not steal or cheat. Most of us keep God's Sabbath. We are, in general, a *commandment-keeping people*.

But have some of us been living this way of life — keeping the commandments of God — yet actually failing in the greatest commandment of all?

Why is the first commandment the greatest? Because it is the key to spiritual zeal, character development, the right control of the mind and the abundant life which Christ intends us to live.

The *source* of all of these qualities is God. They are *spiritual* qualities, and we can attain them only with spiritual help from our Creator. The first commandment is the vital key to obtaining that help from God!

God must have first place continuously. He will not permanently play second fiddle to anyone or anything.

Christ emphasized this command-

ment when He said: "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God, and his righteousness . . ." (Matt. 6:33). The word "seek" is in the present *continuous* tense. It means that we must seek God's way not only at baptism, but throughout the entirety of our lives. God must *remain* in first place.

But how can we ensure that we are really seeking God *first*?

The Basic Building Block — Time

If you wanted to build a brick wall, how could you guarantee it would be a good job? There is only one way — to *lay each brick accurately*, one at a time.

The building material of life is *time*. Your life consists of just so much time. This is a basic ingredient that God has given each of us to build righteous character. This is where we must start in seeking God.

The Apostle Paul exhorted the Ephesians about "*redeeming* [Greek: buying back] *the time*" (Eph. 5:16). But just *how* do we go about accomplishing this vital goal?

We have to begin by realizing that the basic period of time revealed in the Bible is the *day*. Christ showed us this when He told His disciples to pray, "Give us *this day* our daily bread" (Matt. 6:11). God divided this basic unit of time into two separate parts: daytime and nighttime.

First, what is the purpose of the daytime?

Paul said that we Christians are "children of the *day*" (I Thess. 5:5). *This*, then, is the time when we are to be *doing* the job God has given each of us. This is the really *important* time!

The Use of Nighttime

The Bible shows that God started *His* time sequence at *night* (Gen. 1:5). Then why was the night given to man?

The night is merely the time of

preparation for the activity of the next day. The nighttime hours prepare us for part of the very purpose of man's existence — to enjoy the labor of his hand (see Eccl. 5:18-19).

But isn't it interesting that much of the real *activity* time of the world takes place at night? So much of what is glamorous takes place under *artificial* lights.

Many people seek entertainment at night, and they don't stop until fatigue overtakes them or their entertainment tastebuds are totally satiated. Only then do they take refuge in sleep.

The next morning these people drowsily answer the sound of their alarm clocks, drag themselves out of their beds, shock themselves into wakefulness by drinking coffee, eat hurried breakfasts and reluctantly depart to work.

Start the Daytime Right!

But suppose we take a different approach.

How would you like to face the daytime with a buoyant, happy, enthusiastic attitude; with a mind that is alert and ready for the challenges of a hard world — a world that is subtly trying to tear you and your family apart?

Here's how it can be done: GET TO BED ON TIME!

Most of us need from seven to nine hours of sleep. This is scientifically demonstrable. Too many are laboring under the false idea that they can get away with lack of sleep. Such people are greatly impairing their ability to function correctly in the daytime.

In many cases bad sleeping habits have been formed over so many years that they are difficult to change. But with effort we *can* change for the better with beneficial and lasting results.

Getting to bed about eight hours

before we need to get up is generally the needed physical preparation for the day. Don't let the siren song of continuous entertainment, night after night, interfere with this necessary preparation.

Now, what about *spiritual* preparation for the new day. Wouldn't the best way to begin the day (after the physical preparation of sufficient sleep during the night) be to spend time with the One who gives you every breath of air you draw — the Creator who bestows upon you the time you are about to use?

If we are going to seek God *first*, we must do so on a *daily* basis. Paul emphasizes this key principle, saying that the inward man must be "renewed *day by day*" (II Cor. 4:16). We must spend time with God each day so that we are properly prepared for the battle of the day ahead.

How Much Time?

What would a young man interested in a young girl think if every time he called to see her, she were to say, "I'd *love* to spend time with you, but I have things to do"? How long would he continue calling? Wouldn't he reason: "If all those things are so very important, she can just continue to do them without me"?

When young people begin developing an interest in one another, they don't *have* to spend time together. It isn't something that requires legislation. They *like* spending time together; they make excuses to do so. They just keep "running into" each other!

This is the way it works on the physical plane.

Have you noticed that you always manage to fit into your busy schedule the many "necessary" things and the things you *like* to do?

But on the other hand, there are other things in life that you feel

would be a “nice idea” but that you somehow never do.

But when it comes to spending time with the Eternal Creator God, oftentimes five or ten minutes here and there is *all* we feel we need.

So let’s be a little more specific. *How much* time? We don’t want to become legalistic or pharisaical in our approach — that in itself can become a pitfall.

Perhaps a physical example will get the point across. Do you normally find time to eat physical food, to take in physical nourishment? Do you not normally manage enough time for three meals a day — around a half hour to eat each meal?

So we spend something like one and a half hours each day eating food; that’s how long it takes us to nourish our bodies physically.

But is our spiritual condition of any less importance? Can we spend considerably *less* time nourishing ourselves spiritually and get away with it in the long run?

If you began to cut down your physical intake of food, or began to eat low-quality food, you would soon pay a penalty. Your resistance level would fall, and you would have less stamina and lack energy.

In the same way, we weaken ourselves *spiritually* if we consistently reduce our spiritual nourishment.

Spiritual Nourishment

But somehow we don’t look at it that way. We try to kid ourselves that we don’t have to spend that much time with God — we tell ourselves that we don’t *have* that much time.

So often the physical *crowds out* the spiritual.

Jesus Christ talked about a plot of land that could have borne fruit, but instead there were thorns and thistles which “choked” the Word. What were the thistles? “He also that received seed among the thorns

is he that heareth the word; and *the care of this world*, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful” (Matt. 13:22).

Jesus Christ said that the care and the concern for the physical things of this life can prevent us from being fruitful!

Luke 10:40 states that “Martha was cumbered about [with] much serving,” whereas Mary chose to listen to the truths Christ was expounding. Martha “came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art *careful and troubled about many things*: But *one* thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”

Too many of us are spiritual Marthas!

Certainly there is nothing wrong with serving — nothing wrong with performing physical tasks. But if we allow God to be *muscled out* by the pressure of these physical activities, we are starting down the wrong path.

Be honest with yourself! Have you *really* been spending enough time with God?

What Kind of Time?

Is time all that it takes? Just time, so long as it’s enough?

Let’s suppose you have been spending an hour or more every day in prayer and Bible study. Probably several thousands who read this magazine have. But does even this fulfill what God requires?

Let’s begin to find the answer by understanding a physical type that God gave to ancient Israel. Listen to God’s instruction regarding the Passover lamb: “Your lamb shall be *without blemish*, a male of the first year . . .” (Ex. 12:5). It had to be

perfect. Only the *very best* was to be offered for the Passover.

In Malachi 1:8 God warned Israel that He does not accept inferior sacrifices. This is what God demanded for *their good*.

With this principle in mind, what *kind* of time should we give to God? Shouldn’t it likewise be our *best*? Shouldn’t it be our *prime time*?

Advertisers crave prime time on radio and television. The cost of this coveted time is astronomical; it’s the most valuable time there is on this type of media.

Our Creator doesn’t want us to give Him merely *enough* time; He wants *prime time*. Again, for *our good*!

But so often we give God the dregs, the crumbs, the leftovers: We are fatigued, tired, jaded, enervated; going through a ceremony, a ritual, instead of really drawing close to God. We try to give Him time that we simply would not offer to a fellow human being.

A Program for Seeking God

David was a man after God’s own heart (Acts 13:22). *When* did he seek God?

“I prevented the *dawning of the morning*, and cried: I hoped in thy word” (Ps. 119:147). He also said: “My voice shalt thou hear *in the morning*, O Lord; *in the morning* will I direct *my prayer* unto thee, and will look up” (Ps. 5:3).

David was excited about the opportunity to seek God, and he rose *early* to do so. He anticipated the new day as another wonderful opportunity to go before his Creator!

David knew when prime time is. He had discovered a living law. He said: “O God, thou art my God; *early will I seek thee*: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is” (Ps. 63:1).

David’s son Solomon personified

wisdom in Proverbs 8:17. "I love them that love me; and those that seek me *early* shall find me."

If you were to take a concordance and go through the Bible, you would discover that the great servants of God sought Him *early*. They used the *prime* time immediately after waking for prayer to their God and the study of His Word!

Here is a simple plan for giving God prime time every day.

Determine when you must walk out of the house in the morning, then count back two hours, and that's the time you need to get out of bed. *Not* the time to wake up, but the time to be *out of bed!*

Then, once you are out of bed, take a shower or bath to get the sleep out of your system. Next, spend a half hour in Bible study followed by a half hour of prayer, or vice versa.

You can do it in any manner you wish. Since most people have read books all of their lives, it is easier for them to read than it is to pray. Reading is something physical, while prayer is sometimes a difficult spiritual activity.

Studying before praying gives you a chance to get in gear. And you are letting God teach you, enabling you to talk to Him more effectively.

Bible study prepares your mind for prayer. You may find it the easiest way to get started on this program.

Your study time should be preceded by a brief prayer asking God to give you *understanding* of the Bible. Pray as David did: "*Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law*" (Ps. 119:18).

If you have never consistently prayed and studied before, you will be amazed by the spiritual help you will begin to receive.

And if you have been praying

and studying, but haven't been giving God the very *best* of your time, you will begin to derive the added impetus and interest you need to begin combating Satan's influence on your mind through his use of the society around you.

You might find difficulty in persevering with prayer at first, but don't be discouraged. *Stay with it*, and it will become increasingly easier as a right habit begins to form. It will pay off in big spiritual dividends!

Set Your Mind for Battle

Do you realize that your mind is most impressionable in the morning? Information put into the mind *early* in the morning is usually more indelibly printed than at any other time of the day.

If you have ever walked on a beach after a beach-cleaning machine has smoothed out the sand, you have seen your footprints deeply imprinted in those beautiful ribbons of sand. Yet, if you were to go to that same beach *later* in the day, you wouldn't leave the same quality of impression. Hundreds of pairs of feet have trodden down the sand. No one track is clear.

Sleep smooths out our mental landscape like a machine cleans the beach. Thoughts impressed into the mind *early* are *deeply imprinted*.

If we put God's thoughts into our minds by studying His Word *first*, our entire spiritual resistance level will rise. We will automatically be better equipped to face the battles and temptations of the day ahead. Of course, you will still have problems — but now you will be making measurable headway.

Studying the Bible at the beginning of each morning, in the very prime hours of the day, will arm your mind for the battle you will face.

Flexibility Necessary

However, this isn't to say that there will never be variations to your morning schedule. Any schedule must be *flexible* if it is to succeed. There have to be exceptions, days when you can't follow the program exactly. But they ought to be exceptions — not the rule.

Of course, some of you will be reluctant to try any "new" schedule if you haven't already been doing these things. Initially, some of you won't *like* the idea. But as the Guinness stout ad says: "In so many cases we *don't like it* because we've never *tried it*."

The Battle Is On

Satan's wavelength is broadcasting twenty-four hours a day. He *never* ceases his assault on the human mind.

Whether you are ready to fight or not, Satan is already throwing all of his forces into the fray. He isn't waiting for you to declare war!

You can't afford to delay marshaling for the battle. You need to begin *immediately* to arm yourself (see Eph. 6:10-18). If you aren't prepared to withstand Satan's assault, you are losing the battle already!

The proper use of your time is *the key to winning*. Don't be *too busy* to pray or to study God's Word.

Don't be among the many who will stand before their Maker unprepared, embarrassed, ashamed — wishing they could live their lives over again — so they could rearrange their "busy" schedules to include God.

But you can begin *now* to put your plan of attack into action. Be sure you are able to say with the Apostle Paul: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, *I have kept the faith*" (II Tim. 4:7).

It's your eternity that is at stake! □

QUESTION: "After getting my Good News today, I looked twice to see if I had made a mistake in seeing a book for sale called *The Envoy*. I thought all your literature was sent free of charge."

Mrs. Annabelle A.,
Church Hill, Tennessee

ANSWER: Over the years we have offered *The Envoy* (the Ambassador College student yearbook) exclusively to the baptized members of the Worldwide Church of God. These Church members have always expressed great interest in the activities of the Ambassador student body.

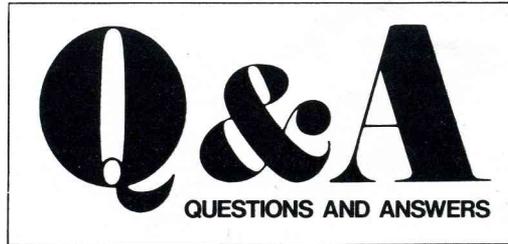
However, with the November issue we expanded *The Good News* circulation to include our co-workers, donors and others interested in the Work of God. We thought they too would appreciate knowing about the availability of the College yearbook.

The Envoy contains full-color pictures of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong and Mr. Garner Ted Armstrong; photographs of faculty members, administrators, and the entire student body of all three campuses; plus student highlights throughout the entire year.

But in offering this beautiful publication to our expanded mailing list, we must emphasize that *The Envoy* is not a part of the publishing of the gospel. It is not a religious publication heralding the Kingdom of God as a warning and a witness to this sick and dying world; nor is it a publication instrumental in feeding God's flock.

The sale of *The Envoy* is not synonymous with selling the gospel. All of our religiously oriented literature (including books, booklets, reprint articles, periodicals and the Correspondence Course) is sent absolutely free of charge. (See the "How Your Subscription Has Been Paid" box on page 23 for a detailed explanation.)

Selling *The Envoy* does not compromise the biblical principle of



"freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8). It is not gospel literature.

If you are interested in obtaining a copy of *The Envoy*, please see the back cover of the June issue for the essential details.

Q: "I have heard from several different people that it is very difficult to join the Worldwide Church of God. Members are supposedly very carefully screened before they are even allowed to attend a meeting of the Church. What is the story behind membership in your Church?"

Robert H.,
Bellflower, California

A: Actually, God's Church is not something one can "join." God Himself puts a person into His Church (John 6:44), which is the spiritual body of Christ (I Cor. 12:13).

God does require certain prerequisites before He will add a member to the body.

Acts 2:38 is an anchor verse to consider: "... Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

I Corinthians 12:13 further tells us: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body [the Church], whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

Membership in God's Church can only be obtained by receiving God's Holy Spirit upon real repentance — water baptism being symbolic of burial of the old self. (Write for our free booklet entitled *What Is a Real Christian?* The subject of the second chapter is "What Is Real Repentance?" Also request *All About*

Water Baptism and "How You Can Be Imbued With the Power of God.")

Anyone who meets the biblical qualifications — without respect of persons and regardless of race, color or previous creed (see I Corinthians 12:13 again) — is admitted to membership

in the Church of God by God Himself.

And our Bible studies are open. If you inadvertently were to walk in on one of the Worldwide Church of God services, you certainly would be warmly welcomed and allowed to remain if you wished to do so.

For further information request our free, full-color booklets entitled *Where Is God's True Church Today?* and *This Is the Worldwide Church of God*. The latter publication presents the story of a Church that practices Christianity as a way of life as well as a faith — even as the first-century Church did in the days of the early apostles.

Q: "I have been reading your booklets and magazines for some time and I agree with the fact that religion is a way of life. Many times I find myself in a position where I am asked what religion I am. Exactly what would you tell them? When I tell them we have no specific name for it, they can't understand. How could I explain it without getting into an argument over religion?"

Shirley O.,

Waterford, Wisconsin

A: No arguments are necessary! Simply tell them you are associated with the Worldwide Church of God.

If you would like to know more about the teachings of this unique Church, simply write and ask for a private appointment with one of God's ministers. We will be happy to arrange a personal meeting with one of these dedicated men.

Or if you would prefer faster service, please dial this toll-free number in the continental United States: 800-423-4444. (Readers in California, Nevada, Alaska and Hawaii should call 213-577-5225 collect.) □



**UPDATE
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The Garner Ted Armstrong T.V. Team

The Garner Ted Armstrong TV program is more than just news and good reporting. It offers biblical solutions and answers to the critical problems that face the average American and Canadian today. This unusual telecast gets down to the nitty-gritty of a problem — making it factual and interesting. In bringing the advanced news of the wonderful world tomorrow, Mr. Ted Armstrong combines up-to-the-minute reports with biblical prophecy. No other program gives such unique insight into world news. The Worldwide

(Continued on next page)

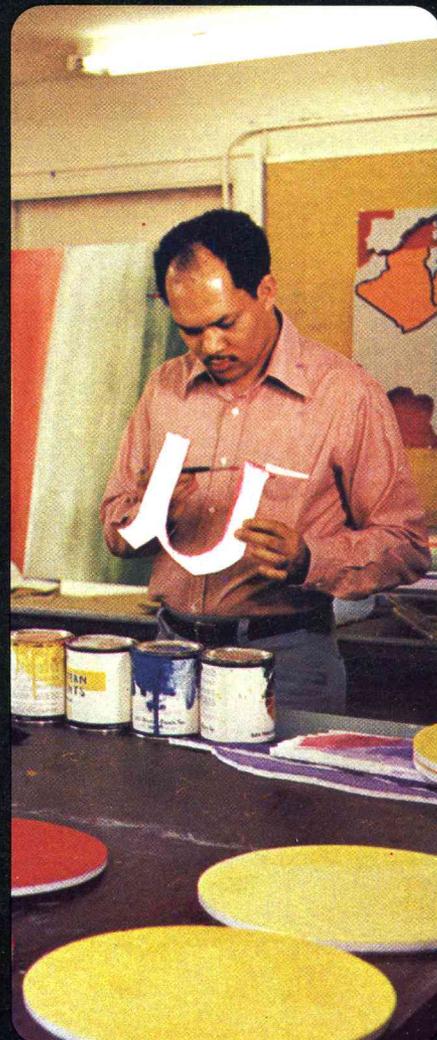
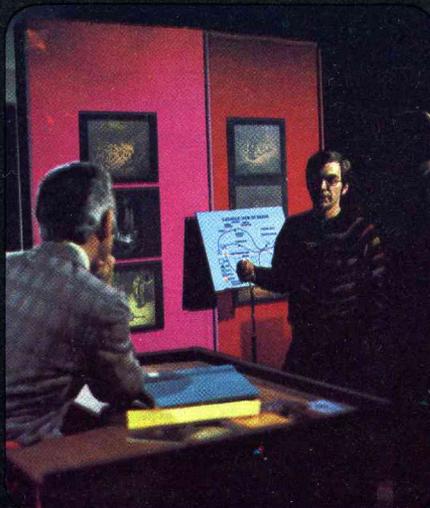


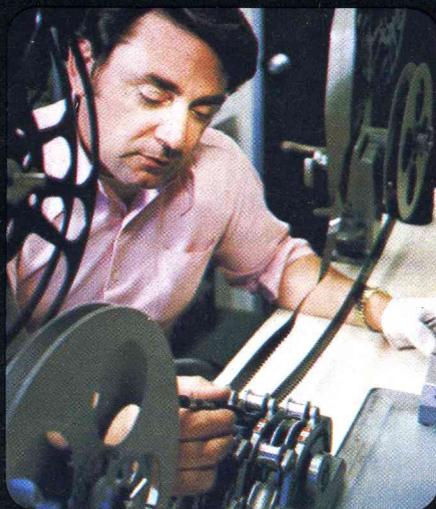
FLOOR DIRECTOR signals five minutes to go (above). An "ideas" session for future programs (center). Director briefs Mr. Armstrong before telecast (below). Graphic Design produces props, set background and other artwork (right).

Church of God has a commission to preach to all nations concerning the good news of the coming millennial reign of Jesus Christ (Matt. 24:14; 28:19-20; Acts 1:8). Via this telecast a message of enormous impact is reaching many new listeners every day. In viewing this church-sponsored program, you are actually witnessing this worldwide Work of God fulfilling part of its commission.

Putting It All Together

Garner Ted Armstrong has a professional flair all his own that adds to the "good news." He makes the gospel live as no other broadcaster has. For over twenty years on radio (seven on TV), he has proclaimed the coming events prophesied in your Bible.





CAMERAMAN moves in for close-up (left). Master control room (top), which is used for video editing and making visual variety count during live taping. Film editor syncs voice with film (above).

Mr. Armstrong is not only known in the United States and Canada, but around the world — from Bonn to Nepal; from the Mideast to Rhodesia. He has personally gone to these areas to obtain firsthand knowledge and understanding of world problems.

The television studios from which the program emanates are located on the beautiful Ambassador College campus in Pasadena, California.

Here a *team effort* produces the *Garner Ted Armstrong* telecast. The members of the team are inspired to try to produce the most

creative, highest quality work within their capabilities.

Working with Mr. Armstrong are Norman A. Smith, who guides and directs the overall Media Division, and Dr. Robert L. Kuhn, who sets program goals. These two leaders help Mr. Armstrong translate his ideas into program content.

An Idea Goes to Production

Once an idea has been formulated and then approved by Mr. Ted Armstrong, it is brought before the producers to initiate planning for producing the program. The producers then confer with the directors to discuss the goals and theme of the program.

The ball is then pitched to a specific director who is assigned to be responsible for that particular program. His communication to all support systems is critical to the overall success of the program; therefore, his assistant director keeps the network of communications moving smoothly.

The first communication is to the researchers. They compile needed information for the program subject. Many times this input includes conducting interviews; gathering data, graphs and charts; plus finding interesting film clips.

A single program can require animation, set design, film clips, charts and graphs, interviews, and on-location filming.

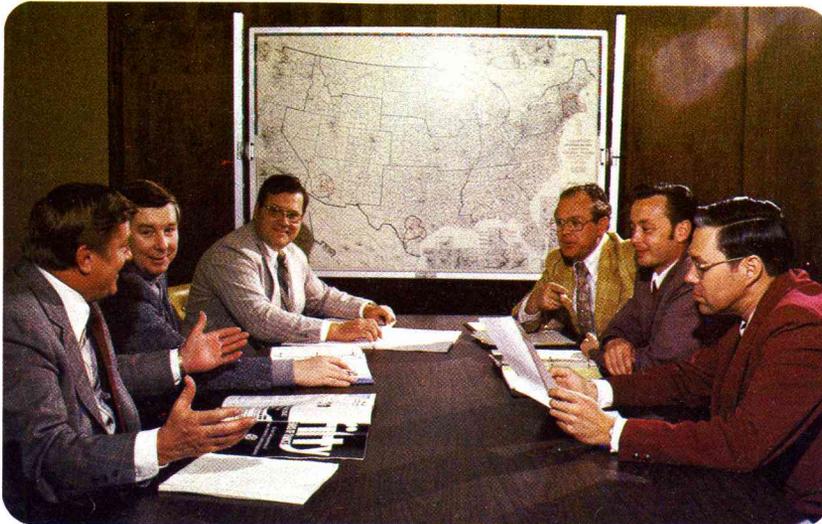
To produce these, the input and activities of a number of departments within the Media Division must be coordinated. These departments include Engineering, Production and Film, Graphic Design, Commercial Production, and Research and Public Relations.

The employees in these areas

comprise a team of over 100 persons, and the efforts of those who are working on the same program must be correlated so they are completed in time for a specific taping date.

Final Preparation

When the essential interviews, film clips, graphs, etc., are completed — and approved by the director — there are two more necessary



MARKETING and Media Division heads discuss future plans for distribution of the telecast.

steps before the actual taping can begin: The director must obtain the very latest last-minute information concerning the program topic from the researchers and then brief Mr. Ted Armstrong.

Once Mr. Armstrong is apprised of these final details and has jotted down a few notes, he is ready to begin. Then the logo (theme music) starts and another taping session is under way.

Once the program has started, coordinated teamwork is needed once again. With the director in charge and making the visual variety count (switching cameras and changing angles), cameramen await his signals. At the same time, the floor director cues Mr. Armstrong to a specific camera.

Sometimes when a film clip is inserted, Mr. Armstrong narrates the

information. During the telecast there are also breaks for 60-second commercials announcing free booklets related to the subject.

In terms of time, the total job is about half done after the taping. Remaining steps are post-editing (editing out mistakes, adding commercials, film clips, interviews, etc.), preview (viewing the finished product), dubbing (making a copy for each station), and shipping out the end result.

The Program Reaches You

Within the restrictions of a limited budget, Mr. Norman Smith and the Marketing Division are continually working to achieve our primary television marketing goal: blanketing the United States and Canada with the *Garner Ted Arm-*

strong telecast. They are constantly searching for new and better methods of buying media times.

Obtaining better stations in more geographical areas takes not only their efforts and the production of quality programs by the TV team, but *your efforts* as well.

Recognizing this, on behalf of our television team, we thank you members and co-workers for your financial contributions and your persevering prayers. We realize that your support makes possible the continual growth in scope and power of the *Garner Ted Armstrong* television program.

This program is made and marketed for the purpose of giving. The TV team does not exist for personal gain. Its function is to *help* Mr. Armstrong with his part in the commission of the Church to give this world its final warning and witness; and to preview the panoramic prophecies of the world tomorrow.

— Robert Antonacci

DID YOU ever attempt to relate some information to a lawyer, an agent for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, or an insurance investigator? Did you become irritated when every time you told a crucial part of the story he continuously interrupted and asked, "Now, how do you know that? Did you actually see that happen? Do you know that for a fact or did someone tell you?"

It would seem that he was forever interrupting and never willing just to accept your statement of the way things happened. He insisted on getting to the *ultimate source* of the information. He only wanted the firsthand facts and was never willing to accept your assumptions.

On the other hand, did you ever talk to someone who never bothered to question one iota of your story? To the contrary, whatever was said was accepted with, "Oh! Is that right?" or "Oh! I didn't know that."

The difference is that in the first case you were dealing with a professional fact finder; in the second case, with a gullible gossip believer.

The professional fact finder has learned through diligent training and experience that the majority of information that people relate is exaggerated, colored, misinterpreted, based on assumptions or just altogether false. He knows that in order to arrive at the actual truth of the matter, diligent inquiry is necessary to sift fact from falsehood. To these professionals, the comment "they say" does not establish the truth of a matter, but usually is a sure indication that the statement is pure gossip.

On the other hand, the gullible gossip believer isn't interested in the facts or the truth of the matter. All he wants to hear is something interesting and exciting. It doesn't matter how false or inaccurate. He wants a story, usually derogatory, that he can relate to someone else. Then he can leave with the feeling that he knows something somebody else doesn't — no matter how erroneous

it might be in fact. This elates and inflates his ego and vanity.

A Warning to Beware

In times past, certain people caused some to reject God's truth (II Tim. 2:16-18; Jude 4, 8, 15, 18). Such people are active today (II Pet. 2:1-3; 3:1-3; II Thess. 2:7). And Christ warns you to take heed, lest anyone deceive you (Matt. 24:4, 5). Then, as now, there was a great master professional behind them; inspiring them; using

them. That great mastermind is Satan the devil (Rev. 12:10; II Cor. 4:4; 11:13-15).

Satan has deceived the whole world (Rev. 12:9). One device he uses is plain, bold-faced lies (John 8:44). He knows human nature and recognizes that one of its proclivities is to be a willing hearer of gossip and falsehoods (Jer. 5:30-31).

There are many biblical examples of how gullible gossip believers fell victim to Satan by believing a lie against the truth. The following are just some of them:

1) The angels under Lucifer were duped into believing they could dethrone God (Isa. 14:12-15; Rev. 12:9).

2) Eve carelessly accepted Satan's explanation of the situation and rejected God's. She didn't make inquiry to ascertain truth from error. She carelessly assumed Satan was correct and reaped the disastrous penalty.

3) Noah preached of the impending Flood for 120 years (Gen. 6:3). During all this time the world had the witness of Noah's preaching and saw or knew about the construction of the Ark. The world, however, with the exception of eight people, rejected that witness. They accepted the lie that all things would continue as they were (II Pet. 3:4).

4) God's prophet told Ahab that

**don't
believe a
lie about the
truth**

by Ralph K. Helge

he should not go to war, but Ahab rejected the warning and chose to believe a demoniacal lie that was in accord with his own physical desires (II Chron. 18).

5) A prophet of God chose to disobey a direct instruction from God. He chose to believe the lie of a false prophet; to believe that an angel could countermand God's command (I Kings 13).

6) Some individuals rejected the preaching of the apostles, and accepted the false teachings of those who claimed that the resurrection was already past (II Tim. 2:14-18).

7) Others believed such totally false doctrines that Peter was inspired to call such doctrines "damnable heresies" (II Pet. 2:1-2).

How Error Grows

The disastrous effect of believing lies, even through carelessness, is that it turns one from the truth (Titus 1:14). Do you grasp that even a *little error*, a *little false doctrine*, is like a cornerstone of a building? By believing error you reject the truth of God on that particular point. That little bit of falsehood is like leaven. It begins to grow (Matt. 16:6).

Soon a little more knowledge is built upon this foundation. Since truth does not fit with error, the additional building blocks of knowledge, built upon this initial cornerstone of falsehood, must be altered to fit the foundational error. So error grows until the person has built himself a fortress of falsehood — a bastion of error.

And the pathetic truth is that he is deceived, and may actually believe he has built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ, the apostles and the Bible (Eph. 2:20). In actual fact, he has built it upon sand (Matt. 7:26, 27).

Who Do You Believe?

God has given ample warnings against becoming a gullible gossip believer. He encourages you to become a professional fact finder. He is concerned because your salvation

"But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies And many will follow their licentiousness, and because of them the way of truth will be reviled."

II Peter 2:1-2, RSV

". . . Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie."

II Thes. 2:10-11

could be at stake — He wants to be certain that you don't believe a lie about the truth — and reap the dire consequences — without at least being warned.

So God exhorts us to become professional fact finders: to test the spirits (I John 4:1); to prove all things (I Thess. 5:21); to study and acquire a thorough understanding of God's Word (II Tim. 2:15). He gives us the example of the Bereans, who searched *the scriptures* daily to prove whether or not the things they heard were true or false (Acts 17:10-12). The Bereans were professional fact finders.

God clearly warns us that today there are a great many who speak evil of God's truth. They come with the grossest of errors, although they are often cloaked in subtleties. Unfortunately, some fervent gossip believers will accept what they say — without question — and never even attempt to seek out or test the truth of their accusations.

Many False Rumors

There are many different types of false charges that these messengers of Satan will bring. Much misinformation about this very Work of God has found its way into circles of gossip.

Some have stated, for example, that this Work is financed by a single billionaire. This is absolutely 100 percent fallacious — unless you regard *God* as a "billionaire"! Mr. Armstrong has written numerous co-worker letters and editorials explaining how this Work is financed. It's clear for all who want to know, yet some would rather just believe a lie than learn the truth.

The true facts are explained in our "How Your Subscription Has Been Paid" box on the next page.

Other lies against this Work are even more gross and are not worthy of mention here.

But gullible gossip believers are a simple target of Satan. It's as though they were *hungry* to hear some new negative misinformation about the

Work! How simple it would be to ascertain the truth — just go to the *source* and *ask*.

But they are more willing to believe a lie and fall under the very condemnation warned of in II Thessalonians 2:10-11. God says that people perished “because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.” For this reason God sent “them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.”

God's Church Will Suffer Persecution

People who so readily accept unfounded gossip and slander against God's Work should realize that every time they hear an accusation it is *strong evidence* that this *is* the Work of Almighty God. Even a cursory examination of Scripture reveals that preaching the Word of God brings persecution and false accusations (John 15:20; Mark 10:30).

God says “to speak evil of no man” (Titus 3:2); we are to lay aside all “evil speakings” (I Peter 2:1). God commanded His true Church to preach the gospel of the coming Kingdom of God to this world (Mark 16:15) and to feed the flock — the individual members of His body (John 21:15-17; I Cor. 12:12, 13).

God's commission to His true ministers was *not* to go out and malign, ridicule, castigate and bring false charges against individuals.

That is why this Work has never, and will never, use the powerful means of communication at its disposal — television, radio and the printing press — to malign and castigate other individuals.

So do not assume that accusations against this Work are true just because *The Plain Truth*, *The Good News*, and *The World Tomorrow* program, are not taken up with continual denials. To do so would fall right into the hands of Satan. Becoming enmeshed in petty bickerings would cause the preaching of the gospel to go wanting.

What You Should Do

Withhold judgment when you hear an accusation brought against this Work. Don't judge according to appearances (John 7:24). Regardless of how innocent or malicious the accusation may be, know that it *will* sound convincing. “He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him” (Prov. 18:17). The inclination of humans is to believe the *first* story they hear; but a false story can be exposed for what it is if the accused is given an opportunity to tell his side.

There is one more thing you might do — something that might prove very, very interesting. Write the accuser and challenge him to forward you copies *from the source* upon which he bases his accusations.

Don't be satisfied with a mere “quote,” but demand a copy of the article itself. We say this because many times antagonists severely editorialize the so-called “quote” so that it is an absolute misrepresentation of what we printed.

Remember, we have been publishing written material for over forty years. Certainly there must be some written documentation upon which they can rely. If they do not forward you such requested documentation, it certainly should be, in and of itself, absolute proof that the accusations are totally untrue.

In the event the accuser should forward some type of documentation, please don't just formulate your conclusion based upon it. Under any circumstances, come to the source and let us at least have an opportunity to explain the basis or circumstances surrounding the material.

Don't believe derogatory charges against this Work without at least writing and presenting the charge to us. Then we will give you the true facts regarding the subject.

Be a professional fact finder. Go to the source. Don't believe a lie about the truth! □

How your Good News subscription has been paid

Jesus said, “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached [and published — Mark 13:10] in all the world for a witness unto all nations” (Matt. 24:14) at this time, just before the end of this age. A price must be paid for this magazine, the Correspondence Course, booklets and other literature.

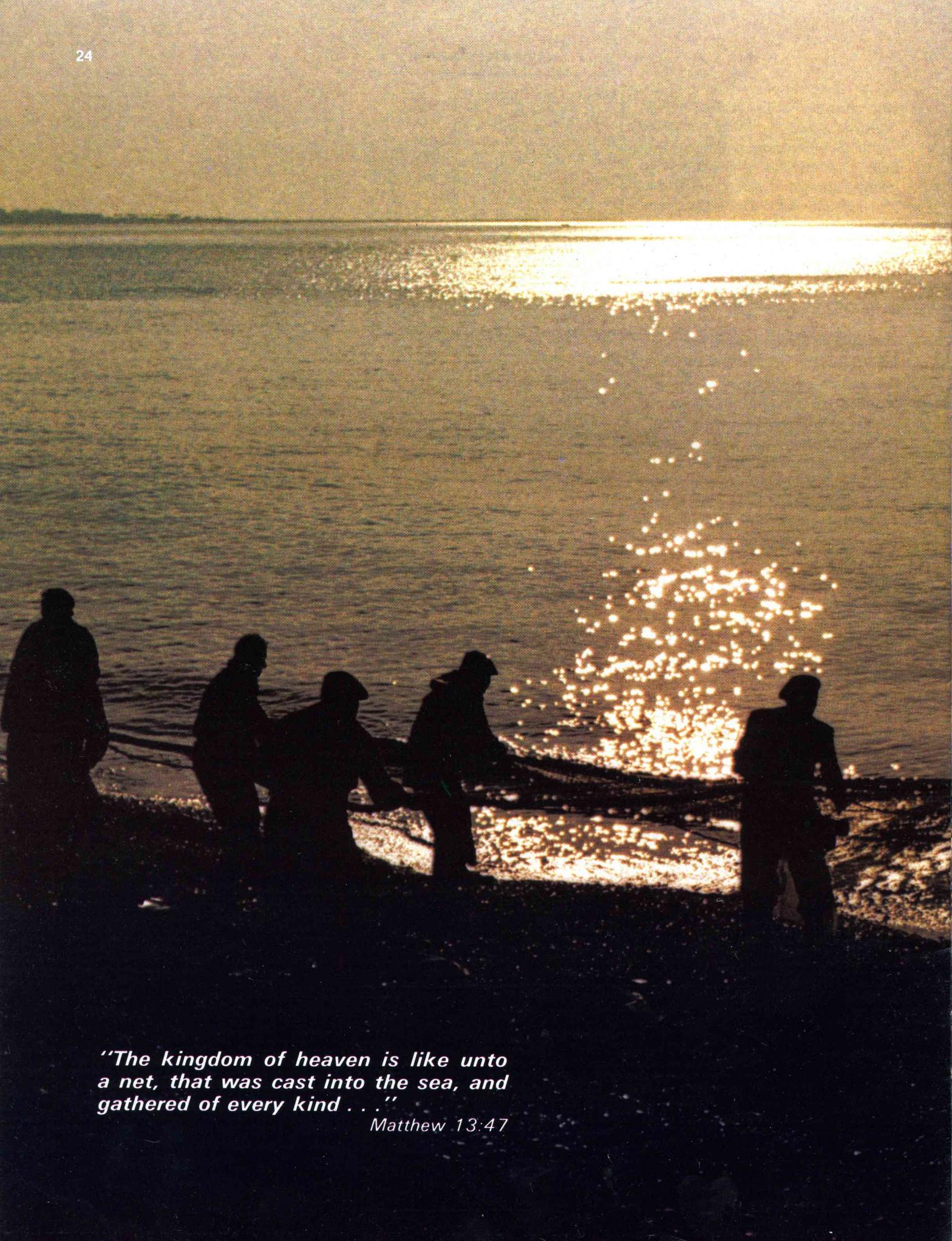
But how? Christ forbids us to sell it to those who receive it: “Freely ye have received, freely give,” said Jesus to His disciples whom He was sending to proclaim His gospel. “It is more blessed to give,” He said, “than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

God's way is the way of love — and that is the way of giving. God expects every child of His to give freewill offerings and to tithe, as His means of paying the costs of carrying the gospel to others.

We, therefore, simply trust the Living Christ to stir the minds and hearts of His followers to give generously, thus paying the cost of putting this precious gospel truth in the hands of others.

The faithful, tithe-paying members of the Worldwide Church of God and our ever-growing family of co-workers gladly give of their incomes that we may give this precious gospel to an ever-widening number of readers.

The living, dynamic Christ Himself enables us to send you this *Good News* magazine without charging a price. God's way is right — the way of giving to others.



*"The kingdom of heaven is like unto
a net, that was cast into the sea, and
gathered of every kind . . ."*
Matthew 13:47

Part Three:

THE PARABLES OF JESUS

FOR DISCIPLES ONLY

The theme for this first group of ten parables is the Kingdom of God. In the last installment we covered the first six parables, which were given to the people but explained only to the disciples. Now we examine the remaining four parables — all of which deal with important doctrinal points concerning the Kingdom.

by Brian Knowles

JESUS had addressed the first six parables in this series directly to the people who were standing on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. But because of their spiritual blindness He did not explain the meaning to them. It was only to the disciples that He later revealed the meaning.

“All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them” (Matt. 13:34). The people — at the time — never really realized what they had been told! Actually Christ had given them precious information that had been kept secret since the world was formed — but it was *hidden* in the parables (verse 35).

“Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him...” (Matt. 13:36).

Now the setting had changed. Jesus was no longer sitting in the boat on the Sea of Galilee. He was in a house (His own or perhaps Peter’s). The disciples asked for an explanation of the parable of the tares (verse 36). Jesus explained not only that parable but all the parables He had given to the people (Mark 4:34).

Following the explanation of the parables given to the people, Jesus then *added* four more parables which pertained directly to the work of the future apostles. These were not given to the people at that time, but to the disciples only. The meaning was not hidden — there was no need. In fact, the meaning of each of these four last parables is self-explanatory.

Jesus continued with the same theme — that of the Kingdom of God — but He spoke of things which had to do with the ministry of the apostles. The disciples were still *not converted* at this point. They were not yet fully resolved to carry out their apostolic commissions. You will recall that following Christ’s crucifixion Peter had said: “I go a fishing...” (John 21:3).

And, following Peter’s example, the others said the same thing. But Christ had intended that they should become fishers of *men*!

These four parables were designed to show the disciples the incredible value and pricelessness of their apostolic calling. They were intended to illustrate the true worth of the knowledge of the Kingdom of God. And the last of these parables indicated how they were to preach and teach others about the Kingdom of God.

Let’s examine them one at a time.

The Hidden Treasure

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.”

Matt. 13:44

Here we see a person who stumbles unexpectedly upon a valuable treasure in a field through which he is passing. He is not seeking it. He just happens upon it. But in so doing he immediately recognizes its tremendous value and takes steps to acquire the field — even at the cost of selling all his earthly possessions.

We may learn *two* lessons from this brief parable. One: not everyone who is called is *seeking* the truth of God. Most are just going about their lives oblivious to the need to search for life’s meaning. Their whole goal in life is self-perpetuation and perhaps material success. Then, quite unexpectedly, God intervenes in their lives and calls them to His Kingdom (John 6:44).

The second lesson: a wise person will immediately recognize the value and meaning of that high calling. He will take steps to see that from that time forth nothing jeopardizes his efforts to pursue eternal life. He will abandon his material goals and “seek first the kingdom of God” (Matt. 6:33).

He will not care what the cost is — although he should soberly count that cost before he sets about becoming a real Christian: “For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? . . . So likewise, *whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple*” (Luke 14:28, 33).

Jesus was pointing the disciples to the importance of their calling as apostles. But the principle applies to all who are called of God to His Kingdom.

Are *you* willing to give up everything to achieve salvation?

The Pearl of Great Price

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.”

Matt. 13:45-46

Notice the difference between this and the previous parable. The merchant was *seeking* “goodly pearls.” Since the pearl of great price represents the Kingdom, we must conclude that here is a person searching for spiritual truth.

There are many such people in the world. Not everyone stumbles upon the truth; some are actually seeking knowledge of God and His Kingdom.

Consider the moving example of a man named Simeon: “And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, *waiting for the consolation of Israel*: and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation" (Luke 2:25-30).

Simeon had *yearned* for God's Kingdom and His Christ! And God rewarded him by allowing him to see the Messiah before his death — and indeed to prophesy concerning Him!

God has not yet given us the privilege of seeing Christ as did Simeon. But we have been offered that pearl of great price — we know of the Kingdom of God and how to achieve salvation.

If we are patient and endure to the very end — if we have really been willing to forsake everything and have given God's Kingdom top priority in our lives — we too will someday gaze upon the face of the living Christ, this time in all its brilliance and glory as the returning Creator God.

Notice what the scripture says: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, *we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is*" (I John 3:2).

Whether you were searching for the truth of God or not — will you now recognize *the value* of what you have within your grasp?

The Net Cast Into the Sea

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

Matt. 13:47-50

As Peter and the others went out as "fishers of men," there was no

guarantee that every person they caught would be of top spiritual quality. The gospel message attracts all kinds of people. Not everyone is truly converted and headed for the Kingdom. Simon Magus, in Acts the eighth chapter, is a good example of a person who was attracted by the power of the apostles (he was even baptized), but his motives were insincere.

There are those who fellowship with true brethren of the body of Christ. They eat with them, attend services with them, and pay lip service to righteousness — but they are *not* children of the Kingdom!

Jude spoke of such as "spots in your feasts of charity, *when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear...*" (Jude 12). Such people do not truly have the fear and respect of God which a genuinely converted person must have. They appear as Christians outwardly, but inwardly they are hypocrites and spiritually unclean.

Peter also warned of such individuals. He wrote: "But there were false prophets also *among the people*, even as there shall be false teachers *among you*, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (II Peter 2:1).

These are not outsiders — they are insiders among the people of the Church of God. They are caught in the "net" along with those who are headed for the Kingdom of God. But at the return of Christ, such people will be separated — God's angels will "sever the wicked *from among the just.*"

Upon completion of this parable Jesus asked them, "Have ye understood all these things?" They answered in the affirmative (Matt. 13:51). He then gave them one last parable which could only apply to the ministry of Christ.

The Householder's Treasure

"Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed

unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."

Matt. 13:52

Here was an obvious reference to the disciples, who had been "instructed unto the kingdom of heaven" by the previous parables! They had learned some entirely new things — as Jesus had said in verse 35: "That it might be fulfilled... I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world."

But they also would preach some "old" things — things from the Old Testament prophets and writers, as well as the new truths which Christ had personally given to them. The Church of God is "built upon the foundation of the apostles *and prophets*, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph. 2:20).

The Jewish people to whom the apostles preached were familiar with many of the Old Testament teachings used by the apostles in the preaching of the gospel. In addition, they heard many new truths which were given directly to the disciples by Christ.

The complete message of the New Testament combines the words and lessons of the Old Testament with the revelation of Jesus Christ. Therefore some things are new and some are old. This is amply demonstrated by the fact that the New Testament writers included some 850 references to the Old Testament in their writings — 280 of which are direct quotes!

This completes the first set of Galilean parables. "And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence" (Matt. 13:53).

In the next article in this series, we will examine the second set of parables, which deals with a somewhat different theme and was given under an entirely new set of circumstances. □

Part Three:

by Robert L. Kuhn

What will it "feel like" to be eternal? What does inherent life (John 4:14; 5:26) really mean? This is the most awesome quality any human being could possibly hope to attain. And God the Father and Jesus Christ want to share it with us.

ISAIAH 57:15 contains one of the most incredible phrases that a human mind can try to understand. These few words describe God as "One that *inhabiteth eternity*."

And we, as heirs of God now and literal sons of God in the near future, will eventually do the *same* thing. We will inhabit eternity!

Considering the overwhelming personal significance of these words, let's investigate what "inhabit" and "eternity" mean.

The Hebrew word translated "eternity" is *ad*. *Ad* can be translated "eternity, forever, everlasting, always."

The English word "inhabit" in Isaiah 57:15 comes from the Hebrew verb *shakhan* — which can mean "to rest, live in, continue, dwell, settle, inhabit." The word *shakhan* gives the impression of comfort and confidence. In various contexts the meaning includes the complete possession, occupation and fulfillment of the object inhabited.

And so, much like the human family abides in, dwells in, continues in and inhabits *the earth*, the

ence: Just as physical beings employ the vectors of *space*, spirit beings employ the vectors of *time*. (This is why God *equally* speaks of 1000 years as one day and one day as 1000 years — II Peter 3:8.)

Jesus Christ is called the *Father of Eternity* — which is a way the phrase "the everlasting Father" in Isaiah 9:6 can be translated. And we will be like Christ (John 17:22). Like God! "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2).

As a son in God's family, you will possess, envelop, encompass, occupy and fulfill *eternity* in the same manner as you, as a physical human being today, can possess, envelop, encompass, occupy and fulfill a comfortable home or a soft easy chair.

Picture yourself relaxing in your favorite fluffy, pillowy armchair. You are in charge of it. You use it. You enjoy it. You possess it. You envelop it. You encompass it. You occupy it. You fulfill it. You abide in it. You dwell in it. You inhabit it.

The God Family

God family rests in, abides in, dwells in, continues in and inhabits *eternity*!

In the same manner that physical beings can control and comprehend a specific plot of *space*, spirit beings can control and comprehend an eternity of *time*. Just as the earth is the arena for all the activities of the human family, eternity — *eternity* — is the arena for all the unimaginable activities of the God family.

Grasp the fundamental differ-

Get the picture? Get the feel of it?

Now transfer that picture and that feel. As a son in God's family, you will likewise "inhabit eternity."

Think about it. Think about all the things that you would like to do that you "don't have time for."

Think about *eternity*. Think about *inhabiting* it.

What Will We Do?

Eternity is a long time. Could it get boring?

If it could, it would!

There's plenty of time available! If boredom would develop — even a little bit — we'd be in deep trouble. Eternity would become a literal *hell!* As a matter of fact, that is precisely the fate reserved for Satan and his demons — *hell* — an eternity of boredom: "Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever" (Jude 13).

If eternity is to be spent gazing blissfully up into God's face, or having our every wish immediately fulfilled — as many religions teach — after a few months (or after a few octillion years, it doesn't really matter), life would get boring.

And once life got boring, it would be sickeningly and fiendishly terrifying. Because there would remain nothing but an unending eternity of boredom to come — with death a wonderful but impossible way of escape (see Luke 20:35-38). This would indeed be the ultimate *tor-ture*.

But our Eternal Father has a better idea. He has designed a plan in which eternity will *not* grow pro-

gressively more boring. But, as unbelievable as it seems, eternity will grow progressively *more exciting*, more scintillating, and more enjoyable as each eon follows eon.

It, of course, becomes extremely difficult to attempt to describe the life of God — and *our* future life in God's family. But Romans 1:20 gives us a key: we can learn about the spiritual things of God by studying the physical things which God created. We can learn about God's life by examining the perfect human life as exemplified in God's Word.

Life in God's family will include all the qualities of life which make human life enjoyable. Only, as God,

right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

The words "pleasures" and "for evermore" in Psalm 16:11 are somewhat unusual. Note the numerous meanings of each:

"Pleasures" is translated from the Hebrew word *naeem* meaning: "pleasant, delights, agreeable, lovely, beauty, glory, pleasures."

"Forevermore" is translated from *natzach*, a Hebrew root which can mean: "forever, perpetuity, permanency, truth, faithful, overseer, entire, perfect, complete, surpass, excellency, glory."

Now combine them together in your mind's eye in order to begin to barely approach the really great time that God has in store for us for eternity.

The Ultimate in Fine Living

For eternity to be truly pleasurable, delightful and existing forever and ever, it must be finely *balanced*.

Balance is the key — for God's life, just as for human life. Proper goals and hard work must be combined with artistic appreciation, recreation and fellowship.

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."
Isaiah 57:15

to inhabit eternity

gressively more boring. But, as unbelievable as it seems, eternity will grow progressively *more exciting*, more scintillating, and more enjoyable as each eon follows eon.

In Ephesians 2:7 God reveals "that in the ages to come he [God] might shew the *exceeding riches* of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

Psalm 16:11 multiplies this simple but profound concept: "... In thy presence is fulness of joy; at [in] thy

presence is fulness of joy; at [in] thy

presence is fulness of joy; at [in] thy

THE GOD FAMILY IN BOTH TESTAMENTS

	OLD TESTAMENT	NEW TESTAMENT
God is a family	Genesis 1:26	Ephesians 3:14-15 John 17:11 1 John 3:1
Man now in God's image	Genesis 1:26	Romans 1:20
Man to become perfect	Genesis 17:1	Matthew 5:48 Colossians 1:28 Philippians 3:15 James 1:4
Man to be changed	Job 14:14	1 Corinthians 15:49-54
Man to have God's likeness	Psalms 17:15	Philippians 3:21 1 John 3:2
Man presently is a little lower than spirit beings — but eventually will rule over all things	Psalms 8:4-6	Hebrews 2:6-8
Man can be God's own Son	Malachi 3:17	Romans 8:14-16 1 John 3:1
"Ye are gods"	Psalms 82:6	John 10:34-35

everything experienced will be infinitely more enjoyable.

As we look to the time of God's Kingdom, nothing inspires us more than *the ultimate in family life*. We will all be part of God's family. We will *also* be part of specific sub-groupings based on the personal families, friendships and associations developed and acquired in our physical lives. Close friends today could well continue a similar friendship forever.

We will surely *not* all be "carbon or xeroxed copies" of one another — all similar droplets of water vapor in a great, amorphous, heavenly cloud, as some religions might suggest.

Neither will we fulfill the communistic ideal of every individual being completely replaceable by every other individual. We will each be utterly unique — each maintaining our own individual appearance, interests, friends and special relationships with our own former physical families. We will *recognize* each other in God's family. (The only things that will be lost will be the physical and mental *restrictions* of the human flesh.)

Revelation 21:24 speaks of "the nations of them which are saved." Here we see *national groupings* exalted in God's family — each with its own leaders ("kings of the earth")

and organizational structure. The Bible certainly indicates that these national groupings will reflect the national — or, more precisely, the racial, tribal and family — associations of the physical life. The continuance of the twelve tribes of Israel (Revelation 7 and 12) is further proof of this.

Next, it seems wholly logical for physical families of this life, once born into God's family, to live and work together.

Is it unreasonable to ask if converted husbands and wives, having formed a successful and established team, will continue to be together for all eternity? What could be more

inspiring? Would a loving God have it otherwise?

Then add the children and grandchildren, and their children and grandchildren — all living and working together — and we just barely begin to appreciate the full range of contentedness and deep happiness that has been prepared for us in God's family.

How often in this life have old age and death disrupted and seemingly obliterated forever the supreme joys of deep family satisfaction and quiet family happiness?

One hundred percent of the time!

Every family that has ever existed has eventually been destroyed by death. The death of husband, wife, parents, children, brothers, sisters — whether at premature or elderly ages — is always the most piercing and the most permanent of human tragedies.

Well, the time is coming — *soon* — when such misery will never again darken the door of any home. And even more fantastically stirring, most members of almost every family in all human history, having been ripped apart by death, will become reunited! And this time they will be forever inseparable.

God's Word has the *answer to death*: "... Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (I Cor. 15:54, 55.)

Never again will the corruption of disintegrating change alter the serenity of family life. Never again will separation, disease, old age and death bring that grinding despair known to every human being. This is why verse four of the twenty-first chapter of the book of Revelation is so emotionally stunning: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

All the epochs of human obituary — in childhood, in youth, in the prime of life, in middle age; all the ways of human death by war, by accident, by disease — will all be eradicated. Full families — *your* family — will for the first time be really together — grandparents, parents, brothers and sisters, children and grandchildren. All will be in the prime of their spiritual lives, working, living and enjoying life as a close-knit family, as part of the overall family of God. Forever. And ever.

But this is just the beginning. Life in God's family will be "the ultimate" in every respect.

The ultimate environment (Rev. 21-22). Splendor and glamour.

The ultimate in food. (God eats for pleasure, not nourishment — see Genesis 18:8; Luke 24:36-43.) The finest delicacies, the most luscious fruit (Rev. 22:2).

The most efficient means of transportation — *self*-transport. (Other means are also available. See Ezekiel 1 and 10.) Effortless (nonpolluting) speeds up to and including instantaneous transference between any two points in the universe.

The ultimate in music (Rev. 4; 14:3, etc.). Enormous choruses and orchestras. Creativity unlimited. Virtuosity supreme.

The ultimate in art. The ultimate in education. The ultimate in learning. The ultimate in inventiveness. The ultimate in creativity. The ultimate in personal friendships. The ultimate in conversation.

The ultimate in recreational "games." (Are there "spiritual games" which would be analogous to chess, bridge, billiards, table tennis, etc.?)

The ultimate in friendly "athletics." (Whatever form it may take, we can only imagine. But for balance some form of "athletics" seems to be needed in God's Kingdom. Remember the physical was patterned after the spiritual.)

The ultimate in vacations. The

whole universe will be at our service.

The ultimate in personal pleasure (Psalm 16:11).

The ultimate in enthusiasm for life. The ultimate in drive and accomplishment. The ultimate in purpose.

Eternity will be fantastic. And ever more so — forever and ever.

Putting It All Together

You have been created to become God. You have been destined to rule the universe.

This is not just some ethereal speculation. Hebrews 2:8 states that God has put all things — and, as we have said, "all things" really means *all things* — under man's feet. "He put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But *now* we see not yet all things put under him."

When will we see all things put in subjection under us? When each of us is changed into a literal member of God's family ourselves (Rev. 20-22). Then we will "*inherit* all things" (Rev. 21:7).

Then every member of God's family will inherently generate the same family characteristics: intrinsic life, inhabiting eternity; perfect character, free moral agency (not an automaton), individually distinct personality (not an assembly-line robot); ability to design, capacity to create; knowledge and understanding, purpose and drive; appreciation of the arts and sciences; friendship and family life; continuous growth, excitement and stimulation, opportunity and responsibility, accomplishment and fulfillment, and on and on.

The family of God will be forever expanding — throughout the universe, and beyond; throughout time, and beyond; not limited by space or time; independent of the physical; in all ages to come — epoch after epoch, eon after eon, forever and ever; worlds without end! □

THE surprising truth is that the people of Old Testament times had scant knowledge of God the Father. But He *is* alluded to and actually mentioned — several times.

One of the purposes of Christ's coming to earth as a human was to reveal the Father (see John 1:18; 5:37; 8:19; 14:7; Luke 10:22). He would not have had to reveal Him if the God of the Old Testament, whom the Israelites *had* known, had been the Father.

Yet a first hint of the existence of the Person who became the Father is found in the very first chapter of the Bible. "And God said, Let us [not me] make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness..." (Gen. 1:26). (This does *not* indicate the "plural of majesty" as some scholars have suggested.)

Then in chapter 2 we are introduced to the term "the Lord [YHVH] God" as the designation of the acting and speaking member of that "us." This Being — the *Eternal* (which is the meaning of YHVH) — is every time the one who deals with mankind as the biblical message progresses. In Genesis 14:18, we meet this Person as the "king of righteousness" (*Melchizedek*, in Hebrew), the "king of Salem" (peace). Proof? Suffice it to say here that of this Melchizedek "it is witnessed that he *liveth*" — that he is the Eternal (Heb. 7:8). For further proof of the identity of Melchizedek, the reader is invited to request our free reprint article "The Mystery of Melchizedek Solved."

The point to notice, however, is that this Melchizedek, the YHVH, the one who later became Jesus Christ, becoming God the Son, was at that time the *priest* (compare Hebrews 7:1 and verses following with Hebrews 8:1) of "the MOST HIGH God" (Gen. 14:18-22). Now who was God MOST High, the one to whom the Eternal Himself was

WHERE IS GOD THE FATHER IN THE OLD TESTAMENT?

priest? Let Jesus Himself answer: "... My *Father* IS GREATER than I" (John 14:28).

Of course.

But let's be sure. Who was Jesus Christ the son of? "The power of the *Highest* shall overshadow thee," the angel told Mary before Jesus was begotten, "therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God... He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the *Highest*..." (Luke 1:35, 32).

Luke 8:28 and Mark 5:7 verify that Jesus is the "Son of God *most high*" and "Son of the *most high* God." The Father is mentioned twice more by this term in the New Testament — Acts 7:48 and 16:17.

To whom did Jesus tell us to pray? The Father (Matt. 6:9). And who did David pray to? "I will cry unto God *most high*..." (Ps. 57:2). Again, "I will praise the Lord... *and* ... the name of the Lord *most high*" (Ps. 7:17).

Yes, David may indeed have known of the One who was to become the Father. (Remember, he could not have been called the Father yet, because He had not yet begotten the Son. Melchizedek, YHVH, was not yet the Son.) "The Lord [YHVH] said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Ps. 110:1; Heb. 1:13).

Sang David, "The Lord thun-

dered from heaven, *and* the *most High* uttered his voice" (II Sam. 22:14).

Did Moses also know? "When the *Most High* divided to the nations their inheritance..." (Deut. 32:8).

The pagan Nebuchadnezzar would of course have had no difficulty in believing in two separate members of the God family. The Babylonians worshipped multiple false gods. After Nebuchadnezzar caused *three* men to be bound and thrown in the fiery furnace, he looked in and saw "*four* men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and... the form of the fourth is like the Son [more correctly, *a son*] of God. Then Nebuchadnezzar... said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the *most high* God, come forth..." (Dan. 3:25-26).

The Prophet Daniel foresaw the return of the resurrected and ascended Christ to the Father in heaven to receive the Kingdom (see also Luke 19:11, 12, 15): "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom..." (Dan. 7:13-14). Here the "Ancient of days" must refer to the Father, although in verse 9, the Son is perhaps also called "Ancient of days," just as either may be called the *Eternal* (YHVH).

Perhaps even Proverbs may contain a small hint that God was known as a family: "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?" (Prov. 30:4.)

— Lawson Briggs

WHAT OUR READERS SAY

Fear Religion

Your article "Fear Religion" in the March *Good News* should win an Oscar for clarity and presentation. The discourse held an authentic appeal to what we may have realized, but had never heard expressed so well.

Chester S.,
Wyoming, Michigan

The Second Resurrection

To Mr. Raymond F. McNair: My writing isn't so good because I'm in an awkward position due to a broken leg. I'm writing to congratulate you on the wonderful article you wrote in *The Good News* about the second resurrection. I read and reread it. It answered a few questions I had in the back of my mind.

Susan G.,
Manchester, Pennsylvania

• Mr. McNair and our whole staff wish you a speedy recovery.

Why Observe the Passover?

I have a question regarding the article in the March 1974 edition of *The Good News* magazine, "Why Observe the Passover?" by George L. Johnson. In the first paragraph of the third column on page 11 is the following statement: "At 3 p.m., the 14th of Nisan, A.D. 31, Jesus Christ died after being pierced with a Roman spear."

How do you reconcile this with John 19:33-34: "But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith there came out blood and water"? This scripture states that Christ was dead before they pierced Him. Please explain the contradiction.

Victor T.,
Middleport, New York

• The apparent contradiction is carefully explained in our free reprint article "Did Jesus Die of a Broken Heart?"

Full Time in God's Work

Thank you for sharing your wonderful *Good News* magazine with me. There is so much help in it, and the answers I have been seeking are right there. The article "Full Time in God's Work" might have been written for me, as I was wondering what a woman of seventy living alone could do. I still have a great deal to learn and unlearn. I always wondered why the Christian world didn't keep the real Sabbath. I asked my Sunday school teacher about it when I was a child.

Ella M.,
Oswego, New York

I've learned more in six months than I've learned the 25 years I was a member of another church — yes, I found out I wasn't in God's "true Church of God." I promise I'll do what I can from now on to help God's Work. The subject in the *Good News* by Robert L. Kuhn, "Full Time in God's Work," made it very clear what I can do. It is real happiness, joy and peace of mind to realize God loves me. God's truth has been

revealed to me. My blinded eyes have been opened. I have turned about-face and I'm going God's way through obeying His laws.

Katherine G.,
Knoxville, Tennessee

I'm really glad that Robert L. Kuhn wrote the article entitled "Full Time in God's Work." I feel this was one of the best articles ever to appear in the *Good News*. It sure answered a lot of things that I needed to know; and I'm sure every other reader of this wonderful magazine needed to know, too. I've only read the *Good News* for three months, but it didn't take long to realize that it's the best magazine I've ever had my hands on and the most difficult to put down before reading it all.

Clarence S.,
Hollins, Virginia

The Missing Dimension in Sex

I have just finished reading your interesting and practical book *The Missing Dimension in Sex*. You can't imagine how much benefit I have derived from this book. I have read a lot of books about sex and I realize that their authors only try to profit by our human desire for excitement. Your book should be in all parents' private libraries. I am a young unmarried man, and if it were not for you I know I would get into trouble a little later in my life. But with your counsel (through your books and booklets) I'll get married without any fears. You do help people to conquer their own difficult situations.

J. B. A.,
Colombia, South America

Is God a Trinity?

Thank you for sending me the booklets that I requested. I have been very much enlightened on various subjects such as on Christmas and the resurrection not being on Sunday. Though I do find your booklets very interesting, I am inclined not to agree with you on certain subjects. In my opinion Christ rose from the dead on a Sunday, the first day of the week . . . As a Christian I believe in God, the Son (Christ) and the Holy Spirit (the Trinity).

S. M. D.,
Durban, South Africa

• Since you do enjoy reading our booklets, why not request one of our newer publications entitled "Is God a Trinity?"

Dietary Question

Is there really a prohibition on some foods to be eaten by true Christians? Please cite some references on this matter.

Jesus A.,
Masbate, Philippines

• *Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 are the two main biblical references. For a complete scriptural exposition of this whole subject, write for our free article "Is All Animal Flesh Good Food?"*

How Paid?

Page 26 of the March *Good News* is the first time I have ever noticed money being asked from tithe-paying members . . . My

reason for bringing up this matter is because in years past many readers have asked how they can pay for their subscriptions. The answer was always a mysterious one, such as "Your subscription is paid for — don't worry, etc." (This is not an exact quote — just my own [paraphrase]).

Mrs. Robert B.,
Walla Walla, Washington

• Actually, our "How your Good News subscription has been paid" box states: "The faithful tithe-paying members of the Worldwide Church of God and our ever-growing family of co-workers [and donors] gladly give of their incomes [voluntarily] that we may give this precious gospel to an ever-widening number of readers." (The full text is on page 23.)

And although we do not "sell" the gospel (Matt. 10:8), we do accept contributions freely and cheerfully given for Christ's service. It costs enormous sums of money to spread the gospel in this technocratic society.

Thanks

I wish to thank you most sincerely for the splendid magazine, *The Good News*. It is certainly very inspiring, interesting and helpful. We are highly pleased with its contents and will be looking forward to each month's edition. I couldn't write this, my first letter to you, without making special mention of your most extraordinary father. You are indeed privileged to be his son. Until I came to hear of him in very recent years, I had never thought anyone so wonderful existed; and I'm still amazed at the marvellous man he is. Not another on earth can compare with him, and we shall ever feel indebted to him for bringing the knowledge of God's true Church and soon-coming Kingdom within our reach. I pray daily for you, your remarkable father, and all of God's ministers who work so hard in bringing the gospel to all the nations. We appreciate the many instructive booklets, magazines and articles freely sent.

Elizabeth C.,
Irish Republic

Hope for the Future

Would you kindly send me your booklets *All About Water Baptism* and *What Is a Real Christian?* Although my situation seems impossible at the moment, God is definitely going to open the way for my baptism some time in my life. It might be soon, it might be later, but He surely will. Of this I'm certain, and I want to be ready. *The Good News* is almost as good a contact with God's Church, together with the Bible of course, as personal counsel. It is certainly a great help and comfort to anybody struggling against the odds without personal counsel, as it doesn't hold any punches. Thank you once again for your ever available help and advice. God indeed works in strange ways, as my plight and God-given perseverance is proving slowly to be a witness to my husband. I hope by my prayers I'm part of the team, and eventually the system."

Catherine C.,
Manchester, England

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IS GOD A TRINITY?



The "Trinity" is believed, or at least accepted, by most professing Christians. Yet the word Trinity is not found in the Bible! Nor is there substantive proof for such a doctrine.

What is the truth about the nature of God? What is the Holy Spirit? Was Jesus Christ God, or merely a man? Was Jesus the born Son of God, or only an adopted son? To receive the answers to these and other questions, request your copy of this attractive booklet, *Is God a Trinity?* Send your request to:

The Good News
Pasadena, California 91123

If you live outside the United States, please see the inside front cover of this magazine for the address nearest you.

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