

# TOMORROW'S WORLD

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The Truth Behind the  
**Protestant  
Reformation**

## Build Faith and Courage

**A**s Editor in Chief of this magazine, I have a God-given responsibility to genuinely *serve* all of you subscribers. Right now, tensions are at the boiling point in many nations! Millions in America are *genuinely upset* over the election of Donald Trump—which was a **shock** to the media elite, who did not foresee this happening at all. Additional millions are upset and deeply concerned about the “Brexit” vote—indicating that Britain will no doubt withdraw from the European Union and cause a major upheaval in this European project. China and Russia have been stirred by recent events, and tensions are increasing all over the world! As we in this Work of the great God continue to proclaim the *full Truth* of who we are and what genuinely lies ahead, **millions** will be deeply **upset** at us, and this will lead to persecution of God’s true people—just as Jesus Christ prophesied.

Will *you* be ready? Will *you* have the *faith* and **courage** that you will definitely need in the years just ahead? Will you be strong enough spiritually to “endure to the end”?

### No Cowards in God’s Kingdom!

Near the end of the Bible, God set forth some key “markers” of the kind of people He wants in His eternal Kingdom as future “kings and priests”—ruling over this world under Jesus Christ in the soon-coming Kingdom of God. God’s Word tells us: “He who *overcomes* shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. But the **cowardly**, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death” (Revelation 21:7–8). Notice that we are *all* to be “overcomers.” And especially note that the first characteristic that God mentions that would keep us **out** of eternal life is being “cowardly!”

*Wow!*

Each one of us must develop a strong and enduring **faith** that Almighty God is **real** and that He will “never leave us nor forsake us” (Hebrews 13:5). Then

each of us must be willing to follow through and **obey** our Creator, even when it seems “dangerous” to do so. We all remember the stories of Daniel in the lion’s den, the tale of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace, and the example of the Apostles when they were threatened for preaching the Truth. As they told the Jewish leaders who were threatening them, “We ought to **obey God** rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

Through the pages of this magazine, the *Tomorrow’s World* television programs, our many booklets and our outstanding *Tomorrow’s World Bible Study Course*, we hope to help



you *thoroughly prove* that God actually is **real**—and that He will **never** leave you nor forsake you. Each of you needs to begin to ask yourself *right now* if you really are prepared to “weather” the trials and tests just ahead, as nations

split asunder and as ethnic wars, food riots and other catastrophes begin to tear our nations apart.

### Faith Leading to Obedience

One of the bravest men recorded in the pages of the Bible was King David of ancient Israel. Over and over in his writings in the Psalms, David pointed out the need to have *absolute faith* in the great God who guides our lives and protects us—who is ultimately *in charge* of world affairs. In the Psalms, notice the constant emphasis on putting your *faith* or “trust” in Almighty God. In Psalm 5:11, David was inspired to tell us, “But let all those rejoice who put their **trust**

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in You; let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them....” In Psalm 7:1, he wrote, “O LORD my

**The only way you can develop a deep faith and courage is through genuinely “seeking God” and having a profound relationship with Him through His Son, Jesus Christ.**

God, in You I put my **trust**; save me from all those who persecute me; and deliver me.” And in Psalm 9:10, he said that “those who know Your name will put their **trust** in You; for You, LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You.” Throughout these and *scores* of additional verses inspired by God through David, our Creator tells us *how important* it is to Him that we learn to have genuine *trust* and **faith** in Him. When you read about

this faith throughout the Bible, it is the faith that leads to *obedience* and the willingness to do what God says, no matter what!

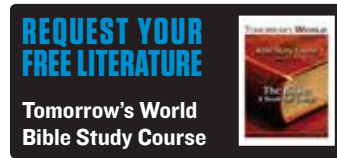
We should often read and re-read the magnificent account of the ultimate “test” which God gave the “father of the faithful,” the patriarch Abraham. After Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his only son to Almighty God, He said, “For now I **know** that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me” (Genesis 22:12). And later: “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have **obeyed** My voice” (v. 18). Again, we see that absolute *faith* leading to **obedience** is a key element of the type of character God wants *every one of us* to have, if we are to follow the “father of the faithful” Abraham and be given eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

**The Only Way to Build that Courage**

Please remember! God will **not** “save” any soul He does not rule. You must be willing to do what God says and have the *faith* and *courage* to obey Him in the perilous years just ahead, no matter what. The *only* way you can develop that *faith* and **courage** is through sincerely “seeking God” and having a profound relationship with Him through His Son, Jesus Christ. For Christ must literally **live** His life within

you through the Holy Spirit! As the Apostle Paul was inspired to write: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but *Christ liveth in me*: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20 *KJV*).

If you will truly **study** the Bible, carefully read and study the powerful booklets we send you absolutely free, and **prove** them to yourself and so learn to “walk with God” *then*—and *only then*—will you be granted eternal life in God’s Kingdom! For God’s Kingdom is not a “feeling in your heart.” It is a genuine **government** to be set up on this earth under Jesus Christ within the next several years. All these events prophesied in your Bible are going to affect your personal life **powerfully**.



uine **government** to be set up on this earth under Jesus Christ within the next several years. All these events prophesied in your Bible are going to affect your personal life **powerfully**.

Almighty God does not want a bunch of spiritual “wimps” in His coming Government who will not put their full *trust* in Him and will not *obey* His son Jesus Christ, who is returning soon as King of kings. *That* is why God tells us: “But the **cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars** shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death” (Revelation 21:8).

Dear subscribers, please do not take this **lightly**! Near the end of His inspired Word, God is telling you and me that we truly must develop the type of **living faith** that will prepare us to *do what God says* and **obey** our Creator, even when we are given glory and power and majesty beyond imagination in the Kingdom of God. So it is “worth it” a thousand times over. It is something you and I need to be profoundly involved in!

So get out your Bible and **study** this revelation from God on your knees! *Pray* fervently and regularly to God each day of your life. **Meditate** on His Word and think deeply about why you are here, where you are going and *how* to get there. **Nothing** is more important if you want to live **forever**.

*Roderic C. Meredith*



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# Luther's Reformation Turns 500

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# 500 Years of *The Protestant Reformation*

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## PART 1



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### From the Editors:

Since this year represents the 500th year of the Protestant Reformation, it seemed an opportune time to “pull back the curtains” and make the real significance of the Reformation—which very few truly understand—crystal clear to our readers. This article begins an enlightening series on the subject that we are privileged to share with you.

**Roderick C. Meredith**, the Editor in Chief of the *Tomorrow's World* Magazine and Presiding Evangelist of the Living Church of God, is uniquely qualified to write this series. His ministry spans almost 65 years, from the earliest years of Herbert W. Armstrong's worldwide work to today's multi-media continuation of that Work of reaching the world with the Gospel of the coming Kingdom of God. Dr. Meredith has long been an expert concerning the history and significance of the Protestant Reformation, and this series collects his research on this highly misunderstood subject. It will explain the truth about the Reformation—a truth that will make you see the last 500 years of the religion called Christianity in an astonishingly different light.

*We hope you will enjoy this brand-new series!*

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# The Plain Truth about the *Protestant Reformation*

By Roderick C. Meredith

**T**he Protestant movement today is on trial. The Protestant Reformation has spawned a veritable Babylon of hundreds of differing denominations. They vary in faith and practice all the way from fundamentalist Quakers to modern Congregationalists, from primitive Methodists to Christian Scientists, from conservative Lutherans to Mormons, Seventh-day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses—with hundreds of shadings in between.

What is the real basis of the Protestant Churches throughout the world today? Why did their early leaders revolt against the authority of the Roman Catholic Church? To what extent are they responsible for today's "divided Christendom"?

Did the Protestant reformers succeed in attaining their stated goals? More importantly, did they succeed in recapturing the faith and belief of Jesus and the inspired New Testament Church? For the real question is whether the Protestant reformers and their successors have succeeded in returning to the "faith which was once for all delivered" (Jude 3).

These questions are *vital*. Many of us have been reared from childhood in one of the many denominations or sects stemming from the Protestant Reformation. We assumed—as *every* child does—that what we were taught was altogether true.

Of course, we were, however, all taught *different* things!

We are told in Scripture to "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21 *KJV*). The purpose of this series, then, is an objective examination of the real factors underlying the Protestant Reformation. We will seek to find out *why* the early reformers rebelled against the Roman Catholic system, and *why* the various Protestant bodies took shape as they did. Using the impartial facts of history, we will compare, in principle, the *teachings, methods* and *actions* of the Protestant reformers with the Bible, which they professed to follow.

## The Basis of Judgment

Realizing the current trend toward modernism and rejection of the Bible as an inspired authority, let us simply state that this series is written from the point of view of a fundamentalist, literal understanding of the Bible. This inspired revelation from God will be the criteria of truth.

For those readers who may be modernists, or "higher critics," we will simply ask: Have you really *proved* whether or not the Bible is supernaturally inspired? A good way to disprove it would be to present conclusive evidence that the scores of prophecies, which pronounce specific judgments on the major cities and nations of the ancient world, have not come to pass. Unfortunately for your cause, no one has been able to do this.

Another test would be to take God at His Word, surrender to obey His will, and then in real faith and earnest, believing prayer, claim one of the many specific promises given in the Bible and *see* whether or not a miracle-working God stands back of His Word.

Naturally, the modernist has not done that. He has *failed* to prove that the Bible is not inspired. So it may be well to remind ourselves that it is intellectual hypocrisy to scoff and ridicule something when there is *no proof* to the contrary.

Therefore, we will employ the Holy Bible as the overall spiritual "yardstick" against which we will measure the Protestant Reformation.

Also, we shall quote the statements of the reformers themselves about what they intended to do. We will examine the historical record to see what they actually did do. Then we will consider statements of their Protestant descendants, and let *them* help pass judgment on the ultimate results of the Reformation.

## The Protestant Aims

We will examine the well-known saying of William Chillingworth, the Protestant theologian: "The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, is the religion of Protestants" (Schaff-Herzog, *Encyclopedia of*

*Religious Knowledge*, “Chillingworth, W”). In their constant affirmation of the scriptures as “the inspired rule of faith and practice” (Schaff-Herzog, “Bible”), the Protestant leaders have committed themselves to follow the religion of Jesus Christ and His Apostles in all respects.

The Lutherans, in their *Torgau Book* of 1576, declare that “the *only standard* by which all dogmas and all teachers must be valued and judged is no other than the prophetic and Apostolic writings of the Old and of the New Testaments” (T. M. Lindsay, *A History of the Reformation*, p. 467).

The average Protestant of today usually accepts these statements at face value and assumes that they must be at least very close to the truth. We would ask: Was this actually true during the course of the Protestant Reformation? Is it true now?

It is well to remember also that in his writings and teachings, John Knox, among other leading reformers, acknowledged “that all worshipping, honouring, or service of God invented by the brain of man in the religion of God without His own express commandment is idolatry.” He then adds force and pointedness to his statement by saying that “it shall nothing excuse you to say, we trust not in idols, for so will every idolater alleage; but if either you or they in God’s honour do anything contrary to God’s Word, you show yourself to put your trust in somewhat else besides God, and so are idolaters. Mark, brethren, that many maketh an idol of their own wisdom or phantasy; more trusting to that which they think good not unto God” (William Hastie, *The Theology of the Reformed Church*, p. 50).

Knox’s warning against false “service of God invented by the brain of man” is certainly parallel to Jesus’ condemnation of the “traditions of men” (Mark 7:7–8). It is very important that we understand this principle before attempting to comprehend the real meaning of the Protestant Reformation. For, as Solomon wisely wrote: “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death” (Proverbs 14:12).

We must not view the Reformation in the light of human ideas and what appears reasonable to man, but in the light of Christ’s words: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word of God” (Luke 4:4). We need to consider also Jesus’ warning against

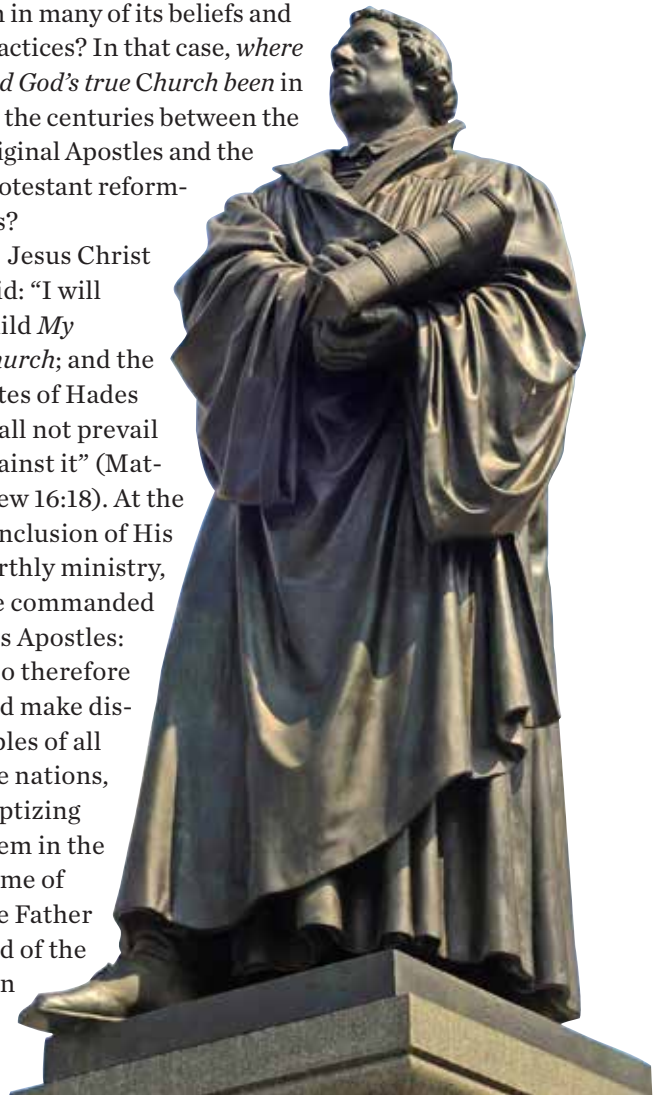
human tradition, and the fact that the reformers understood this principle and claimed to pursue a course based upon “the Bible only.”

### **Was God’s True Church “Reformed”?**

Although it is a subject many Protestants do not like to discuss, to correctly grasp the significance of the Reformation, we must take one other very important consideration into account. That is, was the Protestant movement a reformation of God’s true Church gone wrong? Is, then, the Roman Catholic Church actually the misguided offspring of the Church Jesus Christ said He would build?

If not, was the Protestant movement simply an effort of men to extricate themselves from a false and harsh system, which they admit is pagan and devilish in many of its beliefs and practices? In that case, *where had God’s true Church been* in all the centuries between the original Apostles and the Protestant reformers?

Jesus Christ said: “I will build *My Church*; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18). At the conclusion of His earthly ministry, He commanded His Apostles: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son





and of the Holy Spirit, *teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age*” (Matthew 28:19–20).

At the start of the Reformation, where was the Church Jesus built, the Church to which He promised, “I am with you always”? If it was the Roman Catholic Church, then the Protestants were simply—as Catholic historians claim—revolting against the Church of God on earth.

In this case, much as they might wish to improve conditions *within* the true church, they should have remembered and obeyed the words Christ uttered of the Scribes and Pharisees—the perverse, but right-fully constituted religious leaders of His day: “Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works...” (Matthew 23:3).

But, if it is the case that the church of Rome is not the Church that Jesus built, then *why did not the reformers seek for and unite with that Church which had never participated in the paganism of Rome*, nor been contaminated by her false doctrine and influence, the Church which Jesus promised to be with until the end of the age, the Church of which He is the living Head (Ephesians 1:22)?

Why start *many new churches* if that *one true Church* was still in existence?

Or was it necessary only to purify the faith and morals of those *individuals* who would be willing to come out of a corrupted Roman system?

These questions *demand* an answer! As we shall later see, many Protestant leaders—knowing and believing that Rome is their true source—seek to vindicate her claim as the true body of Christ on earth. This supposition needs a careful examination.

## Pope Francis and the Reformation

**On October 31, 2016, the 499th anniversary** of Martin Luther’s famous “Ninety-five Theses,” the head of the Roman Catholic Church, Pope Francis I, traveled to Sweden to take part in the many events there commemorating the beginning of the 500th year of the Protestant Reformation. While there, he participated in a joint prayer service in a Lutheran cathedral in the city of Lund—a cathedral which had once been Catholic, but which was seized when Sweden officially rejected Catholicism as the state religion.

Celebrating the life and work of the man who caused one of the most profound religious schisms in history, Francis acknowledged that Luther was understandably upset by the worldly sins of the Catholic Church in his day

and stated, “With gratitude we acknowledge that the Reformation helped give greater centrality to sacred scripture in the (Catholic) Church’s life” (*Reuters*, “Pope, in Sweden, says Reformation had positive aspects,” October 31, 2016).

Given that Pope Francis, more than any single man on earth, currently personifies the Roman Catholic Church, it may seem a strange sight to see him praising Luther, whose move-



ment claims to repudiate the very authority Francis claims to wield. But such actions have been a hallmark of Francis, whose reign has seen him reaching out not only to Lutherans, but also to Evangelicals, Pentecostals and Orthodox leadership, as well. Some form of ecumenical unity seems to be very much on the mind of this pope.

Bible prophecy speaks not only of a corrupt, global version of Christianity, pictured by the Great Harlot of Revelation 17 who rides a fantastic beast, but also of the Harlot’s *children* (v. 5), representing churches that have gone out from her.

As prophecy unfolds, the history detailed in this special series will help equip you with the keys to understand the events of today’s news!



Is the “mother” church at Rome the only historical basis of the Protestant plea of descent from Christ and His apostles? We shall see.

### Today’s “Christendom”

We must weigh any religious denomination or movement in the balance of Christ’s prophetic saying: “You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit” (Matthew 7:16–17).

The honest historian will be forced to admit that the Reformation brought in its wake an increased interest in, and knowledge of, the Bible by the common man. Also, the revival of learning and the arts inspired by the Renaissance spread most readily to the whole populace of those nations which accepted Protestantism. Admittedly, the Protestant lands maintain a far higher level of education than do Catholic nations. And, in like manner, they enjoy a much higher standard of living, materially speaking.

But, again returning to the real root of the problem, how do the *spiritual* standards of modern Protestants compare with that of the inspired New Testament Church?

Has a real return to “Apostolic Christianity” occurred? Or does, of necessity, another tremendous “cleansing and purging” religious upheaval still lie in the future?

Speaking to His disciples of the Pharisees, the religious leaders of His day, Christ said: “Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted” (Matthew 15:13). Are the “fruits,” the *results*, of the Protestant Reformation such as to show us that this movement was planted by God and used for His glory?

The purpose of this series of articles is to answer the many questions raised herein. We will get at the *root* of these questions.

Let us be reminded again, at the outset, that the Protestant Reformation must be viewed by every honest Christian in the light of the clear teachings and examples of Christ and the Apostles—“the Bible and the Bible only,” which Protestant leaders have claimed to be their “sole rule of faith and practice.”

If the Protestant faith be true, then we can *prove* that it is so. But we must not *assume*, without proof,

that the doctrines, beliefs, and practices of modern Protestantism constitute the religion founded by Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

In this, above all other matters, we must *know*. We must be *sure*. We must not be afraid to compare Christ and His Word with what purports to be His Church in our age.

This is a fair challenge.

### Christianity after the Death of the Apostles

All scholars agree that the Protestant reformers broke with the historical Catholic Church.

Very few laymen realize the history of degeneracy and the utter depravity to which that body had sunk before the call to reform was sounded. A realization of this fact, and a grasp of the historical background of the Protestant Reformation, is most necessary for its proper understanding.

It is widely recognized that the *visible* church in the early Roman Empire *completely changed* many of the beliefs and practices of Christ and the Apostles.

We need to understand the nature of these changes to properly evaluate the later Reformation. And as we consider the record of the Roman system, we should ask ourselves: “Is this the history of God’s true Church gone wrong?”



### Early Apostasy

A mysterious change transformed the life, doctrine, and worship of the visible Church within fifty years after the death of the original Apostles. As Jesse Lyman Hurlbut observes: “For fifty years after St. Paul’s life a curtain hangs over the church, through which we strive vainly to look; and when at last it rises, about 120AD, with the writings of the earliest church-fathers, we find a church *in many aspects very different* from that in the days of St. Peter and St. Paul” (*The Story of the Christian Church*, p. 41).

This unusual transformation recalls the ominous words of Paul: “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn

**PROTESTANT REFORMATION** CONTINUES ON PAGE 12

# h Canada!

## Signal Hill



**Towards the end of the 19th century**, physicists considered radio waves to be “invisible light.” In many respects, that is exactly what radio waves are: an electromagnetic frequency, oscillation or signal outside of the visible spectrum that allows communication

to occur over great distances. One of the wonders of creation is that communication of this nature is only possible due to the ionosphere—a layer of our atmosphere—above us. The waves emitted from an electromagnetic impulse are sent at the speed of light outwards and upwards, and without the ionosphere reflecting these signals back to earth, many waves would fly away into space.

The practical use of these waves as a method of communication is largely attributed to one man: Guglielmo Marconi. From an early age, Marconi became fascinated with electricity and, specifically, with the production and detection of electromagnetic radiation, now commonly known as radio waves. Up until this time, the quickest form of communication was the telegraph system, which required cables spanning great distances in order to send an electronic current between a transmitter and receiver. What Marconi developed was a wireless method of transmitting an electrical impulse through the air and then receiving this signal at another location. Early models of wireless receivers used a glass tube containing iron shavings to detect the electrical impulse. These shavings, which were connected to an open circuit and an alarm bell, would become electrically charged and stick together when the electromagnetic impulse was detected. The electrical surge would form a circuit and then the bell would ring.

### **Caught by a Kite in Canada!**

What can seem, on the surface, to be nothing more than a primitive manipulation of an electronic current actually became a remarkable method of communication that has powerfully shaped our society. On December 12, 1901, Marconi was in Newfoundland—a British Dominion in present-day Canada. There, he received the first transatlantic wireless transmission sent from Cornwall in the United Kingdom to the appropriately named Signal Hill. Poised with his instruments, Marconi waited for the signal to be sent, while a kite flew 500 feet above his head, flapping in the wind and holding his receiving antenna aloft. From the transmitter in Cornwall to the antenna kite in Signal Hill, there is a distance of approximately 2,200 miles (3,500 kilometers). The success of transmitting a signal over this distance with the basic instruments available to them is such an impressive feat that, to this day, many skeptics still question the veracity of Marconi’s claim. Yet it is undoubtedly because of these experiments and Marconi’s dedication to his work that the benefits of radio waves were realised. Ships at sea were now able to communicate with one another and emit distress signals. For example, it is commonly understood that the only reason there were any survivors from the sinking of the *Titanic*, only a little more than 10 years after the experiment in Newfoundland, was because Marconi radio operators on board the vessel were able to send out a distress signal, which was received by the *RMS Carpathia*.

The British Navy was quick to apply this form of direct communication, sending Morse Code to vessels at sea. Shortly thereafter, harnessing radio



waves—especially once transmitters were fine-tuned to oscillate at a particular frequency—led to widespread adoption of radio communication. With the further development of “amplitude modulation,” or AM radio, for the first time in human history a voice could be heard over the airwaves and the power to reach a worldwide audience had been achieved.

### “Pirate Radio” and the Radio Church of God

The BBC (the British Broadcasting Company, later to become the British Broadcasting Corporation) began transmitting public radio in 1922 as a service to inform, educate and entertain. Due to concerns about potential disruption of military and civil communications, heavy regulatory restrictions were placed on who, when and what could be broadcast. By the early 1930’s, Radio Luxembourg was established and adopted, largely by English-speaking broadcasters, as a method of circumventing the monopoly held by the BBC. This was the birth of “pirate radio” and would, for the majority of the twentieth century, be used as a method of broadcasting content to Europe and the British Isles that would otherwise not be heard.

In 1934, a program by the Radio Church of God, later known as “The World Tomorrow,” began to broadcast out of Eugene, Oregon by Herbert W. Armstrong. The program transmitted the same message of the coming Kingdom of God that you read in this magazine today, and which you can watch on the *Tomorrow’s World* program, aired around the world on television and online. After spreading to various radio stations across North America, the program began to



be aired on Radio Luxembourg in the 1950’s, and Mr. Armstrong’s efforts grew into a truly worldwide work.

The birth of mass communication brought with it the first opportunity to preach the good news of God’s coming Kingdom to a truly global audience. No longer would it always be necessary to travel in person in order to speak to audiences scattered all about the planet.

### Information Everywhere

The effectiveness of radio waves as a method of communication has since increased to include television



and more recently the Internet. The ease with which information can now be transmitted and shared abroad has

resulted in a veritable “information explosion”!

Everyone is now able to inform, educate and entertain on a global stage—but there is an obvious risk associated with this technology. Paul refers to our adversary, Satan the devil, as “the prince of the power of the air” (Ephesians 2:2), and—in much the same way that electronic signals can be sent out to deliver a message of hope—the ideas and influence of corrupt and debased minds can also be transmitted into our very homes. And the volume of media we consume and share today on social media platforms such as Twitter, YouTube and Facebook—much of it distasteful or vulgar—poses one of the greatest challenges facing society. Marconi’s marvelous discovery may have accelerated humanity’s technical progress, but it did not change human nature.

As the radio waves bounce and reverberate around us, this form of “invisible light” must be used for good—as both an example and a witness for the troubled world today. However, it is not just the content of messages delivered by groups or governments that matters. What matters is our own, individual approach to communication, and whether or not we set the right example each time a post, picture or video is uploaded. Ever since the first transatlantic transmission was received on Signal Hill, opportunities to individually and collectively demonstrate and educate the world about God’s ways have increased at a phenomenal rate. May we use them to be “the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill” (Matthew 5:14).

—Jonathan Riley

their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables” (2 Timothy 4:3–4). Peter, in his second epistle, had given a similar warning: “But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed” (2 Peter 2:1–2).

In fact, by the time of the Apostle John’s last epistle, about 90AD, perversions of the true faith were already rampant, and false teachers were gaining the ascendancy within the visible Church congregations. John states that one Diotrephes was already excommunicating those who adhere to the truth, and “not content with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting them out of the church” (3 John 9–10).

From the detached viewpoint of the secular historian, Edward Gibbon describes this portion of Church history: “A more melancholy duty is imposed on the historian. He must discover the inevitable mixture of *error* and *corruption* which she contracted in a long residence upon earth, among a weak and degenerate race of beings” (*The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. I, p. 380).

The visible Christian assemblies, subverted by false teachers with worldly ambitions, began to adopt the practices and customs of the ancient pagans in place of the inspired faith and practice of the apostolic Church. “Christianity began already to wear the garb of heathenism” (James Wharey, *Sketches of Church History*, p. 39).

Ceremonies and rituals began to replace the worship of God from the heart until finally the whole of religion was made to consist of little else (Wharey, p. 40). This, of course, was true only of the *visible* church as a whole.

### Some Continue Apostolic Practice

In spite of the apostasy of the majority, there is an abundance of historical evidence to indicate that a number of Christian societies—some holding much of the truth, some very little—continued to follow the basic doctrines and practices of the original Church right down to the time of the Reformation. Gibbon speaks of the plight of the principal imitators of the

Apostolic Church, called the “Nazarenes,” who “*had laid the foundations* of the Church (but) soon found themselves overwhelmed by the increasing multitudes, that from all the various religions of Polytheism enlisted under the banner of Christ: and the Gentiles, who, with the approbation of their peculiar apostle, had rejected the intolerable weight of the Mosaic ceremonies, at length refused to their more scrupulous brethren the same toleration which at first they had humbly solicited for their own practice” (Gibbon, p. 387).

Thus we find that the Gentile converts began bringing into the Church the customs of their former



heathen religions, and an *attitude of contempt* for those who would remain faithful to the example and practice

of Christ and the original Apostles. No doubt this very attitude was the reason Diotrephes could “cast out” the true brethren with the apparent approval of the visible congregations.

Since it is not the purpose of this series to trace the history of the small body of believers who remained faithful to the Apostolic faith and worship, and since it is a common practice for denominational church historians to distort or cast aspersions upon the belief of this people, it may be well to include an admission by Hurlbut of the difficulty in ascertaining the true beliefs of these people, or, for that matter, of the actual “heresies” of the time. He tells us:

With regard to these sects and so-called heresies, one difficulty in understanding them arises from the fact that (except with the Montanists, and even there in large measure) their own writings have perished; and we are dependent for our views upon those who wrote against them, and were undoubtedly prejudiced. Suppose, for example, that the Methodists, as a denomination, had passed out of existence with all their literature; and a thousand years afterward, scholars should attempt to ascertain their teachings out of the books and pamphlets written *against* John Wesley in the eighteenth



century, what wrong conclusions would be reached, and what a distorted portrait of Methodism would be presented! (*The Story of the Christian Church*, p. 66).

Add to this scanty historical evidence, the fact that many modern church historians write from a denominational viewpoint prejudicial to Apostolic practices and beliefs, and it is easy to perceive the inherent difficulty in finding the truth about such Christians in past ages. Nevertheless, even the testimony of enemies contains abundant proof that an unbroken chain of these faithful believers has existed until this day.

### **The Development of the Catholic Church**

Although, as we have seen, much of the truth perished from the local congregations within fifty years after the death of the Apostles, the Roman Catholic Church as such did not develop until the fourth century. Before then, there were many splits and divisions within the visible church, but the progress of literal idolatry was stayed because of persecution by the Roman state—which prevented many of the heathen from coming in and kept the Church pure to that extent.

But, even so, it was mainly a purity in *error*, for the theology of the time had departed so far from the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles that many doctrines were now based upon the ideas of Plato and other pagan philosophers. Origen, one of the

great “church fathers” of this period, was an admirer of this philosophy and employed it in explaining the doctrines of the gospel. This led him to the *allegorical method* of interpreting Scripture (Wharey, p. 46).

Dealing with this period, Gibbon describes for us the gradual development of what eventually became the Roman Catholic hierarchy, patterned after the government of imperial Rome. He states: “The primitive Christians were dead to the business and pleasures of the world; but their love of action, which could never be entirely extinguished, soon revived, and found a new occupation in the government of the church” (Gibbon, p. 410).

Of the development of this church government, he tells us that it soon followed the model of the provincial synods—uniting several churches in one area under the leadership of the bishop of the church possessing the most members and usually situated in the largest city (Gibbon, p. 413–415). With the conversion of Constantine to nominal Christianity, the church government began to be modeled more nearly after the Roman state. Wharey tells us: “Under Constantine the Great, the church first became connected with the state, and in its *government* was accommodated to such connection, upon principles of state policy” (*Church History*, p. 55).

### **Corruption and Moral Decay**

The increased vice and corruption of the ministry is related by Mosheim, who aptly describes the *lust for power*, which entered the hearts and minds of the spiritual leaders of this period: “The bishops had *shameful quarrels* among themselves, respecting the boundaries of their sees and the extent of their jurisdiction; and while they trampled on the rights of the people and of the inferior clergy, they vied with the civil governors of the provinces in luxury, arrogance, and voluptuousness” (*Institutes of Ecclesiastical History*, p. 131).

When Constantine became sole emperor of the Roman Empire in 323AD, within a year Christianity, at least in name, was recognized as the official religion of the empire. This recognition not only affected the government of the church and the morals of its ministers, but it had a profound influence on the entire church and its membership.

All persecution of the established church ceased at once and forever. The ancient “day of the sun” was



soon proclaimed as a day of rest and worship. Heathen temples were consecrated as churches. Ministers soon became a privileged class, above the law of the land.

Now everybody sought membership in the church. "Ambitious, worldly, unscrupulous men sought office in the church for social and political influence" (Hurlbut, p. 79). Instead of Christianity influencing and transforming the world, we see the world dominating the professing Christian church.

"The services of worship increased in splendor, but were less spiritual and hearty than those of former times. The forms and ceremonies of *paganism* gradually crept into the worship. Some of the old *heathen feasts* became church festivals with change of name and worship. About 405 A.D., *images* of saints and martyrs began to appear in the churches..." (Hurlbut, p. 79).

The church and state became *one integrated system* when Christianity was adopted as the religion of the empire. The Roman Catholic system had begun, and Hurlbut tells us that "the church gradually usurped power over the state, and the result was not *Christianity*, but a more or less corrupt *hierarchy* controlling the nations of Europe making the church mainly a political machine" (Hurlbut, p. 80).

### Catholicism in Power

Within two years after what was called Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, a new capital was chosen and built by Constantine. He selected the Greek city of Byzantium because its situation rendered it relatively safe from the ravages of war which had so often plagued Rome.

Soon after this, the division of the empire took place—with Constantine appointing associate emperors for the West. The division of the empire prepared the way for the coming split in the Catholic Church. This also provided an easier path to the exaltation of the Roman bishop, as he was not now overshadowed by the emperor.

During this time, the established church ruled supreme—and any attempt to return to the Apos-



Silhouette of the statues of Basil of Caesarea, Francis of Assisi, and Roch of Montpellier atop the Catholic cathedral in Dresden, Germany

tolic faith would have been severely punished as an offense against the state. "The command was issued that no one should write or speak against the Christian (Catholic) religion, and all books of its opposers should be burned" (Hurlbut, p. 85).

Thus we can see that those who may have held much truth during this period were deprived of the means of preserving any record of their faith for future generations. This edict was effective in stamping out *heresy*, but it was also effective in stifling any *truth* which was held in opposition to Catholic doctrine.

As for the substance of that doctrine, Wharey tells us: "The *Theology* of this century began to be much adulterated and corrupted with superstition and heathen philosophy. Hence, are to be seen evident traces of excessive veneration for departed saints, of a belief in a state of *purgatory* for souls after death, of the celibacy of the clergy, of the *worship of images and relics*, and of many other opinions, which in process of time almost banished the true religion or at least very much obscured and corrupted it" (*Church History*, p. 60). Thus we find that as the Catholic Church continued, superstition, heathenism, and idolatry increased.

The development of papal power was the outstanding fact during the ten centuries of the Middle Ages. The Pope at Rome soon claimed to be ruler, not only over the other bishops, but over *nations, kings, and emperors* (Hurlbut, p. 105).

Gregory I (590–604) made the church the virtual ruler in the province around Rome, and it was he who

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developed the doctrine of purgatory, the adoration of images, and transubstantiation. George Park Fisher speaks of this period: “*Christmas* originated in the West (Rome), and from there passed over into the Eastern Church. Many Christians still took part in the *heathen* festival of *New Year’s*” (*History of the Christian Church*, p. 119).

Speaking of the doctrinal controversies which raged through the church at this time, he says: “The interference of the state in matters of doctrine is a fact that calls for particular notice. In philosophy, Plato’s influence was still predominant: Augustine as well as Origen, was steeped in the Platonic spirit” (Fisher, p. 121). Here is a plain statement that the philosophical teachings of such heathen thinkers as Plato distinctly influenced the doctrinal positions of many of the early “church fathers”!

**The Culmination and Decline of Papal Prestige**

The height of papal supremacy was attained under Gregory VII, born Hildebrand. Under his reign, we behold the spectacle of the current emperor, Henry IV, in order to receive absolution from the pope’s ban of excommunication, “having laid aside all belongings of royalty, with bare feet and clad in wool, continued for three days to stand before the gates of the castle” (Hurlbut, p. 111).

Another high point in the progress of papal authority was the reign of Innocent III. He declared in his inaugural discourse, “The successor of St. Peter stands midway between God and man; below God, above man; Judge of all, judged of none” (Hurlbut, p. 112).

Soon after this, however, followed the period known as the “Babylonish Captivity” of the church

began to prepare men’s minds for the later attempts at reformation (Mosheim, p. 490).

That there were many good and sincere men in the Roman Church even during this period is not doubted. But the *complete departure* of their ancestors from the doctrine and practice of Christ and the Apostles, the substitution in their place of *heathen* philosophies and doctrines of *heathen* church festivals, fasts, images, relics, and sundry other practices—all this would have made it virtually impossible for most men to grasp the simple truths of the Bible, even if they had desired to do so. And, due to the prevailing ignorance and barbarism of the times, most of the common men and women would have been unable to read the scriptures even if they had been made available, and they had wished to do so (Mosheim, p. 491).

Nevertheless, the constant abuse of ecclesiastical authority by an ignorant and ravenous clergy, the continuing scandals of the papal court, and the compromising involvement of the popes and cardinals in temporal as well as religious affairs—all these things did much to arouse a questioning spirit in the masses of people.

At the conclusion of the “Babylonish Captivity” in 1378, Pope Gregory XI returned to Rome. But at his death, through political pressure and maneuver, *two* popes were elected by the cardinals! The world then beheld the spectacle of the nominal heads of Christendom hurling maledictions, threats, accusations, and excommunications at each other over a period of many years.

Mosheim aptly describes this unhappy state of affairs: “For, during fifty years the church had two or three heads, and the contemporary pontiffs assailed

each other with excommunications, maledictions, and plots. The calamities and distress of those times are indescribable. For besides the perpetual contentions and wars between the pontifical factions, which were ruinous to great num-

bers, involving them in the loss of life or of property, nearly all sense of religion was in many places extinguished, and wickedness daily acquired greater impunity and boldness; the clergy, previously corrupt, now laid aside even the appearance of piety

**THE POLITICAL AND MORAL SCANDALS OF THE POPE AND CLERGY THROUGHOUT THIS ENTIRE PERIOD WEAKENED THE PAPAL INFLUENCE**

(1305–1378). Through political influence of the French king, the papacy was transferred from Rome to the south of France at Avignon. The political and moral scandals of the pope and clergy throughout this entire period weakened the papal influence, and

and godliness, while those who called themselves Christ's vicegerents were at open war with each other and the conscientious people, who believed no one could be saved without living in subjection to Christ's vicar, were thrown into the greatest perplexity and anxiety of mind" (Mosheim, p. 496).

Such was the provocative state of "Christendom" on the eve of the Reformation. Well might men have asked themselves, "Is *this* the church that Jesus Christ built?"

### Precursors of the Reformation

History seems to provide some strange dilemmas. One of two alternatives is often assumed about the existence of the true Church during the Middle ages. One is that the Church of God as a visible, organized body of believers had ceased to exist over a period embracing hundreds of years. The other is that the Roman Catholic Church—whose *utter depravity* we have described—was the only legitimate descendant of the Church Jesus Christ said He would build (Matthew 16:18).

However, many historians are now beginning to realize that there were groups of believers in Apostolic truth scattered through almost every country of Europe prior to the age of Luther (Mosheim, p. 685).

Long before the dawn of the Reformation proper, many of these different independent movements and religious societies asserted themselves more strongly with the decline of papal influence and power. Some of these undoubtedly contained remnants of believers in Apostolic truth, now long languishing in an obscurity forced upon them by periodic persecutions and ravishments.

Among these, the Albigenses or Cathari, "puritans," grew to prominence in southern France around the year 1170. The Cathari made great use of Scripture, although they are reputed to have rejected parts of the Old Testament (Williston Walker, *A History of the Christian Church*, p. 250).

They translated and circulated copies of the New Testament, repudiated the authority of tradition, and attacked the Roman Catholic doctrines of purgatory, image worship, and various priestly claims. Their doctrine seems to have been a mixture of truth and error, but their rejection of papal authority brought forth a "crusade" against them at the behest of Pope

Innocent III, in 1208. As a result, the sect was almost eradicated by the wanton slaughter of most of the inhabitants of the area, including many Catholics (Hurlbut, p. 141).

### The Waldenses



Ruins of Fort Buoux in Provence, an ancient home of the Waldenses

Another scattered group of believers in Apostolic teachings and practices were called Waldenses. Mosheim tells us how the Waldenses "multiplied and spread with amazing rapidity through all the countries of Europe, nor could they be exterminated entirely by any punishments, whether by death or any other forms of persecution" (p. 429).

Unquestionably, there were different elements among those denominated as Waldenses. Some held to more Apostolic truth than others. Some, we are informed, "looked upon the Romish church as a real church of Christ, though greatly corrupted." But others "maintained that the church of Rome had apostatized from Christ, was destitute of the Holy Spirit, and was that Babylonian harlot mentioned by St. John" (Mosheim, p. 430). As we have already seen, the enemies of these scattered Christian groups have often charged them falsely as to doctrines, and much of the scriptural truth they may have held has probably been lost with the destruction of their original writings. Yet even their enemies sometimes bear eloquent testimony as to the morals and doctrine of the Waldenses. As quoted in an appendix of Wharey's *Church History*, the following incident, taken from an early and reputed source, is indicative of the faith and practice of the early Waldenses: "King Louis XII having received information from the enemies of the Waldenses, dwelling in Provence, of several heinous crimes which they fathered upon them, sent to the



place Monsieur Adam Fumee, Master of Requests, and a certain Sorbonnist Doctor, called Parui, who was his confessor, to inquire into the matter. They visited all their parishes and temples, and neither found there any images, or sign of the ornaments belonging to the mass, or ceremonies of the Romish Church. Much less could they discover any of those crimes with which they were charged. But rather, that they kept the Sabbath duly; caused their children to be baptized according to the primitive Church; taught them the articles of the Christian faith, and the commandments of God. The king, having heard the report of the said commissioners, said, with an oath, that they were better men than himself or his people” (J. Paul Perrin, *History of the Waldenses*, Book I, Chap. V).

Thus it is evident that *much* knowledge of the “faith once delivered” existed in the minds of many faithful men and women throughout the Middle Ages. They were often gathered together in religious bodies for purposes of worship. Though sometimes scattered and persecuted, they were, in actual fact a *Church*, which carried on in the spirit, faith, and practice of Christ and His Apostles.

We need to consider the fact that the knowledge of Apostolic truth and practice, which they held, was available to Luther and the other reformers if they had desired it.

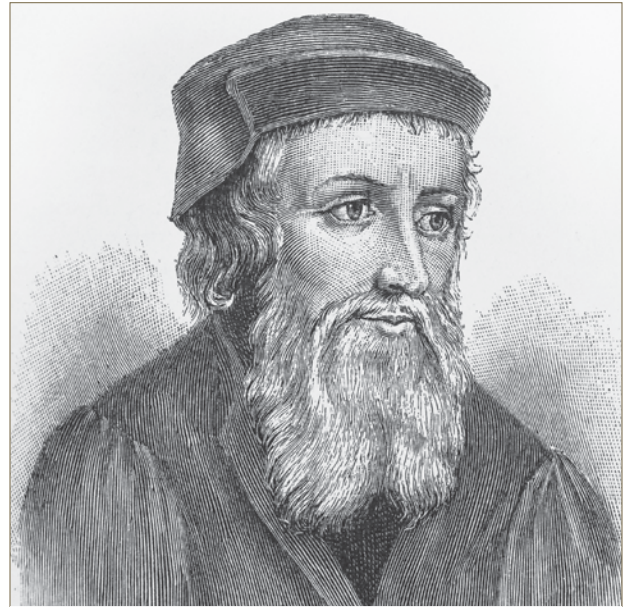
Besides these scattered groups of believers which had existed—*independent of Rome*—for hundreds of years, there were many individual leaders *within* the Roman Church who became alarmed at the spiritual decay and called for reform before the Reformation proper.

### **The Work of John Wycliffe**

One of the most notable reformers before the Reformation was John Wycliffe, born about 1324 in Yorkshire, England. He is commonly called “the morning star of the Reformation.”

At Oxford, he rose to scholarly distinction and eventually became a doctor of theology, holding several honorable positions at the university. He soon became a leader among those attempting to combat a number of glaring abuses of the clergy.

Wycliffe attacked the mendicant friars, the system of monasticism, and eventually opposed the authority of the pope in England. He also wrote against the doctrine



John Wycliffe (1320-1384)

of transubstantiation and advocated a simpler church service, according to the New Testament pattern.

He taught that the scriptures are the only law of the church. Yet he did not utterly reject the papacy, but only what he regarded as its abuse (Walker, p. 299).

The incompetence of the clergy led him to send forth preachers, his “poor priests,” wandering two by two throughout the country—to labor wherever there was need. Their success was great because there was already a strong resentment of foreign papal taxation and a longing to return to a more biblical faith.

### **Wycliffe Taught Obedience to the Ten Commandments**

Although he never fully developed his doctrine and was very much enmeshed from birth with the Roman Catholic concepts of his time, Wycliffe clearly perceived the need to restore obedience to the Ten Commandments. He never employed the characteristic devices of the later reformers in evading this Apostolic doctrine. The learned historian, Augustus Neander, describes this frank approach. He states that one of Wycliffe’s first works as a reformer “was a detailed exposition of the Ten Commandments, in which he contrasted the immoral life prevalent among all ranks, in his time, with what these commandments require. We should undoubtedly keep in mind what he tells himself, that

he was led to do this by the ignorance which most people betrayed of the decalogue; and that it was his design to counteract a tendency, which showed greater concern for the opinions of men than the law of God. But at the same time we cannot fail to perceive an inclination to adopt in whole the Old Testament form of the law, which shows itself in his applying the law of the Sabbath to the Christian observance of Sunday” (*General History of the Christian Religion and Church*, vol. IX, Part I, pp. 200–201).

It was perhaps unfortunate that Wycliffe left no follower of conspicuous ability to carry on his work in England. But his translation of the Bible into the English language, completed between 1382 and 1384, rendered a great and lasting benefit to his contemporaries. “The greatest service which he did the English people was his translation of the Bible, and his open defence of their right to read the Scriptures in their own tongue” (Fisher, p. 274).

Although his opinions were condemned by the Roman hierarchy, attempts to imprison him proved ineffectual because of his friends and followers, and he was allowed to retire to his parish at Lutterworth, where he died a natural death. With his death, the political significance of the Lollard movement, as it was popularly called, came to an end. Mainly in secret, some of his followers remained active until the Reformation.

But his writings and teachings had gone abroad, and, as a historian states: “Wyclif’s chief influence was to be in Bohemia rather than in the land of his birth” (Walker, p. 301).

### The Hussite Revival

That Wycliffe’s views found a more ready acceptance in Bohemia than they had in England was almost altogether due to the efforts of John Huss.

Huss was born in Bohemia in 1369, and was an ardent student of Wycliffe’s writings, and preached most of his doctrines, especially those directed against papal encroachments. As rector of the University of Prague, Huss early held a commanding influence in Bohemia.

At first he apparently hoped to reform the church from within, and had the confidence of his ecclesiastical superiors. But as a preacher, he denounced the prevailing sins of the clergy with great zeal, and began to arouse suspicion. When he was appointed to inves-

tigate some of the alleged miracles of the church, he ended up pronouncing them spurious and told his followers to quit looking for signs and wonders and to search the scriptures instead.

At last, “his impassioned condemnation of the iniquitous sale of indulgences called down upon him the papal excommunication” (Fisher, p. 275). He was then persuaded by the sympathetic king to go into exile. But, unfortunately, he later agreed to appear before the Council of Constance after having received a pledge of safe conduct from the emperor.



He defended his teachings as in accord with Scripture, but he was condemned by the council and delivered

over to the civil power for execution. This method was always used so as to preserve the “innocency” of the Roman church in such matters.

The emperor’s “safe conduct” pledge was broken upon the Catholic principle that “faith was not to be kept with heretics” (Hurlbut, p. 143). The cruel sentence passed upon Huss was that he was to be burned at the stake. His courageous death, and that a year later of Jerome of Prague, who shared his reforming spirit and ideals, aroused the reforming element in Bohemia and influenced his countrymen for many years to come (Fisher, p. 276).

### Jerome Savonarola

About 1452 was born at Florence, Italy, a man who was to challenge the papal corruptions in its own territory.

This man was Jerome Savonarola, who had become so disgusted with the wickedness and debauchery about him that he became a monk of the Dominican order partly in order to escape the evils all around him.

He preached violently against the ecclesiastical, social, and political evils of his day—sparing no age, sex, or condition of men. At first the city would not listen, but later filled the cathedral to overflowing. He no longer used reasonings in his sermons, but preached in the name of the Most High (Fisher, p. 276).

For a time, he effected a seeming reformation of the city, and became for a short time the virtual political and religious ruler of the city of Florence. But his political policy made him bitter enemies, among them the



Savonarola would draw large crowds lecturing on the First Epistle of John and the Book of Revelation

pope, Alexander VI. Refusing to keep his silence, Savonarola was soon excommunicated, seized, and imprisoned. After a prejudicial trial, he was hanged, then burned, and his ashes were thrown into the Arno River.

Historians agree that Savonarola's interests lay much less in doctrinal reforms than in the purification of morals. This was to be accomplished *within* the pale of the Roman Church. And we may note that, to a great extent, this was the case also with Wycliffe and Huss. All three had been reared Catholics in faith, practice, and outlook. With the possible exception of Wycliffe, all died as Catholics in actual fact—even though they sought a reformation *within* that body.

Thus it is evident that no ordinary man, be he ever so able and zealous, would have been able to bring about a purification of the spiritual depravity of the Roman Catholic Church as a whole. As a result of the progress of papal power, the pope and his immediate court were the only ones who could do this.

### Obstacles to a True Reformation

But the involvements of the iniquitous system were so great, the selling of ecclesiastical posts so rampant, the temptations to capitalize on the sale of indulgences and other church revenue so abundant, that even a sincere reformer within the papal court would have found his lot a hopeless one. "When men had sunk their whole fortune in buying a lucrative post, which had been put up for auction, would it not be

monstrous to abolish all such posts? And there was no money with which to make compensation. When Leo X died, the papacy was not only in debt, but bankrupt. A reforming Pope had no chance of success. Every door was barred, and every wheel was jammed" (Plummer, *The Continental Reformation*, p. 15).

Yet throughout the nations of Europe, there were many political, social, and economic abuses that cried out for reform—not to speak of the overwhelming religious abuses. One way or another, as we shall soon see, some sort of universal upheaval was inescapably destined to rock the outward complacency of that time.

But, as we have seen, the very men who tried to reform this corrupt system were so thoroughly indoctrinated with the teachings of Rome that it was most difficult to break completely away. We need to bear in mind that these men—and Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, and their associates—had *all* been reared from childhood in Roman Catholic doctrine and practice. They had been taught nothing else, and since there were practically no religious books or Bibles available in the common tongues, they knew of little else than the Roman Catholic faith, ceremonies, rituals, and traditions.

Therefore, it was well-nigh *impossible* for them to objectively compare the religious system they had been reared in with the beliefs and practices of Jesus Christ and the inspired New Testament Church.

However, from a spiritual point of view, the real question of the hour was not whether there would be *some kind* of reformation, but whether there would be a return to the "faith once delivered." A return to genuine *Apostolic Christianity* was sorely needed. A return to the *true gospel*, the *faith* and *practice* of Christ and the Apostolic Church would have ushered in a new era of righteousness and worship, of peace and of joy.

Was such a *true* reformation forthcoming? This is the question that should burn itself into the minds and hearts of all thinking men, because the final answer to this question will determine—to a great extent—the real meaning of the religious division and confusion of our time.

The *answers* to these vital questions, the *unraveling* of this fascinating mystery, will appear next in this series of articles. <sup>TM</sup>

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# Five Hundred Years of

Over the course of half a millennium, the Protestant Reformation movement that began with Martin Luther has reached many milestones. This timeline

● **1456**  
*Printing press invented*

Wider availability causes an instant demand for Bibles, which, in turn, causes many to begin questioning why the Catholic Church's teachings and practices differ so radically from Scripture.

● **1521**  
*Luther excommunicated*

**Martin Luther writes his "95 Theses" and ignites the Protestant Reformation**

**Marburg Colloquy**

**Henry VIII creates the Church of England**

**Council of Trent**

1517

1529

1533

1545

Luther's main complaint concerns the selling of indulgences by the Roman Catholic Church.

Protestants begin dividing among themselves as their leaders disagree on doctrines (in this case, transubstantiation).

Despite earlier supporting the papacy, Henry creates the Church of England to facilitate his desire to divorce his wife and marries Anne Boleyn

This meeting of Catholics has often been described as the "Counter-Reformation" as they soundly rejected Protestant ideas as heresy.

● **1478**  
*Spanish Inquisition*

Jews and Muslims are forced to convert in Spain, as the Spanish Inquisition starts ensuring adherence to Catholic tradition and doctrine. The Inquisition keeps these dissident views from taking root in Spain or its territories.

● **1534**  
*Ignatius of Loyola founds the Jesuits*

This order of Catholics is committed to defeating Protestants.

# Luther's Reformation

millennium, the Protestant Martin Luther has experienced a timeline illustrates just a few.

**1611**  
King James Version of the Bible is published.

**1934**  
*Radio Church of God*  
Herbert W. Armstrong begins a worldwide work using the new medium of radio.

30 Years War engulfs Europe	Vatican I	Vatican II	Reversing the Reformation
1618	1870	1962	1990-
Tensions between Catholics and Protestants in Germany cause one of the worst wars in European history, as some 8,000,000 people are killed.	Having been believed for centuries by many, the Catholic doctrine of papal infallibility is formally announced, confirming papal authority as dogma.	Major reforms enacted, including softening on measures put into place by the Council of Trent.	Popes John Paul II and Francis (and to a lesser degree, Benedict XVI) successfully court Protestant churches. Many Protestant members once again look to the Pope as a religious authority.

**1685**  
*French King Louis XIV revokes the Edict of Nantes*  
This leads to persecution of French Protestants, causing many of them to emigrate.



# Prepare to Inherit the Earth!

*Jesus said that the meek will inherit the earth, but millions believe that they will live in heaven forever after they die. What does your Bible really say?*

By **Richard F. Ames**

**M**illions—perhaps billions—believe that the bliss of heaven is the reward of the saved. This belief is shared not only by most who call themselves Christians, but also by members of many other religions around the world.

Christians believe in the words of Jesus Christ. Jesus gave some of His most basic and fundamental teachings in what is commonly called the “Sermon on the Mount” (Matthew 5–7). How did He begin His teaching? “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:3–5).

Notice carefully. Did Jesus say that the poor in spirit would go to heaven, while the meek would inherit the earth? No! He said that the poor in spirit would be blessed with the Kingdom *of* heaven. The Kingdom *of* heaven will come to earth when Christ

returns! That is when the saved will be resurrected, and will inherit the Kingdom.

Jesus taught us to pray: “Your Kingdom come” (Matthew 6:10). Was He asking us to pray for something to come that is already here? If the Kingdom is here, then why has the world experienced such horrors as the two great World Wars of the last century, as well as the terrible genocides carried out against Armenians, Jews, Cambodians and many others? Even today, peace continues to evade us. As Mikhail Gorbachev, former president of the Soviet Union, recently said, “It all looks as if the world is preparing for war” (*Time.com*, January 26, 2017). Yes, the world *needs* God’s Kingdom to come!

Christ taught that there would be a Great Tribulation before His Kingdom would come. How severe would this tribulation be? He said: “And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved” (Matthew 24:22). Thankfully, Christ promised to intervene, and by His Second Coming put an end to warring mankind’s efforts to destroy the earth. If you are watching world events carefully, you realize that unless God



intervenes, current military trends would lead to total cosmocide—the annihilation of mankind. Ever since the first atomic bomb was exploded over Hiroshima in 1945, human beings have had the power to destroy themselves with an ease never before known in history. And technology has become more powerful since then! Left to themselves, warring nations would eventually destroy themselves. As recently as January 26, the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists moved the minute hand of their famous “Doomsday Clock” 30 seconds forward, indicating their opinion that the world is only two-and-a-half symbolic minutes from midnight—meaning the utter destruction of humanity.

Clearly, the Kingdom of God is **not** already here! Jesus Christ is not yet exercising His rule over all the earth, or there would not be the chaos and devastation we now see. Christ must return to save all nations—spiritually and physically.

Thankfully, He is coming soon to save the world physically. And He has a plan for the spiritual salvation of humanity. He reveals that plan through the

## JESUS CHRIST IS NOT YET EXERCISING HIS RULE OVER ALL THE EARTH. THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOT ALREADY HERE!

Holy Days, which Jesus and the Apostles observed—and which they taught the first Christians to observe. Most professing Christians know that the very first step in this plan to save humanity is the redemption God gives to repentant sinners, through the blood of Jesus Christ. But many do not realize that Jesus and the Apostles commemorated His sacrifice and His redemption of humanity by observing the New Testament Passover, with unleavened bread and wine. Christ and the Apostles kept this annual memorial, and instructed Christians to do the same.

Notice how the Apostle Paul emphasized Jesus’ sacrifice: “For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us” (1 Corinthians 5:7). In the very next verse, Paul tells even the Gentiles to keep the Feast—the Festival of Unleavened Bread. You may find these terms unusual, but for those who want to follow Jesus Christ, they are vital—and full of hope

and encouragement! Jesus never kept Christmas and Easter, nor did the Apostles or the Christians whom they taught. From the beginning, Christians have kept the **biblical** festivals, following the example of Jesus Himself. To learn more about the true biblical festivals picturing the steps in God’s plan of salvation for mankind, please request your free copy of our informative booklet, *The Holy Days: God’s Master Plan*.

### Where Is the Kingdom?

The Apostle John explained that God has called His servants and redeemed them “out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation” (Revelation 5:9). What will be their destiny? Will they go to heaven for eternity? The Apostle John explains in the very next verse: “And have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign **on the earth**” (Revelation 5:10).

God did not offer to save us so that we could rest idly in bliss in heaven. He calls us to become kings and priests, who will assist Jesus Christ—the King of kings—in establishing lasting peace on earth. This is why Jesus said that the meek—those who humbly follow Jesus rather than their own self-will—will inherit the earth. When we pray, “Your Kingdom come,” we are praying for the coming of that Kingdom which will bring peace to all humanity, and in which faithful Christians will serve their beloved Savior, Jesus Christ, as kings and priests under His direction.

Over the years, some have taught that the church, on earth, is the Kingdom. Others believe that the Kingdom is in your heart. However, the Kingdom of God is a literal kingdom, whose King will be Jesus Christ!

What, exactly, **is** a kingdom? Every kingdom has four basic elements: a ruler, a territory, laws and subjects. But how does this apply to the Kingdom of God?

Who is the ruler of God’s Kingdom? The Bible answers this question in many places. Notice what the Apostle John wrote: “Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself” (Revelation 19:11–12). Jesus Christ,

wearing many crowns, will return to earth as its conquering King!

Here is another description of Jesus' appearance at His Second Coming: "He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (Revelation 19:13-16).

Yes, the Ruler of the soon-coming Kingdom of God will be Jesus Christ Himself! Are you praying, "Your Kingdom come"? Are you eagerly anticipating Jesus' return to this earth? The Apostle John certainly was. John concluded the next-to-last verse in your Bible with his prayer and fervent hope: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20).

When Jesus Christ comes, His territory will be the whole earth! And His subjects will be all of humanity. Scripture describes that the whole world will learn the way to peace. People will come to worship their King, every year, in Jerusalem. The whole earth will learn to observe the same biblical Holy Days that Jesus and the Apostles observed. "And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles" (Zechariah 14:16).

Every nation on earth will worship the King—and will keep the Feast of Tabernacles. Many do not realize that the Holy Days are still filled with meaning for Christians today. The New Testament Church was founded on the day of the Feast of Pentecost, though many today have forgotten that Pentecost is one of the biblical Holy Days that God gave to His people. In the book of Acts, we read that throngs of people were gathered together to observe the Feast of Pentecost when the Apostles preached to them and converted thousands. The people were gathered together to observe the day because it was commanded in the Bible! As the *NIV Study Bible* states: "Pentecost is also called the Feast of Weeks (Dt 16:10), the Feast of Harvest (Ex 23:16) and the day of firstfruits (Nu 28:26)"



(p. 1,645). True Christians today understand that the Feast of Pentecost commemorates that stage in God's plan of salvation when He calls the "firstfruits" to salvation in this present age, preparing them to rule under Christ in the Millennium.

### What Is the "Gospel"?

Jesus Christ, the Messiah, came preaching a message that many may **think** they know, but that surprisingly few actually **understand**. What did Jesus preach? "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15). Jesus taught that it was time to stop sinning, believe His message and prepare for the soon-coming Kingdom of God.

Have **you** repented? To "repent" means to acknowledge that you have sinned—transgressed the Ten Commandments, God's law. It means not only to express sorrow, and repugnance at your sin, but to hate that sin so much that you turn from it, and begin to live a new life without that sin. Repentance means that you commit—with God's help—to change your life. What is sin? John wrote: "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3:4). As another translation puts it, "sin is the transgression of the law" (v. 4, *KJV*).

You cannot **believe** the gospel unless you **understand** it! Many who **say** that they believe in Jesus Christ do not, in fact, believe—or act on—what He preached. Jesus asked: "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). If you are truly a Christian, you will do what Jesus

commanded. If you truly become a Christian, you will accept Jesus not in some abstract way as a “Savior” whom you do not obey, but as your Lord and Master whom you strive to obey, with the help of the Holy Spirit. As Paul wrote: “Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? And ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body” (1 Corinthians 6:19–20, ASV).

True Christianity is a way of life. Once you repent, believe the gospel and commit your life to Jesus Christ through baptism, He can live in you through the Holy Spirit. Then, you can grow as a Christian, and transform your life from a life of selfishness into one of service and love toward God and your fellow human beings. Those whom God is calling today are not being called merely for their own salvation; He is calling them to prepare to serve in His coming Kingdom as kings and priests, as we saw earlier. Their first opportunity to rule will come in the Millennium—the thousand-year period described in your Bible, when

## WHEN CHRIST COMES BACK TO RULE THE EARTH, HE AND THE GLORIFIED SAINTS WILL RULE OVER THE NATIONS

Jesus will rule a healed earth. As John wrote: “Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” (Revelation 20:6).

### From Where Will Christ Reign?

From where will Jesus reign on the earth? He will reign from Jerusalem. He says: “I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem” (Zechariah 8:3). In fact, when He reigns, Jerusalem will have another name. The very last verse in the book of Ezekiel states that “the name of the city from that day shall be: The LORD Is There” (Ezekiel 48:35). In Hebrew, that name is *Yahweh Shama*. From there, He will rule His Kingdom: “And the LORD shall be King over all the earth” (Zechariah 14:9).

When Christ comes back to rule the earth, He and the glorified saints will rule over the nations—

over physical human beings. Christ will teach the nations the way of life that produces peace. Today’s Christians—resurrected as spirit beings (the “first-fruits”)—will rule under His direction, as the kings and priests who will rule over cities and nations (see Luke 19:17; Revelation 2:26). These kings and priests will educate the world about God’s truth. Notice this inspiring scripture, describing those who will be taught God’s ways during the Millennium: “And though the LORD gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your teachers will not be moved into a corner anymore, but your eyes shall see your teachers” (Isaiah 30:20). **You** could be one of those teachers. And what will the glorified saints—the kings and priests—teach? “Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This is the way, walk in it,’ whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left” (v. 21).

In the Millennium, the teachers will teach God’s law. The prophet Isaiah gives us an inspiring foretaste of what will come. “Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.’ For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem” (Isaiah 2:2–3).

Humanity’s often-contradictory and unjust laws will be no more. God’s laws will be taught and administered from Jerusalem. And the Ten Commandments are the foundation of those laws. Remember, Jesus said: “But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments”—then He went on to list several of the Ten Commandments (Matthew 19:17). Moreover, in His “Sermon on the Mount” Jesus actually **magnified** the Ten Commandments. He made them more comprehensive, and more binding, because Christians need to observe the Ten Commandments in the spirit, not just in the letter!

What will be the effect of God’s government on this earth? “He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks;

**INHERIT THE EARTH** CONTINUES ON PAGE 28



# Defending Britain's Honour



**T**hree hundred miles to the east of South America lie the Falklands, a British Overseas Territory consisting of two main islands and over seven hundred smaller ones. The sovereignty of the Falklands, known to the Argentinians as the Islas Malvinas, has long been a source of dispute. On April 2, 1982, Argentine forces invaded the islands under orders from their new military leader, General Galtieri, who mistakenly believed that the British government would not respond militarily to this action. What followed was a 74-day occupation, before a United Kingdom task force, waging at times a tenuous, hard-fought campaign, forcibly recaptured the islands on behalf of the 1,800 British citizens living there.

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, writing in her memoir *The Downing Street Years*, summarised her attitude towards the Falklands conflict: “We were *defending our honour* as a nation—above all, that aggressors should never succeed and that international law should prevail over the use of force.” This was a powerful sentiment that more liberal leaders of the time did not necessarily share, but both diplomatic and military resources rose to the challenge.

On April 3, two days after the U.N. demanded the withdrawal of Argentine forces, a task force set sail from Portsmouth led by aircraft carrier *HMS Hermes*. Ultimately, the enormous logistical operation would involve over 100 ships carrying 25,000 men. Their three-week journey to the Falklands would provide time to seek a diplomatic solution whilst demonstrating military strength from 8,000 miles away.

The U.S. Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, and the U.K. Foreign Secretary, Francis Pym, led complex negoti-

ations seeking a solution. But the military junta in Argentina seldom responded consistently to negotiations.

Mrs. Thatcher repeatedly stressed the islanders’ right to political self-determination, and Britain’s right to defend U.K. citizens and territory with the authority of international law. She also highlighted that many territories, belonging to different nations, were in similar circumstances around the world, and warned that setting the precedent of apparently rewarding Argentine aggression was dangerous for the U.N. and the international community.

## Britain Retakes the Falklands

The U.K. set up a 200-mile radius Maritime Exclusion Zone on April 12, when its nuclear-powered submarines arrived in the vicinity. This was extended to a Total Exclusion Zone (ships and aircraft) by the end of the month.

On May 1, RAF Vulcan bombers flew 6,800 nautical miles from Ascension Island on the equator, refuelling in mid-air five times, to successfully attack the runway at Port Stanley, the Falklands capital. This prevented the stationing of Argentine jets on the island. The next day, the cruiser *General Belgrano* was sunk by the U.K. submarine *HMS Conqueror* with the loss of 323 lives, resulting in the Argentine navy, including their aircraft carrier *Veinticinco de Mayo*, returning to port.

Between May 21 and 25, British amphibious landing forces on East Falkland were attacked by Argentine aircraft with Exocet missiles and suffered heavy losses. Several navy vessels were sunk or sustained damage—including, critically, the supply ship *HMS Conveyor*, which was sunk while loaded with helicopters and vital supplies.

After battling to take Darwin and Goose Green on a strategic isthmus against well-prepared Argentine troops, fully equipped British forces then embarked on a long-distance march (called “yomping”) towards Port Stanley, covering 56 miles in three days. Mount Longdon, Two Sisters, Wireless Ridge and Mount Tumbledown were all high ground around the final goal of Port Stanley. All these objectives were successfully taken with close-quarters assaults under the cover of darkness. Argentine troops, demoralised and weary, quickly surrendered on June 14.

### Forever British?

On July 3, 1982, Mrs. Thatcher proclaimed, “We have ceased to be a nation in retreat... [We] rejoice that Britain has rekindled that spirit which has fired her for generations past and which today had begun to burn as brightly as before. Britain found herself again in the South Atlantic and will not look back from the victory she has won.”

These were bold words back then, but 35 years later, the spirit she described no longer seems to be burning as brightly. The commitment of the Falkland Islanders has certainly not diminished; 99.8 percent of voters favoured remaining under British rule in a March 2013 referendum. A garrison of about 1,200 men is deployed on the islands, but the Royal Navy has no active aircraft carrier in service or due to be operational until 2020, and no aircraft to complement it until 2023.

In 1990, Britain and Argentina resumed normal diplomatic relations. Large oil deposits almost certainly exist



British soldiers during the Falkland Islands war

in the waters around the Falklands, and technology is now making this feasible to extract. Should oil production start, the Argentines could gain economically by co-operating, as the nearest suppliers of men and material. So, a repeat of the invasion is probably unlikely given the present political landscape, but Argentine rhetoric about its claims to the islands has not stopped. Indeed, a 2017 New Year’s message by Argentina’s social development ministry caused an uproar, after it excluded the disputed Falkland Islands from the country’s map!

### Ancient Promises to Israel

Thousands of years ago, God swore to deliver on His promises to the descendants of Abraham (Genesis 22:15–18). They would inherit the Promised Land from the pagan Canaanites, and possess their lands and strategic locations.

As long-time readers of this magazine understand, we believe these promises were passed down by birth-right to the English-speaking peoples of today. The Eternal God made it clear, however, that victory over Israel’s enemies was conditional upon their obedience to His commandments (Deuteronomy 28:1–2). If they failed to obey, God would allow their gates to be besieged by their enemies (Deuteronomy 28:47–52), and He would “break the pride of [their] power” (Leviticus 26:19).

The possession of the Falklands is only one example of Britain’s possession of strategic places of the world—a collection that has diminished over the years. Does a breaking of its pride await Britain in the years ahead?

History is replete with examples of how Britain gained a remarkable God-given supremacy around the world over other colonial powers. In World Wars I and II the British and American-led Allies successfully resisted the forces of tyranny. And, in 1982, God granted Britain victory in the South Atlantic. But does Britain have the same capability or willpower for a similar fight for the Falklands today? Would God grant such a victory in the face of our declining national moral standards and abandonment of His laws?

The sad truth is that if we continue as a nation to recklessly reject the laws of God and basic Christian principles, there *will* come a day when our enemies will prevail against us. To find out more, request our booklets *Prophecy Fulfilled: God’s Hand in World Affairs* and *The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy*.

—Simon R. D. Roberts

nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore” (Isaiah 2:4).

When Christ returns, He will re-educate the whole world to the way of peace. “The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra’s hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper’s den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:7–9).

In Tomorrow’s World, all nations will know the true God of heaven and earth—the God of your Bible—and He will bless those who keep His commandments, as He has always done. Notice this inspiring passage from the book of Deuteronomy, describing the blessings that come when we obey God’s law. “Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him. For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing; a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper. When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you” (Deuteronomy 8:6–10).

**Your Glorious Future**

Can you visualize your part in teaching the nations to observe God’s commandments, and helping all people live the abundant life God promises them? If you are among the “meek”—one who seeks God’s will rather than your own—God can use you to teach others His ways.

Our planet, even today, stands out like a jewel in the vastness of space. But a time is coming when God will

purify the earth with fire, and renew it, before heaven will come to earth (2 Peter 3:10–13). As the Apostle John wrote: “Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them


and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be

**IN TOMORROW’S WORLD, ALL NATIONS WILL KNOW THE TRUE GOD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH**

no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.’ Then He who sat on the throne said, ‘Behold, I make all things new’” (Revelation 21:2–5).

You can have a part in that awesome future. God calls His children His heirs, and “joint heirs with Christ” in Romans 8:17. As heirs of God, faithful Christians will not only inherit the earth—they will inherit the universe. We read: “He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us *all things*?” (Romans 8:32). Also: “You have put *all things* in subjection under his [mankind’s] feet” (Hebrews 2:8).

In these last two verses, the Greek expression translated as “all things” is *ta panta*, which literally means “the all”—in other words, everything that is seen and unseen. Yes, faithful Christians will eventually inherit the whole universe! Today, many of us dream of traveling to the far reaches of the galaxy, and marvel at the beauty of the stars, nebulae and other awe-inspiring and beautiful features of our universe. The time is coming when today’s faithful Christians will be able to travel across the universe at the speed of a thought!

Yes, God wants you to inherit the earth—and more! As He tells us: “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son” (Revelation 21:7). May God help us all to seek Him, and His Kingdom, that we may soon inherit the earth, the universe and all things! 

MAY WE SUGGEST?

**Your Ultimate Destiny** The Bible describes your eternal purpose in detail, and it is *not* spending eternity in heaven! Request a **free** printed booklet from the Regional Office nearest you, or order at [TomorrowsWorld.org](http://TomorrowsWorld.org). PDF, ePub and Kindle are also available.





# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

## “Good Friday” No Good?

**Question:** I have looked in my Bible for evidence of the “Good Friday” my church observes, but I cannot find it. What am I overlooking?

**Answer:** You should be commended for your careful reading of Scripture! The Bible does reveal what Jesus Christ was doing on the Friday before His resurrection—but the truth is not what most professing Christians today believe!

We know from Scripture that Christ spent three full days and nights—72 hours—in the grave. He had to do this in order to fulfill the biblical sign of Jonah, as He proclaimed to the scribes and Pharisees. “But He answered and said to them, ‘An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth’” (Matthew 12:39–40).

This fact by itself proves that the widely assumed “Good Friday to Easter Sunday” chronology cannot be correct, since a Friday afternoon crucifixion would have kept Jesus in the grave until Monday afternoon.

But when does Scripture say Christ was resurrected? Notice this account: “Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, ‘They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him’” (John 20:1–2).

Her visit on the “first day of the week” means that Mary Magdalene went to Christ’s tomb in the

night hours after the Sabbath—before the sun had risen on Sunday—and found that Jesus was not in

the tomb. So, counting back 72 hours, there is no way Jesus could have been crucified on Friday at all!

Scripture reveals that Jesus died at about 3:00 p.m. (Matthew 27:46–50). The Gospel of John gives us another vital detail about what happened immediately

after His death. We read: “Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away” (John 19:31).

The “Preparation Day” is the day before the Sabbath, when tasks are performed in anticipation of

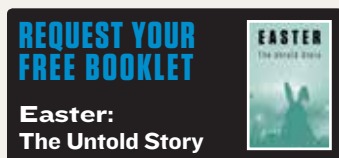
**The “Good Friday to Easter Sunday” chronology cannot be correct, since a Friday afternoon crucifixion would have kept Jesus in the grave until Monday afternoon.**

the coming Sabbath rest from workaday activities. But we have already seen that Friday cannot be the day of Christ’s death, since He had to have been dead for 72 hours before the end of the seventh day of the week! Is this an apparent contradiction in Scripture? No! Notice the description that the coming Sabbath was a “high day.” This is a reference to one of the “annual Sabbaths” (Leviticus 23:6–36). Christ was crucified in the hours immediately preceding the First Day of Unleavened Bread (v. 6).

So, we know from Scripture that Jesus Christ was buried shortly before sunset, before the

First Day of Unleavened Bread began. We know that 72 hours later, before the first day of the week had begun, He had risen. This means that He rose near the end of the weekly seventh-day Sabbath, so He must have been crucified on a Wednesday—not on “Good Friday” as many now believe. On “Good Friday” Jesus was dead, in the grave, in fulfillment of prophecy.

Churches that hold to the Good Friday and Easter Sunday traditions are denying not only the plain words of Scripture, but also the very sign Jesus gave of His Messiahship. If you worship a Messiah who rose on Sunday after 36 hours in the grave, you are not worshiping the true Jesus Christ of the Bible, but rather a counterfeit invented by men who want to draw attention away from God and His Truth. To learn more about false teachings that have been attached to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, please request your free copy of our booklet, *Easter: The Untold Story*.





# Are Millennials Really So Bad?

**H**ave you heard about the “Millennials”? If not, you’re in for a scare. According to *Time* magazine, they are narcissistic, fame-obsessed, egotistical, lazy, and irresponsible (*Time*, “Millennials: The Me Me Me Generation,” May 20, 2013). In addition, they are less religious and less likely to read or trust the Bible than other generations (*Christianity Today*, “Gleanings,” May 16, 2016). Social critics claim that parents and teachers have pandered to them to build their feeling of self-esteem, showering Millennials with meaningless participation awards. From all appearances, they are doomed to failure, dealt a bad hand, a generation without hope. And the frightening thing is that you or someone you know may be a Millennial!

## What’s a Millennial, Anyway?

“Millennial” is the popular label given to today’s young adults. They are also called “Generation Y,” since they followed “Generation X,” the segment of our population born from the late 60’s to the early 80’s. Before Generation X, came the “Baby Boomer Generation” (born right after World War II) and, before them, the “G.I. Generation” (who grew up during World War II and the Great Depression). This trend of labeling generations began in the early twentieth century with novelist Gertrude Stein, who coined the term “Lost Generation” for those who lived through World War I. But among all these, are young Millennials somehow uniquely evil? Is there any hope for them? Let’s look at the bigger picture.

## Every Generation Has a Problem

Today’s Gen-Xers often take a critical view of Millennials. But there was a time when the Gen-Xers were

mocked by their own predecessors, the Baby Boomers. In 1990, a *Time* magazine article described Gen-Xers this way: “They have trouble making decisions. They would rather hike in the Himalayas than climb the corporate ladder. They crave entertainment, but their attention span is as short as one zap of a TV dial” (*Time*, “Twentysomething,” July 16, 1990). A 1985 *Newsweek* article ridiculed Generation X as the “Video Generation,” preoccupied with documenting every moment of their lives with video cameras—the cutting-edge technology of the 80’s. The Baby Boomers disparaged the Gen-Xers as the “Now Generation,” demanding instant gratification.

But in their youth, the Baby Boomers alarmed their parents, as well. They were labeled the “Me Generation,” as anti-establishment rebels. In the 1950s, wildly popular movies like “The Wild One” and “Rebel Without a Cause” led a whole genre of movies depicting destructive, violent and even brutal young men. Even Broadway reflected the growth of youth violence, with “West Side Story” opening in 1957, portraying death, attempted rape, and murder. Juvenile delinquency was considered a real and growing danger, with a subcommittee of the United States Senate conducting a highly publicized investigation into the connection between movies and juvenile crime. In 1969, a gathering of more than 400,000 young people at Woodstock, Vermont became the symbol of a young generation of Boomers, high on sex, drugs, and rock and roll.

Every modern generation, upon closer inspection, has a thread of youthful rebellion, selfishness and immaturity.

But the problem isn't just a modern issue. In a play from around 400bc titled, "The Clouds" by Greek playwright Aristophanes, the main character, Strepsiades, bemoans the fact that his son reclines at ease, "wrapped in five blankets," and struggles to come up with a solution to pay for his son's life of entertainment and horses. From an even earlier time, fragments of a 4,000-year old tablet from the Sumerian city of Nippur have been found that describe the repeated punishment required for the lack of student discipline.

The simple truth is that, as we age, we recognize the youthful faults in younger people. Whether we are a Gen-Xer, sagely dissecting the problems of Millennials, or a teacher at an ancient Sumerian school for scribes, we see the careless errors of youth. But the solution



doesn't lie in hypocritical name-calling or just accepting the status quo. There is hope for every generation! As in so many cases, if we look at the Word of God, we can understand the problem and learn the solutions.

### Characteristics of Youth

According to the Bible, we are combinations of our heredity and environment. We are born with a human nature, that spirit unique to man, differentiating us from animals. And, although we are not born as sinners, we are born with a natural capacity for human selfishness. If our parents do not work with us to curb our selfish, immature demands, that selfishness can become increasingly dangerous to others. In Genesis 8:21, God told Noah after the Flood that "the imagination of man's heart **is evil from his youth.**" Without the help of parents, mentors, and God, our hearts and minds would be supremely selfish, no matter what our generation.

Another characteristic we all share in our youth is a desire to experience life on our own. King Solomon recognized this fact of youth, writing in Ecclesiastes 11:9, "Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; walk in the ways of your heart, and in the sight of your eyes." In other words, we want to see and to try things out for ourselves. That is natural. But we also learn from the Bible that we lack wisdom and judgment in our youth. Proverbs 22:15 informs us, "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child..." So, consistent guidance from older, more experienced adults will help us navigate the challenges we face. Our parents can help us avoid pitfalls that can scar us and hurt others, if we will be receptive to them. "My son, hear the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother..." (Proverbs 1:8).

And we read that there will be a temptation to follow our peers to violence and vice: "My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent. If they say, 'Come with us, let us lie in wait to shed blood... we shall find all kinds of precious possessions, we shall fill our houses with spoil. Cast in your lot among us, let us all have one purse'" (Proverbs 1:10-14). These verses are just a sampling of the guidance that God gives to young people in His Word. And the older generation is commanded to take responsibility to teach, instruct and guide the following generation (Deuteronomy 11:19; Proverbs 22:6).

### A Change in Perspective

Every generation in history has had challenges unique to them. And every human being has had challenges that are unique to him or her. As each generation ages, much of the youthful selfishness and misdirected energy ebbs into a more-seasoned maturity. That is the natural progression of the generations. But God wants us not just to "grow up" physically, but to mature spiritually. And that can actually begin as a young person. In Psalm 119:9, David wrote, "How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word." Yes, even in our younger days—as a child, teen, or young adult—we can break out of the label assigned to us and be a positive example to those around us.

As Paul told Timothy, "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Timothy 4:12).

—Jonathan McNair



# THE POWER OF GRATITUDE

## Feeling Discouraged? Be Thankful!

**W**orld renowned author and motivational speaker Zig Ziglar stated: “The more you give thanks for what you have, the more you’ll have to give thanks for.”

The idea of gratitude is of great interest to the general public as evidenced by the prevalence of books available on the subject (more than 2,600 listed at *Amazon.com*). Most publications carry the common message that a life oriented around gratefulness is the cure for insatiable yearnings and life’s ills. The concept of gratitude has a long lifespan in the overall history of ideas and has been broadly recognized as a positive force in human life. In most of the major religions of the world, gratitude is a highly prized human disposition. To broaden this concept further, the consensus throughout the world is that people are morally obligated to feel and express gratitude in response to received benefits.

Gratitude can be defined as an emotion, an attitude, a moral virtue, a habit, a personality trait or a coping response. Boiled down, gratitude is the willful recognition of the unearned increase in one’s value. It is the measure of gain coupled with the recognition that someone else is responsible for that gain.

So gratitude is the ability to notice, appreciate and savor the elements of life vital to well-being. In fact the degree that a person could develop a perspective of one’s life as a “gift” is the degree that a person is able to achieve optimal psychological functioning.

Researcher Robert Emmons, as reported in his article “Counting Blessings Versus Burdens,” published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (2003, Vol. 84, No. 2), found that the exercise of writing five items for which we are grateful or thankful each week helped people gain a positive feeling about their lives as a whole and were more optimistic in their expectations of the future. Furthermore, the effects on well-being (positive affect and life satisfaction) were apparent to the participants’ spouses. This statement should further

encourage each of us to have more of an attitude of thankfulness.

Emmons showed that to maximize one’s contentment in life we must be consciously grateful for our blessings. Based on his research, he reported that focusing on our blessings is associated with more positive and optimistic appraisal of life, more time exercising, and fewer physical symptoms. People led to focus on their blessings were more likely to help someone with a personal problem or offer emotional support, thereby suggesting a “pro-social” motivation as a consequence of the gratitude.

Emmons’ research reflects and supports the truth and principles contained in the pages of the Bible.

Another word for gratitude is *thankfulness*, and God’s

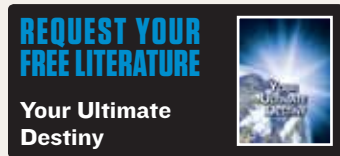
**People led to focus on their blessings were more likely to help someone with a personal problem or offer emotional support.**

Word is filled with examples of this attitude. King David in his Psalms was inspired to write of giving thanks in dozens of verses. Jesus Christ set us an example of giving thanks and having gratitude throughout the gospels (e.g., Matthew 15:36; Luke 22:17, John 6:11). The Apostle Paul admonishes all of us to give thanks always for all things (Ephesians 5:20), and highlights an attitude of gratitude as a central part of our every request of God: “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, *with thanksgiving*, let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6).

Gratitude is felt in response to received benefits and unmerited rewards. If God has opened your mind to His truth, then you too are obligated and commanded to feel and express gratitude. Thoughtful consideration of an “attitude of gratitude” will allow you a greater understanding of the positive spirit the Apostle Paul exhibited while submerged in negative circumstances.

Paul understood gratitude. And he understood to whom his gratitude was owed: “I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Romans 7:25).

—Richard Franz



# LETTERS TO

## TELL US WHAT YOU THINK



Thank you very much for the DVD on “Escape the Great Tribulation.” Thank you for faithfully sending me a copy of your free magazine. The articles are very enlightening, encouraging and informative. I have learned so much and look forward to learning more.

*Reader in the Philippines*

I just wanted to share with you how much I enjoy your free booklets. They are very enlightening. I do want you to know that I appreciate not having to purchase them, for money is very tight. I would not be able to purchase them. I love to study the word of God and to read with extra understanding, and I want only the truth. For Jesus says the truth shall set you free, and he who is set free is free indeed. Just wanted to say thank you, and I wish I could have all of your booklets. I love reading them and learning from them. Of course, I read the word of God first, and you do line up with the truth.

*Reader in Texas*

[Concerning the booklet *Revelation: The Mystery Unveiled*] Very well written. One reading is not enough. This book should be studied thoroughly.

*Reader in Jamaica*

“Why Gender Confusion?” [published online at *Tomorrow’s World.org*, October 11, 2016] Excellent article. Brief, irrefutable and to the point. Congratulations.

*Reader in South Africa*

**Note from the Editor:** *This reader found this commentary on our website at [TomorrowsWorld.org](http://TomorrowsWorld.org).*

*We publish several commentaries there every week, and you can also subscribe to receive notice of new commentaries directly in your e-mail inbox. You will find details at our website.*

I saw your show the other night about [abortion], and I really enjoyed it. I’m very pro-life myself. I’m also adopted. I would like to encourage you to have more shows about pro-life topics. Thank you.

*Viewer in Canada*

I came in contact with your website while I was studying the Bible at a different site, and your ad was on the side of the page I was reading. I found a Living Church of God congregation that was close enough for me to attend, and on Labor Day this past year I was baptized. I watch the webcasts, do the Bible studies, and get the magazines and booklets. I have learned so very much from your teachings, and, as Dr. Meredith says, I am always checking it out for the Truth. I thank God that He has led me to you and am trying daily to present myself as pleasing to our Lord. God bless all of you and your ministry.

*Reader in Oklahoma*

**Note from the Editor:** *The Living Church of God, sponsor of the Tomorrow’s World magazine and television program, has ministers and congregations all over the world. If you are interested in speaking to a representative in your area, you can visit [LCG.org](http://LCG.org) and click on the “Congregations” link to find someone near you. You can also write to one of our regional offices, listed at the bottom of page 4 in this magazine.*

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# TURNING POINTS *in* WORLD HISTORY



## Europe's Unique Role in History

In a previous article in this series, we saw how God dramatically intervened on numerous occasions to guide the course of history. We saw how He preserved and prepared Europe to play a unique role on the world stage ("Europe, Christianity & God's Plan," *Tomorrow's World*, January-February 2017). And we saw how His intervention paved the way for the social and religious influences that have shaped our world to this very day. At critical turning points that determined the future direction of world history, the Persians, the Muslims and the Mongols were each *prevented* from conquering and spreading their religious cultures over the continent of Europe. However, few today understand *why* the peoples of Europe were protected from these foreign conquerors. Even fewer recognize *how* God preserved the remnants of *true* Christianity scattered among other competing versions of "Christianity" that struggled to dominate the European continent. Yet Europe truly has, indeed, been an important stage where God has been working out His plan on earth.

### A New Promised Land

Many of the peoples of Northwest Europe (including those of Scandinavia and the British Isles) *assume* they are Gentiles because they are *not Jewish*. However, many today do not realize that the Jews represent primarily *two* of the tribes of Israel: Judah (from which they take their name) and Benjamin. The Bible reveals that *ten other tribes* also descended from the biblical patriarch Jacob (see Genesis 49). After a period of captivity in Assyria, many Israelite tribes migrated into Northwest Europe—where they multiplied and fulfilled the promises that God made earlier to Abraham and his descendants.

The descendants of these European Israelites later scattered around the globe and carried their religious ideas and cultural values with them (see our booklet *The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy*). Many of the Israelite nations (America, Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa) now make up what is called the "Anglosphere." The French, Dutch, Belgians, Swiss and Scandinavians are also among the scattered Israelite nations. Together, these Israelite peoples have dominated the history of the world for the last five hundred years, but few understand *why* this has occurred.

The Bible records that God gave His laws to His chosen people so that they could be lights and examples to the world and the blessings of a biblically based culture could be shared with all mankind (Deuteronomy 4:1-8). These divinely inspired laws, however imperfectly they have been observed by the modern descendants of Israel, have played a unique role in setting Western Civilization apart from the rest of the world and have played a role in *why* God has preserved Europe from total and permanent foreign conquest in previous historical eras. God intended the Israelite nations to be His "servants" (Isaiah 44:21) and to have a powerful and positive impact on the world—and He guided the course of European history to make His purpose become a reality (cf. Isaiah 46:9-10). We will explore this fascinating subject in future articles in this series. However, the Israelite nations have not always fulfilled their God-given mission—and that will result in future consequences.

### Catacombs, Castles, Caves and Crusades

The continent of Europe played *another* unique role in the fulfillment of God's plan for mankind. Jesus said



that He came to *build a church that would never die* (Matthew 16:18). He described His church as a “little flock” (Luke 12:32) that would be persecuted (John 15:20), but which would hold fast to His teachings (John 17:17; Revelation 3:8). While true Christianity virtually disappeared from the lands of its birth in the Middle East and North Africa due to the violent spread of Islam and other forces, geographical and political factors in Europe combined to allow the survival of the faithful followers of Jesus and the preservation of the teachings of true Christianity.

Both the Bible and secular history record that Jesus and His followers were persecuted by Jewish religious leaders and Roman civil authorities—deadly oppression that lasted long after His death and resurrection. During the terrible persecutions unleashed by pagan Roman emperors, Christians were imprisoned, tortured and thrown to wild animals to amuse cheering crowds. In this environment, many Christians were forced to worship in secret in underground catacombs of Rome or in secluded places in the countryside. However, even as an adulterated and apostate version of Christianity was adopted by the Roman Empire, a few determined to truly follow the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles—observing the seventh-day Sabbath and the biblical Holy Days, baptizing adults and not children, and other doctrines—and were targeted for persecution by the Catholic bishops of Rome. Such true Christians stood out from those who began adopting non-biblical customs and teachings—such as observing Christmas, Easter, and “Saints’ Days,” and adopting the pagan doctrine of the immortal soul—in order to make it easier for pagans to “convert” to the compromised



Ruins of Château de Montségur in France, a refuge for persecuted Cathars

“Christianity” of the powerful Roman Church (see Will Durant, *Caesar and Christ*, p. 595).

In an effort to enforce conformity to Roman Christianity, popes in Rome launched crusades against so-called religious “heretics” who rejected these “Christianized” pagan customs and teachings. As a result of the persecution and slaughter instigated by the Roman Church, Albigensians and Cathars in



southern France fled to mountain-top castles where they were protected by sympathetic leaders.

Waldensians in northern Italy retreated to inaccessible Alpine valleys and sometimes worshipped in caves to preserve their faith. Paulicians in Asia Minor and Bogomils in the Balkans were also persecuted by the Roman Church and the Byzantines. Even in England, where Protestantism prevailed, believers who persisted in following the teachings and example of Jesus and the Apostles (observing the Sabbath, the biblical Holy Days and biblical health laws) were persecuted by the Church of England for not conforming to teachings that were carried over from the Roman Church (see our booklet on *God's Church Through the Ages*).

While many of the records of these persecuted groups were destroyed and forgotten, and surviving accounts of their beliefs were often twisted by their inquisitors and persecutors, traces of their true beliefs can still be found among the remnants of these groups that remain scattered in Europe or eventually fled to the New World, where some even use the biblical name “Church of God” (1 Corinthians 1:2; 10:32; et al.).

From the vantage point of history, the evidence indicates that God preserved Europe from being overrun by foreign invaders as a cradle in which He could incubate the scattered Israelite people and enable them to develop an approach to civilization that would influence the world. As Jesus predicted, God also preserved His Church *among* the various warring divisions of so-called “Christianity” that struggled to dominate the European continent. Bible prophecies reveal that when Jesus Christ returns, the saints who have been faithful to His teachings will join the King of kings to establish the Kingdom of God on this earth (Revelation 11:15–18) in what will become the *ultimate turning point* in the history of the world.

—Douglas S. Winnail



# THE Works OF HIS HANDS

## Home, Sweet (Cosmic) Home!

**A**ll the reports and images we've received from the lunar landers, Mars rovers, Jovian orbiters, deep space probes and all other robotic explorers of our corner of the universe have carried the same message: It's a mess out there. All of the planets and moons we have explored so far with our spacecrafts and rovers seem quite inhospitable. Every planet but one, that is: this beautiful world we call Earth.

Let's take some time to appreciate the cosmic home our merciful Creator has established for us.

It's easy to take our planet and its suitability for granted—after all, it's all most of us truly know! But a brief tour around our solar system and the other planets that whirl in their orbits around the sun can help us appreciate it more fully by presenting us quite a contrast.

### **A Tour of Our Inhospitable Neighbors**

Closest to the sun is the tiny planet we've named Mercury, and it is no home for mankind. You couldn't breathe on Mercury, as it has almost no atmosphere at all. And even if you could, you wouldn't want to stay for long: on the side facing the sun, the temperature is as high as 800°F, while on the side facing away from the sun it is as low as *negative 280°F!*

Further from the sun, but still closer than Earth, is the planet Venus. Covered in clouds and roughly the same size as Earth, you might be tempted to think that Venus could be earth-like. But you would be wrong! Covered in an oppressively thick atmosphere of carbon dioxide, the air pressure at the surface is strong enough to crush a nuclear submarine. And with a surface temperature even hotter than Mercury's—more than

850°F—mankind would find no welcome in this bleak, hellish landscape.

The planet Mars promises more welcome temperatures—if you have a very loose idea of “welcome”! At its equator, the temperature of Mars can be fairly hospitable during the day—at up to 70°F—but you'll want more than a blanket that night, when it drops to 100°F below zero. And while you're busy freezing to death, don't plan on breathing, since the atmosphere is 100 times thinner than Earth's. Just as all the pictures we've received from our rovers on Mars would indicate, this is a dead planet, and no home for humanity. This planet man hopes to colonize one day is a wasteland.

As if that weren't bad enough, the planets out further than Mars offer even less opportunity for a holiday! All of them are “gas giants”—vast planets that represent mostly billowing clouds of toxic gas in thick, smothering blankets that make them utterly inhospitable for human survival. Majestic Saturn and its astonishing rings may make for a wondrous sight in a telescope, but it would not be so wondrous to live there!

Yes, in our solar system it seems as though there is no hospitable place for mankind to live, at all, save for one: our beautiful Earth.

### **A Rare Cosmic Gem**

And it is, indeed, *a beautiful place!* Our blue and green planet, teeming with life, stands out from all other known places in the universe as a perfect home for humanity. And this is only true due to some very fine-tuned conditions that point to a God who loves us and cares for us.

In their book *Rare Earth: Why Complex Life Is Uncommon in the Universe*, geologist and paleontologist Peter



Ward and astrobiologist Donald Brownlee highlight the many, many factors that make Earth such an incredibly rare place in the universe. For instance, our distance from the sun is just right to make liquid water—so essential to life—possible on the surface. Combined with our special distance from the sun, the percentage mix of ocean waters and land surface helps to moderate the temperatures, keeping them from extreme swings hostile to life. The presence of one large moon is believed to help stabilize our planet's tilt so that we experience balanced seasons and climates.

Such a short list is only the start! Our planet is not just in a "Goldilocks" zone around the sun—it also lies in a rare "Goldilocks" zone in our vast *galaxy*. Earth exists in a relatively safe part of space, with no life destroying "magnetar" stars or other cosmic hazards nearby, which would wipe out all life in an instant. Earth possesses an abundance of chemicals beneficial to life—not just water and oxygen, but various metals and other substances. We are blessed with a cosmic "vacuum cleaner" in our solar system: the giant planet Jupiter, with its enormous gravitational field that "cleans up" our region of debris that could hit Earth and devastate it. Scientists like Ward and Brownlee have assembled many such factors that make Earth's very existence—so perfectly situated for life—an extremely rare event in the universe. In seemingly endless ways, our planet seems to have been designed with lifeforms like ours in mind.

### **The Focal Point of God's Plan for the Universe!**

And no wonder, for Earth was designed with us in mind! Under divine inspiration, the prophet Isaiah described the God who created our world, "who formed the earth and made it, who has established it, who did not create it in vain, who formed it to be inhabited" (Isaiah 45:18).

Mankind is the pinnacle of God's creation and the focus of His plan to create a divine Family to inherit all things! (See our article "Prepare to Inherit the Earth!" beginning on page 22.) And it will always play an important role in God's plan, even as the glorified Family of God spreads through the universe. For God's word promises that, after His plan of salvation is complete and the creation is purified and cleansed of sin, God will establish "new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells" (2 Peter 3:10–13).

Famous scientist Carl Sagan once reflected on a photograph taken by the space probe Voyager 1 when



Voyager's photo of Earth as a barely perceptible "pale, blue dot" in space, almost four billion miles away

it was approximately 3.7 billion miles from Earth. The picture was part of a single mosaic of six of the eight planets of the solar system—a unique and remarkable "Family Portrait" of our local collection of worlds, in which each planet appears as a miniscule point of dim light in the darkness of space. Commenting on the lonely "pale, blue dot" that Earth represented there in the vast blackness, Sagan wrote, "Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the universe, are challenged by this point of pale light. Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark. In our obscurity—in all this vastness—there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves" (*Pale Blue Dot*, p. 7).

The thought is a humbling one, but fundamentally flawed, as well. For when we consider the Great God who created that pale, blue dot—this rare and beautiful oasis, crafted by the hand of a Creator who has big plans for its inhabitants—then there is more than a "hint of help." There is the assurance of a God who loves us.

Indeed, there is no place like home.

—Wallace Smith



# FOLLOW YOUR HEART?

## Can We Trust Our Feelings?

**M**oods, feelings and intuition can be uncertain, confusing, misleading—and even at times dangerous. Some feelings can leave us high and almost euphoric, while others can bring us down into darkness and depression. Some of our feelings come from happy, joyous thoughts, while others come from sorrowful, angry or fearful thoughts. Situations, circumstances and events can shape our moods and feelings. How far can such feelings be trusted? Should we make decisions based on what we feel?

It is easy to let our feelings affect how we interpret the things we see and hear. *Was that a funny look she gave me? Were they talking about me? Are they avoiding me? Doesn't he like me? Are they out to get me? I've got a bad feeling about this.* These and countless other fears and suspicions may feed our feelings. At the other extreme, feelings of emotional uplift may lead us to think we have found a friend, or even a future husband or wife, based on a brief time of emotional excitement. At either extreme, emotions can distort reality and obscure our ability to see clearly what is happening—they can even convince us to dismiss plain evidence that may be contrary to our feelings.

Later, of course, when emotions have cooled and we again see things more rationally, we may ask ourselves, “What was I thinking? How could I have been so silly?” Once we have taken the time to gather the facts and examine the source of our fear or our excitement, we may discover that our feelings were leading us in a dangerous direction.

Some people believe very strongly in their powers of intuition. They may say, “I have a sixth sense, a good intuition. I can sense things.” Intuition is defined as a direct perception of truth or fact, independent of any reasoning process. Consider that definition again: “Independent of any reasoning process.” Does that sound like something that will work out well?

God has given the human mind the ability to infer and form a “hunch” from incomplete bits of informa-



tion. Yet we should always be careful not to take our hunches as if they were facts. A mere “hunch” needs further sharpening with investigation, fact-finding and thorough analysis before we can be fully confident in any conclusions we may draw.

But what about “feeling spiritual”? Is true religion a “feel-good” emotional experience? On the one hand, we know that God’s way brings satisfaction and happiness. Yet, if we think we can find our way by “feeling,” we need to consider carefully the warning of Scripture. “He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be delivered” (Proverbs 28:26). “A fool has no delight in understanding, but in expressing his own heart” (Proverbs 18:2). “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9).

Thankfully, God promises to write His laws in the hearts of those who have received the Holy Spirit. “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them” (Hebrews 10:16). God’s law brings happiness to those who follow it (Proverbs 29:18). One sign of Christian maturity is that our feelings more and more are in harmony with what God has so clearly laid out in Scripture. “The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide” (Psalm 37:31).

—Roger Meyer

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Kingston TVJ SU 7:00 a.m.



### CANADA

#### Nationwide Networks (All times Eastern)

**Vision** SU 4:00 a.m.  
SU 4:30 a.m.  
SU 5:30 p.m.  
MO-FR 3:00 a.m.

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**IMPACT** SU 11:00 p.m.

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**Angel One** Ch. 262 SU 8:00 p.m.  
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SU 11:00 p.m.

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### UK & NW EUROPE

CBS Action Freeview 64 SU 8:30 a.m.

CBS Action Sky TV 148 SU 8:30 a.m.

CBS Drama Freeview 74 SA 7:30 a.m.

CBS Drama Sky TV 149 SA 7:30 a.m.

CBS Reality Freeview 66 SU 7:30 a.m.

CBS Reality Sky TV 146 SU 7:30 a.m.

Gospel Sky TV 587 MO 7:00 p.m.

WORD (TWN) Sky TV 590 WE 6:00 a.m.

Sky TV 590 MO 12:30 a.m.

Sky TV 590 SA 12:00 a.m.

**FL** Gainesville WCJB SU 8:00 a.m.  
Jacksonville WCWJ SU 6:30 a.m.  
Panama City WJHG SU 7:00 a.m.

**GA** Augusta WAGT SU 8:00 a.m.  
Macon Cox SU 5:00 p.m.  
Macon Cox TU 7:30 a.m.  
Macon Cox FR 2:00 p.m.

**IA** Des Moines KCWI SU 7:00 a.m.  
Dubuque Mediacom MO 3:30 p.m.  
Dubuque Mediacom MO 7:30 p.m.  
Dubuque Mediacom TU 10:00 a.m.\*

**ID** Boise KYUU SU 7:00 a.m.  
Idaho Falls KIFI SU 7:00 a.m.

**IL** Chicago CANTV Various\*  
Chicago WJYS FR 10:00 a.m.  
Chicago WJYS SU 8:00 a.m.  
Moline Mediacom MO 5:00 p.m.  
Peoria WHOI SU 7:00 a.m.  
Quincy WGMG SU 7:00 a.m.  
Springfield Insight TU 5:00 a.m.  
Springfield Insight TU 1:00 p.m.  
Springfield Insight TU 10:00 p.m.

**IN** Fort Wayne Comcast SU 9:00 a.m.

**KS** Parsons TWPAR WE 7:00 p.m.  
Salina SCAT TH 5:00 p.m.  
Salina SCAT FR 5:00 p.m.  
Salina SCAT SA 9:00 a.m.  
Salina SCAT SU 7:00 p.m.

**KY** Bowling Green WBKO SU 7:00 a.m.  
Latonia PEG WE 5:30 p.m.  
Latonia PEG TH 12:00 a.m.  
Lexington Insight Various\*

**LA** Alexandria KBCA SU 7:00 a.m.  
Lafayette KATC SU 7:00 a.m.  
Monroe KNOE SU 7:00 a.m.

**MA** Malden Access SU 11:00 a.m.  
North Adams NBCTC WE 8:00 p.m.

**MD** Baltimore Community SU 9:00 a.m.  
Westminster Adelphia TH 10:00 a.m.  
Westminster Adelphia FR 10:00 a.m.

**ME** Bangor WABI SU 8:00 a.m.  
Brunswick TV3 SA 8:30 a.m.  
Brunswick TV3 SU 6:30 a.m.  
Presque Isle WBPQ SU 8:00 a.m.

**MI** Alpena WBAE SU 8:00 a.m.  
Detroit Comcast SU 7:30 a.m.  
Kalamazoo CACTV SU 6:30 a.m.  
Kalamazoo CACTV WE 8:30 a.m.  
Lansing WLAJ SU 8:00 a.m.  
Marquette WBKP SU 8:00 a.m.

**MN** Cloquet MEDCLO SU 8:00 a.m.  
Duluth KDHL SU 7:00 a.m.  
Duluth Public Access SA 11:00 a.m.  
Duluth Public Access SU 7:00 p.m.  
Minneapolis MCN SA 8:30 a.m.  
Minneapolis MCN SU 8:30 a.m.  
Minneapolis MTN TH 12:00 a.m.  
Minneapolis NWCT SA 10:30 p.m.  
Minneapolis NWCT SU 4:30 a.m.  
Minneapolis NWCT SU 10:30 a.m.\*  
Rochester KTC SU 7:00 a.m.

Roseville CTV TU 8:00 p.m.  
Roseville CTV WE 4:00 a.m.  
Roseville CTV WE 12:00 p.m.  
St. Paul Nhd. Network SU 8:30 p.m.

**MO** Columbia KOMU SU 7:00 a.m.  
Joplin KFJX SU 8:30 a.m.  
Kansas City KCWE SU 7:30 a.m.  
Springfield KRKB SU 7:30 a.m.

**MS** Biloxi WXXV SU 7:00 a.m.  
Columbus WCBI SU 7:00 a.m.  
Greenwood WBWO SU 7:00 a.m.  
Jackson Time Warner SU 10:00 a.m.  
Jackson Time Warner WE 4:00 p.m.  
Meridian WTKO SU 7:00 a.m.

**MT** Billings KTVQ SU 7:00 a.m.  
Butte KBZK SU 7:00 a.m.  
Butte KXLF SU 7:00 a.m.  
Glendive KWZB SU 7:00 a.m.  
Great Falls KRTV SU 7:00 a.m.  
Helena KMTF SU 7:00 a.m.  
Missoula KPAX SU 7:00 a.m.

**NC** Charlotte WAXN SU 9:00 a.m.  
Greenville WNCN SU 8:00 a.m.  
Hickory WHKY MO 7:30 p.m.  
Raleigh WRAX SU 7:30 a.m.

**ND** Fargo WDAY SU 7:00 a.m.

**NH** Hanover CATV8 TH 7:00 p.m.  
Hanover CATV8 FR 7:00 a.m.  
Hanover CATV8 FR 1:00 a.m.  
Hanover CATV8 MO 12:00 a.m.  
Hanover CATV8 MO 12:00 p.m.

**NV** Reno KREN SU 8:00 a.m.

**NY** Albany-Troy Time Warner MO 3:00 p.m.  
Batavia Time Warner SU 2:00 a.m.  
Batavia Time Warner TU 5:30 p.m.  
Batavia Time Warner FR 7:30 p.m.  
Binghamton Time Warner WE 10:00 p.m.  
Binghamton Time Warner FR 8:00 p.m.  
Binghamton WBNG SU 8:00 a.m.  
Brookhaven Cablevision MO 4:30 p.m.  
Brooklyn BCAT MO 4:30 p.m.  
Canandaigua Finger Lakes SU 11:30 a.m.  
Elmira WENY SU 8:00 a.m.  
Hauppauge Cablevision MO 4:30 p.m.  
Manhattan MNN SA 7:00 p.m.  
Oneida Access TH 2:00 p.m.  
Oneida Access TH 7:00 p.m.  
Queens Public Access MO 11:00 p.m.  
Queens Public Access TU 4:30 p.m.  
Riverhead Public Access SU 7:00 p.m.  
Rochester Finger Lakes SU 7:00 a.m.  
Rochester RCTV SU 5:00 a.m.  
Rochester RCTV TU 10:00 a.m.\*  
Syracuse Time Warner SU 7:30 p.m.

**OH** Cincinnati Time Warner TH 8:30 a.m.  
Cincinnati Time Warner SU 11:30 a.m.  
Cincinnati Time Warner TU 1:00 p.m.  
Fairborn CAC TU 12:00 p.m.  
Lima WBOH MO 7:00 a.m.

**OR** Bend KTVZ SU 8:00 a.m.  
Eugene KMTR SU 8:00 a.m.  
Medford KTVL SU 8:00 a.m.  
Oregon City Access WFTV SU 8:00 a.m.

TU 8:00 p.m.  
WE 4:00 a.m.  
WE 12:00 p.m.  
SU 8:30 p.m.

**PA** Allentown SETV2 FR 4:30 p.m.  
Bethlehem SETV2 FR 4:30 p.m.  
Erie WSEE FR 4:30 p.m.  
Johnstown Att. Broadband MO 10:00 p.m.  
Scranton FOX TH 5:00 a.m.  
Scranton FOX SA 5:00 a.m.

**SC** Charleston WCBD SU 8:00 a.m.  
Myrtle Beach WWMB SU 8:00 a.m.

**SD** Rapid City KWBH SU 7:00 a.m.

**TN** Jackson WBJK SU 7:00 a.m.  
Knoxville WKXN SU 7:30 a.m.  
Knoxville WKXN SU 6:00 p.m.  
La Follette Comcast-WLAF WE 6:00 p.m.  
Memphis WLMT SU 10:00 a.m.

**TX** Abilene KTXS SU 7:00 a.m.  
Amarillo KVIH SU 7:00 a.m.  
Beaumont KBTU SU 6:30 a.m.  
Beaumont KFDM SU 7:00 a.m.  
Corpus Christi KRIS-DT2 SU 7:00 a.m.  
Houston KTRK SU 9:30 p.m.  
Laredo KTXW SU 7:00 a.m.  
Lubbock KLCW SU 7:00 a.m.  
Lufkin KTRK SU 6:30 a.m.  
McAllen KCWT SU 7:00 a.m.  
Midland KWES SU 7:00 a.m.  
Odessa KWES SU 7:00 a.m.  
Tyler KLTV SU 6:30 a.m.

**VA** Charlottesville Comcast Cable MO 8:00 a.m.  
Charlottesville WVRV SU 8:00 a.m.  
Chesterfield Comcast TH 6:30 p.m.  
Fairfax Public Access MO 12:00 p.m.  
Fairfax WSKY SU 9:30 a.m.  
Norfolk WWCW SU 8:30 a.m.  
Roanoke WWCW SU 8:30 a.m.

**VT** Bennington CAT WE 9:30 a.m.  
Bennington CAT WE 12:00 a.m.  
Bennington CAT TH 9:30 p.m.  
Bennington CAT TH 12:00 a.m.  
Bennington CAT SA 8:00 a.m.\*  
Bennington CAT SA 4:30 a.m.  
Burlington Access WE 2:30 a.m.  
Burlington Access TH 11:00 a.m.

**WA** Everett Comcast WE 4:30 p.m.  
Kennewick Charter SU 8:00 p.m.  
Kennewick Charter TU 8:00 p.m.

**WI** La Crosse WXOW SU 7:00 a.m.

**WV** Bluefield WVVA SU 8:00 a.m.  
Clarksburg WFFX SU 8:00 a.m.

**WY** Cheyenne KGWN SU 8:00 a.m.

\*Check local listings for additional airtimes throughout the week

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They are four of the most mysterious figures of the Bible. Has their ride begun?

March 2-March 8

### Judgment Day on the Nations

The Day of the Lord is fast approaching! What signs will announce its coming?

March 9-15

### Four Prophecies for Germany

Your life will be affected by the pivotal role Germany plays in Bible prophecy!

March 16-22

### Ezekiel's Message Unlocked

The book of Ezekiel contains prophecies for our own day that we need to understand!

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### Seven Signs of the Beast

The Beast of the book of Revelation is forming. These are the signs you should look for!

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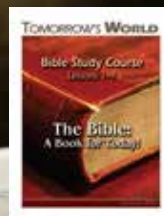
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