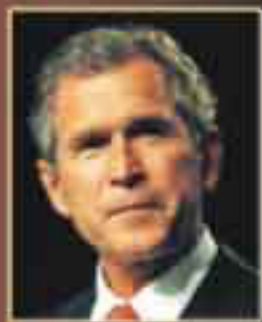


Tomorrow's World

...For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.



How Would Jesus Vote for President?



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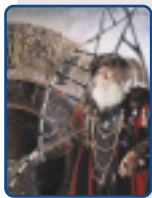
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Postmaster: Send address changes to *Tomorrow's World*, P.O. Box 503077, San Diego, CA 92150.

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Tomorrow's World has no subscription price. Its free distribution is made possible by tithes and offerings of members of the Living Church of God, and by others who have chosen to become co-workers with us in proclaiming Christ's true Gospel to all nations. Contributions are gratefully acknowledged and may be tax-deductible in the United States, Canada and other countries.



The Character Issue

Many surveys show that Americans think their leaders—especially their presidents—should possess good character. Yet when it comes to specifics, most Americans tend to vote for the man or party they agree with on the “pocketbook” issues—the issues affecting their economic or social well-being.

The nominee of the conservative major party seems more hesitant to speak and act firmly on the huge issue of abortion than in defense of “big business” interests. The other major candidate is at the hub of an alleged fundraising scandal. He talks of protecting the environment and allies himself with those who revere the earth as a “goddess” even as many environmentalists are deserting him for another candidate who they believe has not “sold out” their interests. Yet the environmentalists’ candidate talks of his simple lifestyle and dedication to the working class, while having made millions of dollars in stock market investments. More and more Americans see electoral politics as a hopeless nest of lies and hypocrisy.

Yet just ahead of us, America’s political leadership is faced with a large number of primarily moral issues: new forms of murder such as the sickening “partial birth” abortion, the troubling rise in teenage crime and drug use, the growing pressure to legalize marijuana, the relentless lobbying for more and more homosexual “rights” including, now, the right of two men or two women to “marry” each other. Who in this sin-sick environment has the proven character to guide our nation in choosing the right path? Who can we genuinely rely on to lead us at a time when nearly all of our cherished Judeo-Christian values seem to be under attack?

Who?

The truth is that our present political process has produced virtually no one with a proven record of

real integrity, consistency and outstanding leadership. Yet, for those few who still truly believe the Bible, God inspired these words through King David of Israel: “He who rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God” (2 Samuel 23:3).

Most of our modern politicians refer to God or the Bible. Yet they are constant liars, compromisers, men whose opinions change with the latest public opinion poll. Such men don’t fit God’s description of a leader, do they? Former Education Secretary Bill Bennett wrote that today’s Presidential politics are based on “the underlying premise that there are no moral facts, thus reducing politics to what the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche called (approvingly) the Will to Power. In such a world one cannot make appeals to moral principles; what matters is who controls the levers” (*The Death of Outrage*, p. 67).

When considering the unseemly political cronies and influence peddlers that seem to surround almost any president or government leader nowadays, we need to pay attention to our Creator’s warnings about this kind of politicking: “Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne will be established in righteousness” (Proverbs 25:5). And again, “If a ruler pays attention to lies, all his servants become wicked” (Proverbs 29:12).

We also need to focus on the powerful influence exerted on the young and the unthinking by any president or political leader. Most people do tend to follow not merely the words—but the example—set by their leaders. If their leaders tend to have a shallow sense of values, if theirs is an “easy come, easy go” lifestyle, the impressionable of a nation are quick to pick up on this and imitate it. Although voting

Continued on page 30

How Would Jesus Vote for President?



By Roderick C. Meredith

For months, the television and radio political message ads have bombarded our senses: “Vote for Al Gore!” or “Vote for George W. Bush!”

What should a real Christian do? How should we respond? Most importantly, how would Jesus Christ respond in this politically charged atmosphere?

With America’s national debt looming in the background, tension in the Middle East, geopoliti-

cal instability abroad and a *crisis of character* at home, *who* do we think can really solve America’s problems? *Who* can lead us out of the morass of our plummeting morality, our insecure economy, our declining standard of living and the increasing racial and ethnic tension in our society? *Who*?

We all need to recognize that a true Christian is one who has Christ living in him through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Paul wrote, “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).

A true Christian must learn to live as Jesus Christ actually lived—not as many people incorrectly imagine how He *might* have lived. Jesus Himself told us, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God” (Luke 4:4). The genuine answer as to how we ought to live and function in a democratic nation is to be found in the Bible—the inspired Word of God. For we are to have the “mind of Christ” (Philippians 2:5). And the Bible is the revelation of God’s mind—telling us how the Father and Jesus Christ really think about the fundamental issues of life.

Seasonal Contradictions

Two contradictory messages are being aired during this November-December season in America. On the one hand, we will be told, “Vote for so-and-so as your leader!” On the other hand, in churches and auditoriums across the land—and over the airwaves as well—these majestic words of Handel’s *Messiah* will be sounding forth: “King of kings and Lord of lords, King of kings and Lord of lords!”

Most professing Christians don’t even grasp or understand the inherent contradiction between the messages described above. For they have been told far more about the “little Lord Jesus, away in a manger,” than they have about

the biblical Jesus Christ who is now standing at the right hand of God in heaven (Acts 7:55–56). The real Christ will soon return in majestic glory as the literal King of kings over the entire earth! To most people, this Jesus is unknown.

Again, very few professing Christians realize that Jesus' Gospel was about world government. One of the most clever, Satanic deceptions ever spread is that Jesus Christ's Message was principally about Himself. The starting point of true Christianity is accepting the shed blood of Jesus Christ after truly REPENTING (seldom mentioned elsewhere!) of sin. However, Jesus' main Message—the Gospel He preached—centered on world government and the willingness of each human to genuinely surrender to God and eventually become part of His divine Family. This divine government will soon RULE over this entire earth!

Who RULES This Present World?

Though many have been led to believe that this world is God's world, the Bible tells us something entirely different. The Apostle John was inspired to write, "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15).

During the temptation of Jesus Christ, He was taken to a mountain and shown the glory of all the kingdoms of this world: "And the devil said to Him, 'All this authority [to govern] I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish'" (Luke 4:6).

Did Jesus contradict Satan and tell him that he was NOT in

charge of the kingdoms of this world? No. He did not. Rather, near the end of His ministry, Jesus spoke of Satan in this way: "Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out" (John 12:31). Again, in John 14:30, Jesus said, "I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me."

Later, the Apostle Paul wrote, "But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them" (2 Corinthians 4:3–4). Satan the Devil is the invisible ruler—the "god" of this age, which has covered about 6,000 years of human history since the creation of Adam. But this age will end at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ as King of kings! In Ephesians 2:2, God inspired Paul to reveal to us that Satan is "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience." So the invisible spirit ruler—the prince—over this world's society is actually Satan the Devil!

Nevertheless the true Creator God intervenes, when necessary, to accomplish His purpose. In Galatians 1:4, the Apostle Paul taught that Christ "gave Himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world" (KJV). But egotistical men, who think they know it all, are actually unaware that they are under the powerful sway of the invisible Satan. They think that their ideas about society and about government—often diametrically contrary to those of God—make sense. But God says, "There is a way that seems right to a man,

but its end is the way of death" (Proverbs 14:12).

Satan DECEIVES this world in a thousand different ways! In the book of Revelation, the Apostle John foresaw a spirit war just ahead when "the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him" (Revelation 12:9).

Later, God reveals to us that at the beginning of Christ's reign on earth, Satan is cast into a bottomless pit "so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished" (Revelation 20:3). The Bible makes it exceedingly clear that this present society is Satan's. Rather than truly seeking God's will, today's civilization is based on vanity, competition, deception and fraud.

Jesus told Pontius Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here" (John 18:36). Clearly, Jesus had no intention of trying to get into this world's politics and wars. He represented another world, another government—the Kingdom of God. Therefore, Jesus would definitely not try to reorganize this world and get into the midst of a lying, scheming political system under the sway of Satan the Devil!

Training to Be Kings

Probably within the next generation, the biblical Jesus Christ will return to sit on a real throne in the city of Jerusalem. His government will be established throughout the entire earth—a literal government empowered by Almighty God (Revelation

19:15–16). And what will Jesus’ followers—the true saints of God—be doing? “Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?” (1 Corinthians 6:2–3). In the next few verses, Paul went on to expound how the Christians in Corinth were supposed to learn to practice God’s government in the Church by correctly “judging” problems among themselves. From Genesis to Revelation, a position in God’s government has always been by appointment—NOT by politicking or otherwise making deceptive promises to people to buy their votes. So Paul asks, “[Why] do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge?” (v. 4).

Christians are in training, now, to be kings and priests in the soon-coming Kingdom of God. Jesus stated in Revelation 2:26–27: “he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the potter’s vessels shall be broken to pieces’—as I also have received from My Father.” So we need to overcome our human ways and human selfishness—and learn to practice God’s government now. Notice this “prayer of the saints” in Revelation 5:9–10: “You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.” Clearly, the true saints of God will soon have

rulership—NOT up in heaven—but on this earth!

Carefully study the parable of the pounds in Luke 19:11–27 in the King James Version. Here Jesus is pictured as going off to heaven to receive His Kingdom and to return. When Christ returns, He rewards His servants according to how well each has done in using God-given time, talents and wisdom in serving God. What reward did Christ give His faithful servants? “And he said unto him, ‘Well [done], thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities’” (v. 17). And to the servant who had only gained five pounds? “Be thou also over five cities” (v. 19).

Do you see any indication of politicking or voting here? Not at all. Rather, it is just one more scriptural example to make clear to Christians that the best form of government—God’s government—is not in any way based on human politicking, compromising, wheeling and dealing, and coming up with half-baked solutions to our problems.

As Jesus said, “My Kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36). Jesus certainly would not have lowered Himself to be part of this world’s wrongheaded approach to governing. Rather, when Christ returns, He will deal decisively with the governments of this world. “And in the days of these kings [in power just prior to Christ’s return] the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever” (Daniel 2:44).

Later in Daniel, God clearly describes how the true saints will

be given authority, under Christ, over ALL the governments of this earth at the Messiah’s return. “Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him” (7:27).

How Should Christians Interact with Human Governments NOW?

Although Jesus Christ did not actively participate in the governments of this deceived world, He did set us an example of obedience to civil law, showing respect to those in office. When the Pharisees came to ask Jesus about paying taxes, He answered, “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Matthew 22:21).

God inspired the Apostle Paul to write, “Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves” (Romans 13:1–2). And Paul further explains in verses 6–7: “For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God’s ministers attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.”

Paul tells us to pray for those in positions of authority. “Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all

men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence” (1 Timothy 2:1–2).

True Christians—who make up the church (Greek *ekklesia*, literally, the “called-out ones”)—are like foreign ambassadors. “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Philippians 3:20).

A number of years ago, I had the opportunity to act as deputy chancellor of a small college near London, England. Because of this, and other responsibilities, I attended a number of distinguished gatherings in London and at the home of the U.S. ambassador to Her Majesty’s government. On two of these occasions, I met the American ambassador.

The U.S. ambassador to Britain—or to any other government for that matter—is obligated to obey the laws of the land in which he is residing, to pay his taxes, to respect the authorities and to give honor to whom honor is due. On the two occasions when I visited Winfield House—the ambassador’s residence—a toast was proposed to the Queen. All rose and lifted their glasses in honor of the gracious lady who is still monarch of the British people. On each occasion, both U.S. ambassadors—Elliot Richardson in one instance and Walter Annenberg in the other—joined in the toast. Showing this kind of respect to those in authority is clearly reflective of the attitude which God wants us all to have. And certainly to obey all the legitimate laws of the land and to pay our taxes is required. Of course, if some Hitlerian government ever tried to make us directly disobey the higher laws

of Almighty God, then we should follow the inspired example of the apostles who said, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). Even then, if we should decide to stay in that nation, we should expect to suffer any penalty or punishment such authorities might impose—



Queen Elizabeth II receives the Ambassador of Argentina, who presented his Letters of Credence at Buckingham Palace last June. Ambassadors must obey the laws of the land in the nations they serve. © Presslink Image


looking in FAITH to God to take care of us (cf. Daniel 3).

But, as the Apostle Paul wrote, “We are AMBASSADORS for Christ” (2 Corinthians 5:20). We should conduct ourselves with love and respect for all human beings—including those in political offices. But we must always remember that our ultimate citizenship is NOT in or from the governments of this Satan-inspired society! Although we should serve others and do good on an individual basis, we cannot and must not get involved with political efforts to reorganize or to clean up Satan’s deceived world. *For the system itself is NOT God’s system!* He is only allowing deceived human beings to go their own way and experiment with various types of government during these past 6,000 years of human experience.

Again, the Apostle Paul wrote, “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?” (2 Corinthians 6:14–15). Referring to the religio-political system that will dominate the entire Western world when Jesus Christ returns, God commands His people, “And I heard another voice from heaven saying, ‘COME OUT of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues’” (Revelation 18:4).

What would Jesus do in this election year in the United States? He would be so busy proclaiming the GOOD NEWS of the soon-coming Kingdom of God that He would have no time—and no interest—in politicking, voting or taking part in any groups pressuring to clean up Satan’s world. For He would know that—although often well-meaning—human attempts to save this world are doomed to failure because they are under Satan’s sway and are part of his system which God Himself calls “Babylon.”

The mission and calling of all true Christians is to help prepare the way—as advance emissaries—for the Kingdom of God, the literal government that the Living Jesus Christ will soon set up. It will replace all the misguided human governments of this earth. “Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!’” (Revelation 11:15).

May God speed that day! 

Will We Conquer Space?



By Richard F. Ames

Scientists and astronauts are forming plans to rocket to Mars. Is this what God envisioned us to accomplish? Can we conquer the vastness of space? Your Bible offers some shocking surprises about your ultimate destiny and your place in the universe. You need to know that destiny and why you were born! You need to know what the Bible reveals about mankind's incredible potential!

God has an awesome future planned for us, more exciting and amazing than any science fiction story you have ever read. Yet God's awesome plan is not science fiction! And it answers the question: "Will we conquer space?"

Dreams and Desires

In March 2000, *Mission to Mars* was the most popular movie in United States theaters. According to a Zogby America poll, 38 percent of Americans would like to visit Mars (Reuters/Zogby, March 15, 2000). Another Zogby poll revealed that 59 percent of American adults expect man to land on Mars within the next 25 years. Only 24 percent said that man would never travel to Mars.

NASA's long-term plan for Mars travel assumes four to six month trips to and from Mars, with 18 months of exploration on the planet. Others have their own dreams, desires and even plans. One private organization is advertising via the Internet a five-week

The vastness of the universe intrigues us. It seems to invite us to venture out into space. Mankind has set foot on the moon, but will we ever reach Mars—or beyond? What will be our future in the universe? Will *you* ever step out into space?

In 1958, the Soviet Union began the "space race" by launching the satellite "Sputnik." At first the United States lagged behind, but with the July 1969 moon landing, the U.S. took the lead. Now, decades later, Russia, the U.S. and other countries are cooperating on an international space station.

manned mission to Mars in July of 2018. Its ticket price is two million dollars!

But do we really understand our limitations? Perhaps we can send a tiny and expensive spacecraft beyond our atmosphere, but do we *really* think that we, as air-breathing, food-eating, water-drinking creatures can *conquer*—truly master—space? While Mars may be within reach at a cost of billions of dollars, how might we reach our nearest star? The nearest star is Proxima Centauri, 4.2 light years away. If you could travel there at the speed of light (186,000 miles per second) it would take more than four years. By contrast, the space probe Voyager 1 is now traveling into space at 38,700 miles per hour. At that speed it would need 70,000 years to reach Proxima Centauri. We will never extend our reach throughout the universe, unless we can break through limitations of time and space. At present this seems almost impossible. But, as we will see, there is hope for the future.

Cooperation in Space?

How will mankind ever conquer space if we cannot cooperate effectively? One international cooperative project is the International Space Station. Sixteen nations are involved in the project, which began with the launch of the control module Zarya on November 20, 1998. The Russian service module Zvezda saw its original 1999 launch date delayed until July 2000. This \$320 million element is but a small part of all that will be spent on the station. Yet what have the world's top engineers and space scientists created? “[After launch], officials conceded they had overlooked something. Though the school bus-size pod will be home to three astronauts for four months at a time, it has been outfitted with only two tiny sleeping berths—leaving one crewman no place to bunk” (“Space Pork,” *Time*, July 24, 2000, p. 24).

Originally planning the station's completion in 2004 at a cost of roughly \$12 billion, its international management team now expects a 2005 completion at a cost of \$96 billion—eight times the original estimate! And scientists are saying that once the station is built, there may be nothing for it to do, since many of its planned experiments have already been conducted

aboard Russia's Mir space station, and others can be performed at far lower cost on unmanned ships. Will mankind ever be able to conquer space? Not this way!

Human beings, unlike all other forms of life, are able to plan, design and build in wondrous ways, because the Creator God has given each of us a mind. In the 20th century, the human mind brought about the development of amazing new technologies. But human nature historically uses technologies not only for good, but also for evil. At the dawn of the 21st century, long-feared nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) weapons of mass destruction are no longer the only destructive technologies. Now a new threat is on the horizon—genetics, nanotechnology and robotics (GNR)—promising new horrors for the new century.

In his startling essay, “Why the Future Doesn't Need Us” (*Wired Magazine*, April 2000, pp. 238–262), Sun Microsystems founder Bill Joy, an early pioneer of the minicomputer age, contemplates these new GNR technologies' effect on warring humanity. “I think it is no exaggeration

to say we are on the cusp of the further perfection of extreme evil, an evil whose possibility spreads well beyond that which weapons of mass destruction bequeathed to the nation-states, on to a surprising and terrible empowerment of extreme individuals.”

Will these technologies, and their potential for evil, be unleashed as warring mankind seeks to control space? What is your prediction? There is no question that until the Creator God intervenes, mankind's drive for evil will continue, because “...the way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes” (Romans 3:17–18).

Space Wars?

Will there be space wars? Military weapon designers are planning nuclear-powered space-based lasers and particle-beam weapons. In an article titled “Waging War in Space” *The Nation* magazine explored this topic:

In 1996 the [United States] Space Command's commander in chief, Gen. Joseph Ashy, put it bluntly. “It's politically sensitive,



Space probes such as Voyager 1 race through deep space toward nearby stars they will not reach for thousands of years.

but it's going to happen.... we're going to fight in space. We're going to fight from space and we're going to fight into space.... That's why the U.S. has development programs in directed energy and hit-to-kill mechanisms. We'll expand into these two missions—space control and space force application [military jargon for control of Earth from space]—because they will become increasingly important. We will engage terrestrial targets someday—ships, airplanes, land targets—from space. We will engage targets in space, from space” (*The Nation*, December 27, 1999).

History should teach us the profound lesson that human governments and institutions, apart from the government of God and the way of God, will only lead us to total cosmocide—total destruction! As Jesus Himself said, “For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened” (Matthew 24:21).

The good news is that God will intervene and save the earth from cosmocide. Jesus Christ will come back to judge the nations in the dramatic Day of the Lord and the climactic end-time battle. He will need to do that to save humanity from total extinction!

The First Step Toward Space

We have seen mankind’s desire to venture into space, and the frailty of human efforts to do so. Yet even though we are infinitesimal by comparison, we feel we are part of the vast universe. But before mankind can truly conquer space, we must conquer self—selfish human nature. Only then can converted individuals come to understand their place in this vast universe. In his years as a shepherd boy, King David spent many months under the night sky, wondering about his place in the universe. He stood in awe of the starry heavens, and recognized their Source as the Creator God. David wrote in Psalm 8:3–4: “When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which

You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him?”

What was his answer? “For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; you

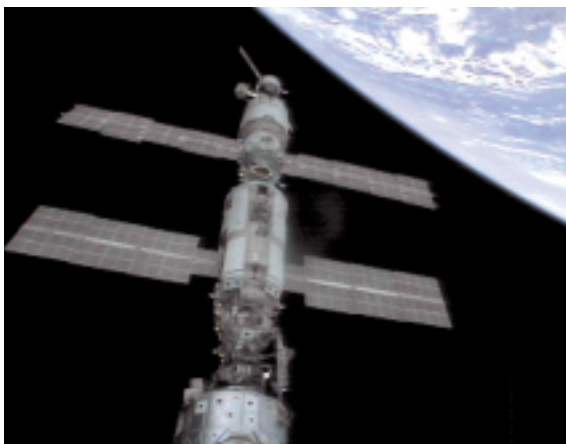
have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen; even the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea that pass through the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth!” (Psalm 8:5–9).

God is “mindful,” as David put it, of human beings. He cares for us! Why? Because He created us for a wondrous purpose—to have a personal relationship with

Him! Just think about that profound truth! God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them” (Genesis 1:26–27).

Human beings were created in God’s likeness to have an eternal and loving relationship with Him. But it is God who first demonstrated His love to us! Nearly every Christian is familiar with the “precious verse” or “golden verse” of the Bible: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

God is love! And He has given the greatest gift of love that any of us could receive—the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ, to pay for our sins. Sin brings the death penalty upon us. “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23). Our sin has earned us the death penalty, but God sent His Son to pay that penalty, so that we can be reconciled to God. Redeemed by God, we can walk in a new way of life and have a new relationship with our Creator! Mindful of God’s great love, and His sacrifice of His Son, we should want to follow the Apostle Peter’s admonition, “Repent, and let every one



A view of the International Space Station, orbiting 206 miles above Earth, as seen from the U.S. Space Shuttle Atlantis last September 15.
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of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). In doing so, God and the Christian are no longer separated—a repentant, baptized Christian, yielding to God’s law of love, has direct access to God through the Savior, Jesus Christ. Through Him we can conquer selfish human nature (cf. Philippians 4:13).

God created the *human* family, and He wants us to be a part of His *divine* family. The Apostle Paul wrote: “For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named” (Ephesians 3:14–15). Yes, God is the Father of a family—and He wants you to be a part of a creative family that will experience activity and joy for all eternity! He wants you to enjoy the earth, the planets, the solar system—and the entire awesome universe.

True Christians are even now the begotten children of God. “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!... Beloved, now we are children of God” (1 John 3:1–2).

Stewards of the Earth— Stewards of the Universe

God’s children, brothers and sisters in Christ, are now preparing for the coming Kingdom of God. Are you preparing for the soon-coming Kingdom of God? We read in the first chapter of Genesis that human beings were given the responsibility of governing our environment. God said, “Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth” (Genesis 1:26).

Have we, as human beings, been faithful stewards of our power, dominion and authority over the earth? All over the world we have polluted our air, our water and our environment. We have misused our potential for good by inventing weapons of mass destruction. And we have not conquered violence, terrorism and abuses of all kinds.

Albert Einstein, reflecting on human nature, commented, “It is easier to denature plutonium than

to denature the evil spirit of man” (*Disturbing The Universe*, Dyson, 1979, ch. 5). Left to our own devices, we have shown ourselves incapable of proper stewardship. Only by yielding to God—repenting of sin and allowing His Holy Spirit to work through us—can we overcome the sinful human nature that, since Adam, has kept mankind apart from God.

Why, then, has God given fallen human beings dominion over the creation? The answer may astound you. God has given us the opportunity to train for greater authority and stewardship in the future! He wants to share the universe with us!

The author of the book of Hebrews quotes David’s psalm: “You have made him [mankind] a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, and set him over the works of Your hands.

You have put *all things* in subjection under his feet” (Hebrews 2:7–8).

Here the quote from Psalms ends, and the author of Hebrews makes a comment. “For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him” (v. 8). *Nothing* in the universe is excluded from mankind’s dominion or rule. Yet the verse concludes, “But now we do *not yet* see all things put under him” (v. 8).

The Greek phrase translated as “all” in this verse is *ta panta*—which literally means “the all.” As Greek lexicons explain, *ta panta* in the absolute sense means “the universe.” God wants to give you, along with billions of others, dominion not just over the earth, but over the universe! Yet we can only do that when we inherit eternal life—only when we become God’s immortal children to reign with Christ in His Kingdom for all eternity!

Just when will Christians become God’s immortal children? Here is what the Apostle Paul wrote: “Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be



Mankind must conquer human nature before ruling the universe. © PhotoDisc

brought to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory’ (1 Corinthians 15:51–54).

Our hope is the resurrection! It takes place at the last trumpet, when mankind hears the great announcement of Christ’s Kingdom replacing this world’s governments (cf. Revelation 11:15). This seventh trumpet occurs during the prophetic time period known as the Day of the Lord, when Christians are changed from mortal to immortal. Only then are we born into the Kingdom of God as His glorified children. Hebrews 2:10 states that the Savior, Jesus

faithful servants. “Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’” (Matthew 25:34).

As heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, we will inherit the earth! We will also inherit the Kingdom of God! That is a part of your incredible future! Some religious people believe that Christians have already inherited the Kingdom! Is that true? Not according to the Apostle Paul. “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor



Imagine being able to travel about the universe instantaneously! One galaxy will be as close to you as another. God, as the Creator of the heavens, wants to share all of His creation with you.

Christ, is to bring “many sons to glory.” Christians will be those sons. Romans 8:29 states that Jesus is the “firstborn among many brethren.” Christians are to become His eternal brethren.

Our Ultimate Inheritance

As God’s children, we are His heirs. What will we inherit? As a part of God’s family, we are promised a great inheritance. “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together” (Romans 8:14–17, KJV).

We have the awesome privilege of being “heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.” What will we inherit? The list is impressive! In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5). Our inheritance includes the earth. The patriarch Abraham is called “the heir of the world” in Romans 4:13. Revelation 2:26 explains that the overcomers will rule over nations. The parable of the talents (cf. Luke 19) reveals that faithful Christians will also be ruling over cities in the coming Kingdom! Yes, the meek *shall* inherit the earth!


What else will we inherit? Chapter 25 of Matthew describes Christ coming back to earth in his glory. All the nations are gathered before Him as He sits in judgment. And see what He says to His

does corruption inherit incorruption” (1 Corinthians 15:50). If you are flesh and blood, the Bible says that you have *not* yet inherited the Kingdom.

The good news is that faithful Christians will inherit the earth and the Kingdom of God. Our ultimate inheritance, revealed above in Hebrews, is also indicated in an amazing passage in Revelation. “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son” (Revelation 21:7). As incredible as it may seem, God is willing to give us all things—even the entire universe.

Imagine being able to travel about the universe instantaneously! One galaxy will be as close to you as another. God, as the Creator of the heavens, wants to share all of His creation with you.

But before Christians venture out into the universe, there will be a crucial mission to perform on the earth. Bible prophecy explains that the saints, immortalized Christians, will need to educate billions of people about God’s way of life—the Way taught by Jesus Christ of Nazareth. In the Kingdom of God—the *real* “millennium” yet to come—faithful resurrected Christians will be kings and priests (cf. Revelation 5:10), ruling on the earth under the King of kings, Jesus Christ, helping billions of human beings into the Kingdom of God, into God’s Family.

Will we conquer the universe? Not by our own efforts. The Creator God, who owns the universe, will give it to His children as an inheritance. You can be one of those future inheritors of the universe. As an immortalized child of God, you can look forward to that day when you will rule space as part of God’s royal family for all eternity! 

Questions & Answers

QUESTION:

Does the Bible indicate that Christ was born on December 25?

ANSWER:

One key to the accurate dating of Jesus Christ's birth is contained in a biblical statement about Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist. In Luke, we are told that John's father was "of the division of Abijah" (Luke 1:5). This brief mention has great significance.

We learn from Luke that Mary, the mother of Jesus, went to visit her cousin Elizabeth right after Jesus' conception. Elizabeth was six months pregnant at the time (vv. 36–41). Thus, John the Baptist was about six months older than Jesus. So if we can determine when John was born, figuring out the approximate date of Christ's birth is a simple matter. This is where "the course of Abijah" becomes important.

About 1,000 years earlier, in the days of King David, the number of priests in Israel had grown considerably. David, therefore, divided them into 24 divisions or "courses" to rotate their service in the temple (1 Chronicles 24; cf. 23:6; 28:13). The Jewish historian Flavius Josephus wrote in the first century AD that the aforementioned partition has remained "to this day" (*Antiquities of the Jews*, bk. 7, chap. 14, sec. 7).

According to the Talmud, all of the priests served in Jerusalem during the three annual Festival seasons—Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles (cf. Leviticus 23; Deuteronomy 16). Throughout the rest of the year, however, they took turns, with each course serving one week in rotating order. The rotation began on the first Sabbath of Nisan (or Abib)—the first month on the Hebrew calendar—with each course serving from Sabbath to Sabbath.

Because *all* of the courses served during the week of Passover, that meant the course of

Abijah—eighth in rotation (cf. 1 Chronicles 24:10)—would have come on duty at the beginning of the *ninth* week. And when this rotation was over, the week of Pentecost had begun—so the course of Abijah would have remained for the tenth week as well. Luke 1 informs us that John was conceived right after his father returned home from serving at the temple (vv. 23–24). This was during the last half of Sivan, the third month of the Jewish calendar. Thus, his birth nine months or so later would have been in the spring of the next year. And since Jesus was born six months or so after John, He would have been born during the following autumn.

Such a conclusion is corroborated by two other details Luke gives us about the events surrounding Christ's birth. Luke describes that the shepherds were *in the field*, keeping watch over their flocks by night (Luke 2:8). Shortly after the fall harvest and the Feast of Tabernacles, in October, Judea's rainy season would have begun. And by November—as the weather began to turn colder—the flocks would have been brought in for the winter. By December they would no longer have been in the fields at night with shepherds watching over them.

Another detail Luke provides is that Joseph and Mary had gone to Bethlehem at the time of a census enrollment for taxation (Luke 2:1–4). Normally such enrollments were set for right after harvest—which, again, would coincide with a fall date. Clearly, then, Jesus was not born on December 25.

How, then, did the idea of a December 25 celebration of Christ's birth originate? We have seen that it cannot be supported from the Bible. To learn more about the surprising non-Christian origin of this idea, and the genuine biblical truths it obscures, please turn to Douglas S. Winnail's article on page 14 of this issue, "What Is Hidden by the Holidays?"

What Is



By Douglas S. Winnail

Hidden

How did modern h

ends revolve around football games and tailgate parties. After Thanksgiving Day family reunions in late November, the mad December Christmas rush begins—to buy presents, send dozens of cards and attend lots of social activities. New Year's brings another round of parties and also resolutions—perhaps the same ones you have made for decades—to do better next year!

Unfortunately, after Halloween costumes are put away, Thanksgiving dinners digested, the needle-shedding Christmas tree discarded and the post-New Year's hangover disappears, many people are left with bills to pay and a *feeling of emptiness*—post-holiday let-down. We *know* the feeling, but we seldom ask or look for answers to the hard questions, like: what do trimming a tree, decorating

the house with lights, stockings, pine boughs and flying reindeer, hanging mistletoe and taking the kids to see Santa Claus have to do with the birth of Jesus Christ—the “reason” for the season? Why do sleigh bells and carols about “peace on earth, goodwill toward men” ring hollow as headlines report increasingly violent crimes, international terrorism, spreading droughts and famines, continuing wars and declining morals? Why do millions of professing Christians delight in dressing up as witches

Have you ever stepped back from the busy and often hectic events that mark the final months of the year (Halloween, Christmas and New Year's Eve)

and asked yourself “Why am I doing this? What does all this mean? Does this lead anywhere?” Perhaps you sense the answers but have avoided asking the questions. If you are not afraid of finding *real* answers, and you want to discover vital information about the *true* meaning and purpose of human

existence, keep reading—because that information is available—even though it has been *nearly obscured* by our popular holiday customs!

Frivolous—But Empty

In many countries the year-end holiday season is a time of fun, frolic and fantasy! In late October, increasing numbers of adults dress up in ghoul-like costumes for Halloween parties at work while sending out similarly-clad children on nocturnal trick-or-treat forays. In the United States, many fall week-

n by the Holidays?

Holidays originate? What do these customs obscure?

and devils? Why do so-called Christian nations perpetuate anti-Christian customs that make life an *endless round* of momentarily pleasurable, but largely meaningless, social activities?

The Surprising Origin of These Holidays

Believe it or not, the customs that surround Christmas originally had *nothing* to do with Jesus Christ. Like traditions of Halloween, these customs originated in *ancient pagan religious practices*. This may seem shocking, but it is true—and the evidence is not hard to find. Dozens of books, articles and reference materials record the same facts—that for some reason, you may not have noticed or were never told!

Halloween is derived from pagan Celtic new year customs in pre-Roman Britain, Scotland and Ireland that “long antedate Christianity,” (“Halloween,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 11th ed.). The pagan Druids, “on or about the 1st of November... held their great autumn festival and lighted fires in honor of the *Sun-god* in thanksgiving for the harvest. Further, it was a Druidic belief that on the eve of this festival Saman [Samhein], *lord of death*, called together the wicked souls... condemned to inhabit the bodies of animals” (Ibid.). These departed spirits could visit their old homes (Druids believed in an immortal soul) on the last night of the Celtic year when they were

released to go to Druid heaven. During the Samhein festival, horses and sometimes humans (later replaced by black cats) were “strapped in wicker cages and roasted alive as a sacrifice for the souls of loved ones. The finale saw celebrants donning masks and costumes and parading to the edge of town—a trick to get the souls to follow” (*Sunday Telegram*, Oct. 27, 1985, p. 7).

The church, in an attempt to gain converts, yet unable to eliminate popular pagan customs, merely placed a “Christian” label on traditional dates and practices. In the 8th century the Roman Church established All Saints’ Day on November 1 to honor the dead elevated to sainthood. The 2nd of November, All Souls Day, which honors departed spirits not elevated to sainthood, “before becoming a church festival in 998 C.E. [AD]... was marked with celebrations from the festival of Woden (Odin) as god of the dead” (*The Pagan Book of Days*, Pennick, p. 124). People parading around in the costumes of animals celebrated this pagan festival. It is remarkable how many intelligent professing Christians perpetuate and participate in superstitious holiday customs where the chief character is *the devil*—yet fail to see—or ignore—its blatant pagan origin!

The story of Christmas and its customs is similar. The widely held idea that Jesus was born on December 25 is known to be a fabrication! The Bible does not state when Christ was born, nor does it

indicate His birth should be celebrated. Authoritative sources and historical facts suggest that Jesus was born around or before 4BC—when Herod died. He was probably born in the fall because sheep were in the fields (Luke 2:8)—a situation that would not exist in December. Jesus was also six months younger (Luke 1:24–26) than John the Baptist, who was conceived in late June (after his father had served the eighth course of Abijah—see Luke 1:5 and 1 Chronicles 24:1–19). Joseph, the Jewish historian, indicates 24 courses of priests served in the temple for one-week periods twice a year beginning in the month of Nisan (in the spring, about April). If John had been born in March, Jesus would have been born six months later, in September—not on the 25th of December!

But why do people celebrate Christ’s birth on December 25? Late December is the time of the *winter solstice*, one of the major festival periods in the ancient world. Historians note “the birth of many solar saviors and dying gods is celebrated at this time, usually on December 25th” and that “Christmas is a wonderful *amalgamation* of many religious traditions, ancient and modern, pagan, Zoroastrian, Jewish, Mithraic, and Christian” (Pennick, pp. 132–133). Modern Christmas is a composite of several year-end festivals celebrated in pagan Rome. The *Saturnalia*, (December 17–21) was a time of “extravagant decadence” when

slaves and masters traded places for a few days. It was a season of revelry where the common greeting was “bona Saturnalia.” Next came the *Sigillaria*—the feast of dolls—on the 22nd when toys were purchased and given to children. The *Brumalia* (December 25) was celebrated as the “Birthday of the Unconquered Sun, when the days began to lengthen after the solstice” (*Christmas and Christmas Lore*, Crippen, p. 7). These were times of feasting, drinking and debauchery. The Egyptians also celebrated the rebirth of the sun in the form of an infant several thousand years before the Romans (see *The Golden Bough*, St. Martin’s ed., pp. 471–472).

By contrast, the early Christian Church *did not celebrate* Jesus’ birthday as long as the teachings of the Apostles remained intact. In fact, as late as 245AD, the church scholar, Origen “repudiated as *sinful* the very idea of keeping the birthday of Christ” (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, 11th ed.). However, in an effort to gain converts, “the church at Rome definitely fixed on the 25th of December as the birthday of the Lord” in the 4th century (Crippen, p. 6). The choice of the winter solstice festival and the birthday of the *sun-god* were deliberate. New “converts” could continue their popular pagan customs uninterrupted—but under a new “Christian” name! People follow the same fabricated practice today—largely ignorant of what is hiding behind the “Christian” façade.

The celebration of New Year’s on January 1 also dates from Roman times. The festive atmosphere of parties, drinking and uninhibited behavior is a relic of the pagan Roman Saturnalia. The

New Year babe in a diaper traces back to the rowdy Greco-Roman festival of Dionysus (Bacchus—the god of wine) held at the beginning of each year. Father Time, the white-haired man carrying a scythe, represents the Greek god Cronos (Saturn), the mythical “silent reaper” who mutilated his father and ate his own children in episodes of cannibalism (*Encyclopedia Americana*, vol. 3, p. 13). We accept and perpetuate these depraved pagan symbols in our endless cycle of fun-filled, yet empty, holiday activities. But have you ever wondered if there is more to life than this? Have pagan customs adopted by mainstream Christianity *replaced* more meaningful biblical practices?

The Hidden Dimension

Again, it may come as a surprise, but the Bible outlines a definite series of festivals or feast days that the people of God are *commanded* to observe. While many have been told these festivals were Old Testament practices and are no longer relevant to New Testament Christians—nothing could be further from the truth! The festivals outlined in the Scriptures (see Leviticus 23 and Deuteronomy 16) are extremely significant and packed with meaning. These festivals outline God’s plan of salvation for mankind. They reveal the major steps or events in that plan. The overall format of the festivals reveals the *true purpose* of human life. That purpose is exciting, inspiring—and humbling—yet it has been *obscured* by pagan holiday traditions professing Christian churches have absorbed! Church services—commanded assemblies—on each of the Holy Days review the meaning

of the festivals. Notice what historian W. D. Davies wrote about early Christian practices:

“Everywhere, especially in the East of the Roman Empire, there would be Jewish Christians whose outward way of life would not be markedly different from that of the Jews. They took for granted that the gospel was continuous with [the religion of Moses]; for them the New Covenant, which Jesus had set up at the Last Supper with His disciples... did not mean that the covenant made between God and Israel was no longer in force. They still observed the feasts of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles; they also continued to be circumcised, to keep the weekly Sabbath and the Mosaic regulations concerning food.” [*Judeo-christianisme*, “Paul and Jewish Christianity,” 1972, p. 72, quoted by Samuele Bacchiocchi, *From Sabbath to Sunday*, p. 151].

Historian Edward Gibbon made a similar observation: “The first fifteen bishops of Jerusalem were all circumcised Jews; and the congregation over which they presided united the law of Moses with the doctrine of Christ. It was natural that the primitive tradition of a church which was founded only forty days after the death of Christ, and was governed almost as many years under the immediate inspection of his apostle, should be received as the standard of orthodoxy. The distant churches very frequently appealed to the authority of their venerable Parent” (*The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chapter 15, section 1, p. 389).

In an earlier article (*Tomorrow’s World*, March–April 2000) we outlined the meaning of the spring and early summer festivals—Passover, the Days of Unleavened

Bread and Pentecost. The Passover comes in the spring (when God begins the year—Exodus 12:2) and is an annual reminder of our need for a Savior and forgiveness of sin. The Passover lamb offered in the Old Testament (Exodus 12:3–6) foreshadowed the coming of Jesus Christ to die for the sins of

is calling a small group of people now (Matthew 13:10–17; John 6:44–66; 1 Corinthians 1:26–28), before He begins working with all mankind. The annual observance of Pentecost is a constant reminder that God has a *special purpose* for those called to be firstfruits (Revelation 14:1–5), and of the *special*

hidden from the world—*obscured* by popular pagan holidays!

Revealing the Future

The Feast of Trumpets pictures the *next event* in the plan of God—an event that will change the course of human history for-



The early Christian Church *did not celebrate* Jesus' birthday as long as the teachings of the Apostles remained intact. In fact, as late as 245AD, the church scholar Origen "repudiated as *sinful* the very idea of keeping the birthday of Christ."

mankind (John 3:16). Although Jesus fulfilled the symbolism of the sacrificial lamb (Isaiah 53:7; John 1:29) the Apostles and the early church continued to observe the Passover (Luke 22:14–16; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26) as an annual memorial of Christ's sacrifice. During the seven Days of Unleavened Bread, leaven is removed from dwellings, conveying the lesson that to obey God we must put sin (symbolized by leaven) out of our lives. This is what Christian growth—repenting, changing, growing and overcoming—is all about. The Apostles and the early church kept the Days of Unleavened Bread to perpetuate the meaning of those days (Acts 2:38; 20:6; 1 Corinthians 5:7–8).

The New Testament Church began on Pentecost with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the disciples (Acts 2). The Feast of Pentecost (meaning to "count fifty") is also called the Feast of Harvest or Firstfruits because it came at the beginning of the summer harvest. This harvest was small, picturing the fact that God

understanding that comes by receiving and nourishing the Holy Spirit (John 14:15–16, 26; 16:13; 2 Timothy 1:6–7).

In God's plan of salvation, the spring and early summer festivals picture events that have already happened. The death of Jesus Christ fulfilled the meaning of the Passover 2,000 years ago—hence we no longer sacrifice a lamb—but we observe the Passover as a memorial of that important event. The Days of Unleavened Bread picture an ongoing process of putting out sin. The events of Pentecost—the giving of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the New Testament Church—inaugurated the Christian era in the 1st century AD. The remaining fall festivals are *prophetic*—picturing major events that have *yet to occur!* The reason for observing the fall festivals is so we can *understand the future* and have hope. The four fall feasts outline the culminating steps in God's plan of salvation for mankind—a dimension that has largely been

ever—the return of Jesus Christ. Bible prophecies associate the Second Coming of Christ with the blowing of the seventh trumpet (Revelation 11:15). Trumpets are used to make announcements, mark the feasts and sound alarm during times of war (Numbers 10:1–10). Cataclysmic events will precede the Second Coming of Christ (Matthew 24; Revelation 6; 8; 9). Jesus will return to a planet torn by war and tribulation to save mankind from utter self-destruction (Matthew 24:3–7, 21–22). He will conquer human armies that will resist His return (Revelation 19:11–19). At His return the saints (the "firstfruits") will receive immortality (1 Corinthians 15:51–54) and reign with Christ on this earth (Daniel 7:26–27; Revelation 5:10). The annual observance of the Feast of Trumpets keeps us mindful of these incredible events. It supplies *real* hope in a world filled with bad news.

The Day of Atonement pictures the fact that Satan—the real instigator of the evils and

troubles in this world—will be bound for 1,000 years when Christ returns (Revelation 20:1–2). This future event was pictured in the Old Testament by a goat sent into the wilderness bearing the sins of Israel. While modern translations of the Bible refer to this animal as the “scapegoat,” suggesting it was without guilt, Jewish traditions correctly identify this goat as symbolic of the prince of fallen angels—Satan (Leviticus 16:8–10). The other goat killed for the sins of the nation pictured Jesus Christ. Fasting on the Day of Atonement teaches the need for humility and our need to become *at-one* with God (see Leviticus 23:27; Psalm 35:13; John 17:11).

The Feast of Tabernacles is the physical and spiritual highlight of the year. While professing Christians have been told for centuries that good people go to heaven, and revelers during the Saturnalia and Christmas try to create heaven on earth for a few days, the Feast of Tabernacles pictures the coming of the kingdom of God to this earth. This seven-day festival offers an annual foretaste of the 1,000-year reign of Jesus Christ and the saints (Revelation 20:4–6). During this period (the Millennium) the government of God will bring peace and justice to this earth and restore all things (Isaiah 9:6–7; Acts 3:19–21). It will be a time of harmony (Isaiah 11:6–9), health and abundance (Isaiah 35; Amos 9:13). Cities will be rebuilt (Isaiah 61:4; Ezekiel 6:10). The government of God will promulgate the laws of God from Jerusalem to the whole world (Isaiah 2:2–4).

The Last Great Day is the final festival on God’s Holy Calendar. It pictures the Great

White Throne Judgment period the Apostle John wrote about (Revelation 20:11–12) when the Holy Spirit will be made available to all mankind (John 7:37–39; Ezekiel 36:24–27). After the Millennium, there will be a great resurrection of everyone who has ever lived (Revelation 20:5). The message of the Last Great Day is that those who died without hearing the gospel are *not lost*. They are not burning right now in hell. They are waiting in the grave for this great resurrection when they will have *their* chance for salvation and eternal life (see Job 14:10–15). Those who reject God’s way during this period of judgment (which appears to last a lifetime of 100 years—Isaiah 65:20) will be consumed in a lake of fire (Revelation 20:14–15). However those who chose to live according to God’s way of life will gain immortality.

Warnings and Hope

Now you might be thinking this all sounds interesting, but does it really matter if we keep those Old Testament festivals or not? You may “love the Lord” and do not see anything wrong with dressing up on Halloween. You may feel you are honoring Jesus by celebrating His birth, and you really do not over-indulge at New Year’s. Is there anything wrong with giving a new meaning to the “enjoyable” parts of old pagan practices? After all, you say: “We are not worshipping pagan deities; we merely want to show our love for God.”

The Bible answers those very questions! God told the nation of Israel to *follow* His commandments and *not alter* them (Deuteronomy 4:1–2). Through

Moses, God repeatedly warned the Israelites not to forget His commandments (Deuteronomy 8:10–14) and to avoid being ensnared [captured, trapped] by the evil religious practices of pagan nations. God specifically stated “*do not inquire* after their gods, saying how did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise. You shall *not* worship the LORD your God in that way; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods” (Deuteronomy 12:30–31). Again in this context God states “Whatever I command you, *be careful* to observe it; you shall *not add* to it *nor take away* from it” (Deuteronomy 12:32).

These clear warnings are repeated in the Old Testament and the New Testament. The prophet Jeremiah pointedly told the Israelites “learn *not* the way of the heathen... for the customs of the people are vain [false, empty, worthless, a delusion]” (Jeremiah 10:2–3, KJV). Jesus even said of religious people, “*in vain* they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (Matthew 15:8–9, KJV). The Apostle Paul made similar admonitions (1 Corinthians 10:6–7; 2 Corinthians 6:14–17). However, the history of the Israelites—and of the modern professing Christian churches—has been to ignore and reason around these very clear instructions. This is why God inspired Moses to warn thousands of years ago “I know that after my death you will become utterly corrupt, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you *in the latter days*,

Continued on page 29

Letters to the Editor

TOMORROW'S WORLD MAGAZINE

The July-August 2000 *Tomorrow's World* is the best yet. Thanks to all of the writers for these tremendous articles. Can these be put on the Web site so that others outside the Church can have access to the Truth?

R.B., Georgetown, IN

Editor's Note: Past issues of *Tomorrow's World* can be viewed online at www.tomorrowsworld.org in a variety of formats, along with audio and video of the *Tomorrow's World* telecast.

I was so happy to read in your July-August 2000 issue the article "Have You Been Sold a Different Gospel?" by Douglas S. Winnail. In my "quest" during the '90s, I had heard about feminists saying that the Bible had been written by men and that a feminine godly being was really the true power. I was almost persuaded then. How naïve I was! It says in the Bible that "lack of knowledge" will destroy a nation. My lack of knowledge almost destroyed me! Thank you for sharing this knowledge to help others.

L.B., Baltimore, MD

I am a college student who was home-schooled. I really was glad to read the article "What Is True Education?" [in the September-October 2000 *Tomorrow's World*]. My professors think they know so much, but without knowing God their knowledge is incomplete, and often just makes them vain. Thank you for your magazine!

J.S., Ann Arbor, MI

I appreciated your article "Does Character Really Matter?" [in the September-October 2000

Tomorrow's World]. With the election coming up this fall, is there any man (or woman) in politics who embodies godly values of leadership? Will we have to wait for God's Kingdom to find godly leaders?

J.A., New York, NY

Editor's Note: Please read Roderick C. Meredith's article, "How Would Jesus Vote for President?" on page 4 of this issue, for more on this vital topic.

BOOKLETS

I read and reread the *Who Controls the Weather?* booklet. It is so timely, and sobering as we see the disruptions and suffering all around the United States and elsewhere around the world. Your booklet makes it plain why mankind is suffering so badly from these weather calamities. Thank you for your teaching!

R.S., Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Thank you so much for your booklet *Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?* My wife and I have discussed this for years, and your booklet explained the Bible truth so clearly. We are so happy to receive your magazine and other literature.

E.L., Omaha, NE

Editor's Note: If you have not already read *Which Day is the Christian Sabbath?* or *Who Controls the Weather?* you may request your free copies from the regional office nearest you (listed on page 2 of this magazine) or view them online at www.tomorrowsworld.org.

We encourage you to share with us your reactions to *Tomorrow's World*. Please direct your correspondence to "Letters to the Editor" at our United States address, or send e-mail to letters@tomorrowsworld.org. Letters may be edited for space and clarity. Remember to include your name, address and daytime phone number.



Watch and War

By Mark Me

Momentous changes that will dramatically impact everyone on earth are occurring throughout the world. How do seemingly unrelated events in different regions tie together? Jesus Christ urges us to “watch” and shows us how, giving us major signs to discern. With that watching also comes a responsibility to warn of impending troubles.

“**W**atch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36).

With those words, Jesus Christ, the greatest newscaster of all time, urges His disciples to remain constantly vigilant of world events. They also must stay close to God in prayer to survive the calamitous conditions that will precede His return to earth at the end of this age.

The ultimate impact of developments in Europe, the Middle East and the Far East will be profound on the United States, British Commonwealth and other nations in the western world. Yet these major developments often are barely mentioned, if even reported, in newscasts or news publications.

Virtually everyone on earth will be astonished at the unforeseen direction events will take in the com-

ing years that will change the global balance of power and plunge the world into its most severe crisis ever. The destruction, loss of life and suffering will exceed even the two previous world wars. It is a scenario that seems unbelievable, but will come as surely as the sun rises and sets. Yet beyond this time of unprecedented trouble dawns tomorrow’s world ruled by Jesus Christ, who proclaimed the Good News of the Kingdom of God.

In the New Testament, Jesus Christ repeatedly warns His disciples to watch world events, discern signs of the times and be prepared, rather than be caught off guard or asleep. He points out key trends so they will not be blindsided. He does not leave them groping in the dark.

In Luke’s account of the famous Olivet Prophecy, Jesus Christ warns of conditions that will prevail prior to His Second Coming to this earth. He notes that religious deception, wars and commotions will



be widespread, but the end will not come immediately as a result (Luke 21:8–9).

Wars between nations and kingdoms, however, will steadily intensify; great earthquakes will strike throughout the world; famines and disease epidemics will spread. These conditions are worsening throughout the world. One only has to witness the wars, starvation and pestilence reaching crisis proportions on the African continent for confirmation. What Christ foretells is unfolding right before our eyes!

He also warns: “Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.... So you, likewise, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near” (vv. 28, 31).

In other words, He strongly admonishes His disciples to wake up and be aware of world events around them. However, He also notes that

most people will be so consumed with seeking their own pleasure and concerned about their own personal cares that they will be oblivious to the ominous trends happening around them: “But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth” (vv. 34–35). Most people will not expect the rapid chain reaction of events leading to a great tribulation that will engulf the entire world prior to Christ’s return.

In this context, again notice Christ’s emphasis: “Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36). As prophecies in the Bible show, we are to watch developments throughout the earth that will lead to a grand smash collision threatening the existence of all life on earth (Matthew 24:21–22).

Watch Europe

With the collapse of the Soviet Union about 10 years ago, a significant power vacuum was created, leaving the United States the world’s only major superpower. What was a bipolar world suddenly

turned into a unipolar world, with the U.S. the undisputed dominant nation. However, a shift in the balance of power, eroding U.S. supremacy, is under way, which has not been widely reported in the news media. Yet this development on the European continent is extremely significant.

A United States of Europe that threatens to rival the U.S. on the diplomatic, economic, political, and even military fronts, is emerging. It is a development that looks innocent on its surface, but has sinister ramifications for the entire world. Most people in the western world are so obsessed with celebrities, scandals, sensations and other inconsequential news, they are not aware of what Europe’s unification means for their future.

The Associated Press reported on May 15 that German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer revived the vision of a United States of Europe in an address at Berlin’s Humboldt University, calling it “a personal vision of the future.”

The planned expansion of the European Union “will make a fundamental reform of European institutions indispensable,” Fischer said. “How can one imagine a European Council with 30 state and government heads? Thirty presidencies? How long will a council meeting then last? Days or even weeks?”

Questions like those, Fischer said, mean the original vision of a united Europe from 50 years ago should be carried to its logical end with a European Federation led by an executive branch and two houses of legislature codified in a European constitution.

He said if Europeans are not ready to go that far right now, a “core group” of countries should make the first move with the rest joining later. “For me it is fully clear that Europe can only play its appropriate role in economic and political competition when we proceed courageously,” Fischer said.

Unqualified praise for Fischer’s speech came from France, Germany’s traditional partner in pushing for European integration. France’s *Le Monde* newspaper headlined its editorial on the speech “Danke Schoen, M. Fischer,” calling the federalism plan an “ambitious vision.” Italian officials also said countries that so wish should move forward with closer ties.

The Associated Press reported: “Closer cooperation would also lead to common defense and foreign policy, enabling the EU to step out of Washington’s shadow and avoid a repeat of the recent embarrassments in the Balkans, when the Europeans had to wait for U.S. support to act on their own continent.”

The Bible indicates a core group of 10 kings or kingdoms “will give their power and authority to the

beast,” referring to a group of nations surrendering their sovereignty to a centralized system of government (Revelation 17:13). Bible prophecy shows this will recur on the European continent, where historically the Roman Empire and its succeeding resurrections have risen only to fall with regularity over the centuries.

Yet when this United States of Europe rears its head for a final time as a monstrous beast, the Bible also shows the world will be astonished. Because the news media devote little attention to international

December 1999, it predicted three events that will, in this decade, magnify Islamic power in the Middle East:

1. Aging leaders of key Arab countries will die or leave office, including pro-western Arab monarchs such as Saudi Arabia’s King Fahd. “Jordan’s King Hussein is dead.... Egypt’s Hosni Mubarak has been in office for a generation. Moammar Gadhafi has been in office for more than 30 years. Most of those now governing Arab states will not be around in 10 years,” it observed.



The Middle East remains the world’s most explosive region, with leadership a volatile issue. From left to right: Saudi Arabia’s King Fahd; Jordan’s King Abdullah II bin Hussein; Egypt’s Hosni Mubarak; Libya’s Moammar Gadhafi; Bashar al-Assad of Syria; Palestinian leader Yassir Arafat and Iraq’s Saddam Hussein. Jordan’s King Abdullah II bin Hussein and Bashar al-Assad of Syria are the most recent changes in Arab leadership; both assumed power after the deaths of their fathers.

affairs, when that powerful empire arises, it will seem to come out of nowhere, astonishing the vast majority of mankind!

“I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast” (Revelation 13:3). The Amplified version renders this verse: “And one of his heads seemed to have a deadly wound. But his death stroke was healed, and the whole earth went after the beast in amazement and admiration.”

Watch news trends leading to a more powerful united Europe militarily, politically and economically.

Watch the Middle East

In His Olivet prophecy, Jesus Christ emphasizes the need to watch not only developments in the Middle East in general, but also Jerusalem in particular.

Diplomatic negotiations in the Middle East between the Israelis and Palestinians, as the European Union and Vatican become more heavily involved, will not mean peace in this volatile, strategic region. Christ warns that Jerusalem ultimately will be surrounded by gentile armies and trampled by foreign troops! (Luke 21:20–24). Yet are we keeping ourselves informed about what is happening in that explosive region?

In March 1999, Stratfor, Inc., an intelligence consulting firm in Austin, Texas, launched an experimental Web site www.stratfor.com. In

Syrian President Hafez Assad’s recent death was a case in point. Palestinian leader Yassir Arafat also is reported to be suffering from Parkinson’s disease and is said to be in frail health. Television news networks have reported that Iraq’s Saddam Hussein may be suffering from cancer. Significant changes in Arab leadership are inevitable.

2. Because the succession process in these countries is either unclear or unknown, the danger of instability as the result of palace coups and other disruptions is substantial.

3. Moderates will be unable to gain complete control in Iran.

“The convergence of these three forces—the decline of the current leadership of Arab nations, the clearly unstable succession periods that will follow and the Iranian variable—indicates a real possibility of a resurgent and powerful fundamentalist movement sweeping the Islamic world during the next decade. With the death of the great leaders of the secular republic Arab movement and potential shifts in the Saudi monarchy, the forces that contain Islamic fundamentalism are likely to weaken and lose their grip on the situation,” www.stratfor.com reported.

The Bible strongly indicates Arab nations in the Middle East will band together to form a confederation led by a “King of the South” that will provoke a remilitarized European power to take swift action in the Middle East. Notice what the prophet Daniel fore-

told: “At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them and pass through. He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown....” (Daniel 11:40–41).

This describes a massive invasion of northern Africa and the Middle East by a powerful European military machine that bulldozes through the region. *The New King James Version* and *Revised Standard Version* say the King of the South will “attack” the King of the North. An RSV footnote says, “thrust at him.” *The King James Version* says, “push at him.” *The New International Version* says “engage him in battle.” *The Amplified Bible* says “push at and attack him.”

The Hebrew word for “push” is *nagach*, which can be translated “to butt with horns” or “to gore.” The same word is used in Exodus 21:32, referring to an ox pushing, thrusting or goring someone. This provocation could be prompted by Arab nations in the Middle East cutting off supplies of petroleum to the western world, prompting a swift response from European nations, or a controversy regarding the status of Jerusalem, which requires foreign troops. This crisis in the Middle East, in turn, will pull in nations from other regions like a vortex.

Watch for future changes in leadership among key Arab nations. And watch the geopolitics associated with the production and marketing of Middle East oil.

Watch the Far East

Once this King of the North invades the Middle East, other major military powers in Russia, India, China and Southeast Asia will mobilize to counterattack the brazen move by the Europeans: “But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many” (Daniel 11:44).

Teeming with billions of people, Eurasia lies directly north and east of Jerusalem. Near Jerusalem is where the King of the North “shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him” (Daniel 11:45).

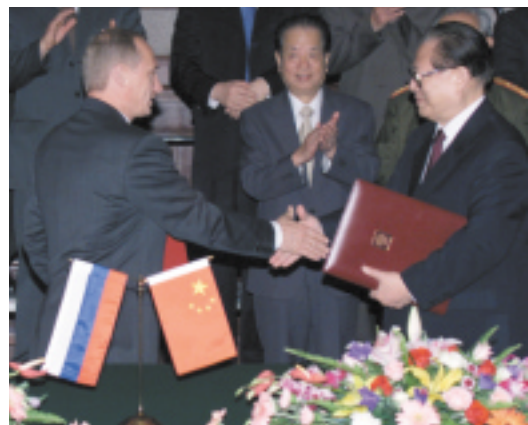
He will eventually meet his end at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (Revelation 9:19–20). This King of the North will face the massive armies of Eurasia. Even now the populations of China and India each exceed one billion people!

In addition to the King of the South and the King of the North, the Bible also refers to “kings from the east” who will invade the Middle East with a massive army (Revelation 16:12). By using the plural “kings,” the Bible intimates that a combination of leaders from the Far East will spearhead the Eurasian counter-invasion. There will not be a dominant leader as in Europe (“King of the North”) or among the Arabs (“King of the South”). The result of these hordes attacking will be a massive loss of life in all-out, highly technological warfare!

“So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and the day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million, and I heard the number of them.... By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed—by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths” (Revelation 9:15–18).

In a January 10, 2000 report, *www.stratfor.com* stated Russia and China would be pivotal in how the global system operates in the years ahead:

“Russia and China together constitute the geographic and demographic center of gravity of the Eastern Hemisphere. How they behave is one of the engines driving the history of any epoch. When Moscow and Beijing rule unified empires and ally with each other, as they did in the



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Jiang Zemin proclaimed a “new stage” in Sino-Russian ties at a July summit aimed at advancing strategic ties and blunting U.S. global influence.

1950s, they create an enormous mass around which the rest of Europe and Asia fearfully revolve.”

On July 18 at a summit in Beijing, Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Chinese counterpart, Jiang Zemin, jointly condemned what they consider U.S. attempts to dominate the global order and pledged to stand together in defiance of American power. They denounced a U.S. proposal for a national missile defense system, saying it would trigger an arms race.

Russia and China, both nuclear superpowers, will probably be in alliance with the kings of the east

and supply most of the 200-million-man army that will launch a major offensive against the European beast power in the Middle East. Russian and Chinese leaders recently stressed the need to offset American power by encouraging a multi-polar world.

Watch continued cooperation between Russia and China as well as among India, Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia and other heavily populated Asian nations. These geopolitical developments in various regions of the world do not bode well for the U.S. and its western allies.

Watch the West

The Bible speaks of a King of the North, a King of the South and kings of the East, but remains almost deafeningly silent about a king from the other compass point—the West. There is no “King of the West” per se named in the Bible. Yet the United States undoubtedly is the leading nation in the West.

When the King of the North retaliates against the King of the South, which will compel the kings of the East to respond, Bible prophecy shows the United States and other nations of British descent will be either conquered, enslaved or on the verge of captivity. Write for our free booklet, *What’s Ahead for America and Britain?* for more information on this subject.

America and other British-descended and north-western European nations are identified in Bible prophecy as modern descendants of Israel, the Old Testament patriarch whose name was changed from Jacob.

The Bible shows these nations will bear the initial brunt of the unprecedented Great Tribulation “which shall come upon the whole world to test those who dwell on the earth” (Revelation 3:10). Christ said: “For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened” (Matthew 24:21–22).

The Old Testament prophet Jeremiah describes the time as follows: “Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob’s trouble, but he shall be saved out of it” (Jeremiah 30:7). He also shows foreigners will enslave these nations of modern Jacob and even those considered allies will severely wound them (Jeremiah 30:8, 14). This captivity will happen: “for the multitude of your iniquities, because your sins have increased.... In the latter days you will consider it” (Jeremiah 30:14, 24). Psalm 83 is

prophetic in that it illustrates major powers in Europe and the Middle East conspiring to annihilate Jacob or Israel as a common enemy: “For behold, Your enemies make a tumult; and those who hate You have lifted up their head. They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, and consulted together against Your sheltered ones. They have said, ‘Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be remembered no more.’ For they have consulted together with one consent; they form a confederacy against You” (Psalm 83:2–5). Arab nations and Assyria, the ancestral nation of modern Germany, are then described as the conspirators. They have shared anti-Semitic sentiments historically.

Watch trends in the moral decay of western nations, particularly the modern descendants of the ancient patriarch, Jacob.

Warn the World

As we watch the decline of such nations as the United States, Canada, Britain, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the Jewish state of Israel, there comes a responsibility to warn people in those nations as well as the rest of the world about the punishment that will ensue.

God urges His servants to: “Cry aloud, spare not; lift up your voice like a trumpet; tell My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins!” (Isaiah 58:1). Yet the prophet Isaiah also foresaw a time when the secular and religious leaders, who should be trumpeting a warning to their people, would not because they are too wrapped up in the cares of this prosperous age and hope its comforts and luxuries will continue indefinitely.

“His watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant; they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yes, they are greedy dogs, which never have enough. And they are shepherds who cannot understand; they all look to their own way, every one for his own gain, from his own territory. ‘Come,’ one says, ‘I will bring wine, and we will fill ourselves with intoxicating drink; tomorrow will be as today, and much more abundant’” (Isaiah 56:10–12).

By contrast, God’s true servants are to be faithful watchmen. For more than 50 years, evangelist Roderick C. Meredith has been involved in this work of teaching, preaching and warning the world. Thousands of co-workers are supporting the *Tomorrow’s World* magazine and telecast and are committed to

Continued on page 30

Shaping Our Modern World



By John H. Ogwyn

Why is our world the way it is today? And where is it headed? In the last 100 years, the world has experienced dizzying technological progress, yet age-old scourges of war, famine and disease continue to plague mankind. But paradoxically, it is the affluent and “progressive” countries that have often seen the most dramatic unraveling of the very social fabric.

While the 20th century was one of dramatic change, today’s world has been shaped by much more than the *events* of the last century. The truth is that *ideas* have consequences. Beliefs will ultimately take people places.

Sometimes, however, those places are quite unforeseen and quite unwelcome!

There can scarcely be anything more important than understanding what and why is man. Are we part of some great cosmic plan or, are we merely the result of random chance? Ideas about man—his origins, his nature, his purpose, and his destiny—have been discussed for centuries. Our modern world has been shaped by certain beliefs that have been responses to these questions.

What are those beliefs and from where have they come? Can you *really* prove and know the answers to questions such as these? It is important to examine

the fundamental ideas and beliefs that underlie our modern world and find out what is true and what is not!

The Coming of the Modern

It was in the 1500s that the word “modern” found its way into the English language. The word originated as a late-Latin term meaning “of the present time.” It was used to contrast the rapidly changing 16th century with both the ancient world and the one that stood between then and “now,” the medieval world. The development of the modern world is really the story of how

secularism has come to be substituted for superstition!

In popular histories, the medieval world is generally pictured as a God-centered world, contrasted with the human-centered modern world. This picture is distorted. The medieval-world was *superstition*-centered. It certainly was not centered on the God of the Bible. The early “Church Fathers” had embraced a combination of paganism and Christianity that produced a society far removed from the ideals that are envisioned in the pages of Scripture. Desiring to attract and hold the masses of people, they found that the easiest way was to adapt and adopt the popular pagan customs already practiced by the people. While some of the grosser features of these customs were gradually tamed, their continued practice served to obscure the biblical revelation of God’s plan and purpose. In theology and doctrine, the Catholic Fathers were far more influenced in their thought by Plato and by the Gnostics than they were by Scripture. This combination of theology with popular pagan practices laid a foundation for the medieval world-view.

In conjunction with this, there was an economic and cultural collapse that accompanied the fall of the Roman Empire. Travel and commerce became virtually impossible in the wake of barbarian invasions and the subsequent pillaging and marauding that lasted for centuries. The infrastructure began to crumble throughout Europe, evidenced by the fact that there was no organized road building for over 1,000 years!

It was into this dark and constricted world that the Renaissance began to bring a little light. The Renaissance, or “rebirth,” involved a rediscovery of ancient Greek and

Roman authors and their man-centered view of the world. The superstition that passed for organized religion had been used as a tool to control the masses of people. Later thinkers, supposing that the medieval world was in some way a reflection of the Bible, sought to build up a world that rejected divine revelation as the ultimate authority. They confused the superstitions and prejudices of the preceding age with the teachings of the Bible. They assumed that the dark medieval period was the outgrowth of taking the Bible and religion too seriously.

The printing press came into use less than 50 years before the dawn of the 16th century. The 1500s proved to be a time when man’s knowledge of his world increased dramatically. It was the age of exploration as European navigators discovered new worlds. Knowledge of geography grew greatly as Spain, Portugal, France and England began adding new territory to their realms.

While the exploration of new lands had far-reaching consequences, events in Europe were setting the stage for even greater change. In 1517, Martin Luther nailed his “95 Theses” to the church door of the Wittenburg Cathedral, setting in motion the Protestant Reformation. It grew in scope until it totally changed the face of Europe. Breaking the monopoly of the Catholic Church, it introduced another way of thinking and looking at life, one that emphasized the importance of private opinion and belief.

The modern world differs greatly from the medieval one in many ways, but it simply offers another way of being wrong! What passes for modern thought is simply neo-paganism, as we shall see.

The Cult of Progress

Optimism was in the air when the 20th century dawned. It seemed self-evident that life was destined to grow better and easier. This had by no means always been so. The concept of progress had gradually gained a foothold in the 17th and 18th centuries and in the 19th century the idea of the inevitability of progress came to permeate society. It gave rise to countless utopian schemes based upon the idea of man’s perfectibility. Many social experiments that began in the 19th century and continued into the 20th were the outgrowth of this way of thinking. We need to understand what happened.

As we have already seen, the 16th century was built upon that rebirth of learning called the Renaissance which had begun a century or so earlier. The rediscovery of ancient Latin and Greek authors began to expand the thinking of those who had been locked in the straightjacket of the medieval Catholic Church. Humanism, an approach to life concerned about man here and now, was rediscovered. Though temporarily sidelined by the Reformation, it rose eventually to become the dominant mode of thinking in the West.

With the 17th century began the period called the Enlightenment. It was a time of great scientific discovery. Remarkable progress was made in understanding the natural world because of the work of men such as Johannes Kepler, William Harvey, Galileo, Francis Bacon and Isaac Newton. Advances in the science of optics led to telescopes and subsequent advances in astronomy. Rapid development in the fields of mathematics, anatomy and physics

opened up whole new vistas to men. This century saw the increasing acceptance of the scientific method: the idea that knowledge was to be based upon observation and measurement. This was in contrast to ideas stemming back to Socrates, Plato and Aristotle who believed that truth could be arrived at simply by proper logic and reasoning. Men no longer looked back to classical antiquity as the golden age, but rather they began to look to the future with the hope of progress.

Perhaps nothing symbolizes the 17th century more than the mechanical clocks and watches that were developed during this period. In 1657 the first pendulum for clocks was designed and the following year, the balance spring for watches was invented. Increasingly, the universe itself began to be viewed in mechanical terms. As the design inherent in the natural world was increasingly uncovered, the initial result was an enhanced appreciation for the fact that it all pointed to a Master Designer and Lawgiver.

The following century, the 18th, is often called the Age of Reason. The thinkers of the day found themselves in increasing conflict with the claims of the established church. Assuming that the superstitious and unscientific past was the result of seeking to build a world upon biblical revelation, these new thinkers adopted a religion of Deism. They accepted the idea of a Creator, but rejected the Bible as the source of divine revelation. Their view of God was that He was the master watchmaker. He had created the universe, wound up "the great master clock," and then walked away. Everything in the world

around followed divinely established laws and there was no place for supernatural intervention that suspended or contravened those laws.

This was largely a reaction against the superstition and corruption of the medieval church. Thoughtful people saw frauds



World War I was the end product of a century of social change and economic development in the industrialized western world. But the war's carnage lay to rest 19th century ideals of utopia. © Presslink Image

being perpetrated on the ignorant and credulous, in the hope of keeping them under church control. As rational people rejected the fake "miracles" meant to keep the populace docile, they often wrongly rejected the entire idea of miracles. In doing so, they had to reject much of the Bible, which led to a "natural religion" based on observation and human reason. Faith too was rejected, considered illogical to the natural mind.

Further advances in applied science, particularly the invention of the steam engine and the development of interchangeable parts, set the stage for an industrial revolution. The end of the 18th century, however, saw the launching of an entirely different kind of revolution in a different sphere that was to have far-reaching implications.

The storming of the Bastille (a royal prison) by an angry Parisian

mob on July 14, 1789 marked the onset of the French Revolution. There followed the guillotine, the Reign of Terror and 25 years of bloodshed and chaos that ended with Napoleon's defeat and exile. The French Revolution was inspired by ideology and it set in motion the chain of ideological revolutions that was the bane of the 20th century.

From the defeat of Napoleon in 1814 until the beginning of World War I was a century of social change and economic development. There was rapid progress in the industrialization of the western world. Along with growing material prosperity came new theories that sought to explain man and his society. Two men who influenced the 20th century more than virtually anyone else of their generation published books during this time. They were Karl Marx who published *The Communist Manifesto* in 1848 and Charles Darwin who published *On the Origin of Species* in 1859.

While the Deists of the Enlightenment had sought to rid themselves of the Bible and to construct a religion based upon logic and reason, Darwin enabled the intellectual community to go one step further. He proffered the idea of creation without a Creator! According to his theories, the world around us is not the result of an intelligent Designer and Lawgiver. Rather, it is the result of random chance, natural selection and survival of the fittest.

Marx's view of the world was very much in harmony with Darwin's. He was totally materialistic in his outlook and saw history as a struggle between classes. He propounded his economic

theories as “scientific” and predicted the inevitability of class warfare and the final triumph of communism as the highest form of social development. Both Marx and Darwin propounded a worldview that saw life as a progressive evolutionary development. There was struggle and conflict to be sure, but there was also the

World War I, so American optimism and idealism were major casualties in the jungles of Vietnam.

Scholars have called the 20th century the “American Century.” Yet as America sought to lead the world, something went dramatically wrong at home. The technological Disneyland that is modern America has become a house of

clude that there is no hope at all? The ancient Hebrew prophet Jeremiah wrote in Jeremiah 10:23, “O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walks to direct his steps.”

The conflict of opposing world-views is not unique to our modern world. The Bible reveals a story of conflicting approaches to

Mankind has been struggling for almost 6,000 years of recording his own problems his own way by following the way that seems

inevitability of progress as the old gave way to the new. In the decades to come, other thinkers offered various modifications of this idea, but the basic thesis remained the same.

World War I marked a defining moment for the 20th century. In its aftermath, 19th century notions of the inevitability of progress and the gradual dawn of utopia lay interred at Verdun and in Flanders Field, at least for many Europeans. The carnage of that war far surpassed anything known before. Civilian casualties alone amounted to more than ten million. Much of what had seemed permanent was swept away in four short years. The decade following World War I was dominated by an unlikely amalgam of cultural nihilists, pacifist idealists and greedy materialists. Romantic notions of the 19th century were swept away by what passed as “realism.” Then the decadence of the “Roaring Twenties” had strong brakes put on it by the Great Depression of the 1930s. World War II followed with its idealism and the Allies’ concept of a crusade for freedom. Instead of world peace, however, World War II was followed by the Cold War. Just as European optimism had been dealt a severe blow on the killing fields of

horrors, in which human life has become cheap. Millions of unborn babies’ lives are snuffed out every year, and many Americans live in constant fear of violence.

The moral consensus in the Western world has collapsed. We have polluted our physical environment and sown the seeds of unimaginable future catastrophes by our attempts at biological engineering. Our spiritual and cultural environment is increasingly toxic as well. The paradox is that with all of man’s amazing progress in discovering laws of science and ushering in the greatest time of physical abundance and prosperity that has ever been known, there are so many personal problems. Empty, unfulfilled lives leave many in our modern western world wondering, “What’s the use?” While there are plenty of social engineers who cling to the idea that they can “fix” everything and bring about a secular utopia, the results of their experimentation demand a contrary verdict!

What Are the Real Answers?

Why have man’s best efforts failed? And given man’s dismal record of failure, are we to con-

life from the very beginning. One of these ways was characterized by the Tree of Life, and the opposing way by the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. According to the biblical book of Genesis, both of these trees were located in the Garden of Eden where the Creator placed our first parents. The Tree of Life symbolized the way of obedience to God and His laws—a way of life based upon divine revelation and yielding self-will to the guidance of Almighty God—the way of love and of outgoing concern for others. The other tree represents a mixture of good and evil—knowledge acquired through experience and experiment, apart from God’s revelation. Human society, and the culture that flows from it, is built upon this fatal mixture. Mankind has been struggling for almost 6,000 years of recorded history to solve his own problems his own way by following the way that seems right to himself.

At the dawn of the 21st century, we are fast approaching the time described in Matthew 24:22, when except for the intervention of the Creator there would be no flesh saved alive. Man’s technological capacity has far outstripped his moral and spiritual capacity.

The conflicting world-views of the modern age do not represent a conflict between true science and the Bible. There is no such conflict, for the same One is the author of both! Rather, it is a conflict between the pagan superstitions of Egypt and Babylon that have given rise to most of organized religion on the one

rded history to solve ms right to himself.

hand, and the secular man-centered view of the world that comes to us from ancient Greece on the other. They simply represent two different ways of being wrong.

Man is not the result of blind chance and natural selection of one species over another. Rather, the Creator formed man in His own image and likeness (Genesis 1:26) with the supreme destiny of ultimately being born into His very Family (1 John 3:1-2, Romans 8:16-17). He is in the

process of “bringing many sons to glory” (Hebrews 2:10).

There is a great purpose being worked out here below. Our modern world has been shaped by mankind continuing to eat of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The vast majority of human beings are destined to learn the hard way that while this fruit may initially be sweet to the taste, it is in reality a deadly poison that produces death. There is a better way!

While mankind as a whole will have to wait for the return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom of God upon this earth, it is possible for you to reject right here and now the way that leads to death! After learning of your Creator and His ways, you can with His help, unconditionally surrender your life and will to Him, coming to *truly* know Jesus Christ as your lord and savior. This is a far cry from accepting the false Christ that the world talks about (Matthew 24:5). Far from being “unscientific,” putting your trust

in the invisible God is the most sensible choice that there is. The One in whom we live and move and have our being (Acts 17:28) has a plan for you. If you want to learn more of that plan and purpose, then write in for the *Tomorrow's World Bible Study Course*. It will help you to make sense of life and to understand your Maker's instruction book.

Ultimately the forces that have shaped our modern world are the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16). These are what enticed Eve into the fatal experiment of eating the forbidden fruit. Genesis 3:6 tells us that it appeared “good for food” (lust of the flesh), “pleasant to the eyes” (lust of the eyes) and something to “be desired to make one wise” (pride of life). These are the values that have shaped our world, ancient and medieval as well as modern. This world and its lusts are going to be swept away in a few short years, but those who do the will of God will endure forever (1 John 2:17). [TW](#)

WHAT IS HIDDEN BY THE HOLIDAYS? (continued from page 18)

because you will do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger through the works of your hands” (Deuteronomy 31:29).

That time of national punishment is about to come upon the modern descendants of the ancient Israelites (as explained in our booklet *What's Ahead for America and Britain?*). God has blessed the people in the western world, but they have been led astray to follow pagan customs that are “fun,” but false and empty of real meaning! They have substituted customs that God says are evil, for festivals God designed to keep them mindful of His great plan of salvation and the true purpose of life. They have listened to false teachers “who call evil good, and good evil” (Isaiah 5:20). They have been deceived by religious leaders “who suppress the

truth in unrighteousness” (Romans 1:18). They have “exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshipped and served the creature [pagan customs] rather than the Creator” (Romans 1:25). When you, personally, start to observe the biblical festivals God has ordained, you will begin to understand what life is all about. The Bible and the world will begin to make sense. The excitement and fulfillment you will experience will make the frivolity and fantasies of pagan holiday practices seem empty by comparison. Perhaps it is time to open your eyes to what is actually hidden by the holidays!

If you would like to learn more about the true Christianity practiced by the Apostles, which included the festivals and so much more that has been lost to today's churches, please write for your free copy of Roderick C. Meredith's booklet, *Restoring Apostolic Christianity*. [TW](#)

WATCH AND WARN *(continued from page 24)*

crying aloud, lifting up their voices and showing mankind its sins and warning of the consequences. That is coupled with proclaiming the wonderful news of the Kingdom of God that Jesus Christ will establish beyond the horrible times that lie ahead.

God also gives His servants the responsibility to warn. Ezekiel's prophecies underscore a principle that remains every bit as applicable today as it did in his day. God's servants are to trumpet a warning when they see warfare coming on the land: "So you, son of man: I have made you a watchman for the

house of Israel; therefore you shall hear a word from My mouth and warn them for Me. When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked man, you shall surely die!' and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. Nevertheless if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul" (Ezekiel 33:7-9).

"Say to them: 'As I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should

you die, O house of Israel?" (Ezekiel 33:11).

Those involved in this Work are soberly striving to heed Jesus Christ's command to watch world events and, like sentries, sound an alarm out of love, about the terrible times ahead for all people on the earth. They fully realize that the message will not be popular, but an urgent warning is needed. Beyond the gloom and doom of the immediate years ahead lies a glorious world governed by Jesus Christ. But meanwhile, we all need to sincerely hope and pray people will repent and turn around as a result of this message of warning and hope. You have just read that message! How will you respond? TW

THE CHARACTER ISSUE *(continued from page 3)*

their pocketbooks may seem to help some individuals in the short term, the moral decay and spiritual cancer brought on an entire nation by this neglect of the character issue will eventually DESTROY the nation itself! The record of history proves that every nation that has abandoned sexual morality and integrity has eventually collapsed, and has often disappeared completely from the pages of history.

Peter Drucker is regarded as the dean of modern management theory. He has been a confidant and advisor to dozens of top-ranking professional, industrial and government leaders. In his virtual "bible" of management text, *The Effective Executive* (pp. 86-87), Mr. Drucker comments on the corrupting influence of leaders without character. He says this is so because "subordinates, especially bright, young, and ambitious ones, tend to mold themselves after a forceful boss. There is, therefore, nothing more corrupting and more destructive in an organization than a forceful but basically corrupt execu-

tive. Such a man might well operate effectively on his own; even within an organization, he might be tolerable if denied all power over others. But in a position of power within an organization, he destroys."

Do we really want to destroy our youth, and millions of other unthinking individuals, who just seem to go along with whatever is dished up to them by our political system and by our liberal media? Yet that is what our modern democratic political process is bringing about with increasing regularity. The few "good" men and women around, often are ridiculed and pushed to the sidelines. The vaunted majority—heavily influenced by the left-leaning media—are usually beguiled into voting for whatever the political manipulators want them to.

Righteous character in a top leader is of paramount importance. But from now on, it will become increasingly obvious that that kind of leader will only be given authority when the Kingdom of God is set up on this earth. Just one more reason to follow Jesus' instruction and pray with understanding and fervency, "Thy Kingdom come."



Tomorrow's World

TV/Radio Log

• Television Superstation

△ Spanish Radio

International

—AUSTRALIA

Adelaide: *ACE*—Ch 6/31, SUN 11:30 am, THUR 8:30 pm
Brisbane: *BRIZ*—Ch 31, SUN 8:30 am
Perth: *CETL*—Ch 31, SUN 9:30 am

—NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: *Triangle Television*—Ch 41, SUN 5:00 pm

—MEXICO

△ Mexico City: *Cambio*—1440 AM, SUN 12:00 noon

—PHILIPPINES

Borongan: *Borongan Cable*—Ch 25, SAT 3:00 pm
Manila: *Home Cable*—Ch 11, SAT 9:00 am
Naval, Leyte: *Naval Cable*—Ch 8, SUN 9:00 am
Hinabangan, Samar: *Omeres*—Ch 7, SUN 9:00 am

—CANADA (nationwide)

• ON, Toronto: *Vision*—SUN 6:30 pm (ET & PT)

United States

AL, Birmingham: *Cable*—Ch 4, FRI 4:30 pm
AR, Fayetteville: *Access TV*—Ch 8, SUN 8:30 pm
AR, Little Rock: *Comcast*—Ch 18, FRI 9:30 am
AR, Little Rock: *KASN*—Ch 38, SAT 8:00 am
AZ, Phoenix: *Access*—Ch 22, TUE 1:00 pm
AZ, Prescott: *Cable*—Ch 13, SAT 6:00 pm; SUN 8:30 am
AZ, Tucson: *Access*—Ch 73, SAT 5:00 pm; SUN 11:30 am
CA, Anaheim: *Adelphia*—Ch 3, WED 6:00 pm
CA, Buena Park: *Comcast*—Ch 55, THUR 7:30 pm
CA, Eureka: *Cox*—Ch 10, FRI 5:30 pm
CA, Garden Grove: *Time Warner*—Ch 6, SUN 10:30 am
CA, Modesto: *Cable One*—Ch 8, TUE 3:00 pm
CA, Norwalk: *Public Access*—Ch 55, THUR 5:00 pm
CA, Oceanside: *KOCT*—Ch 18, SUN 5:30 pm
CA, Riverbank: *SONIC*—Ch 9, WED 6:00 pm
CA, Sacramento: *RCCTV*—Ch 75, WED 7:00 pm
CA, San Andreas: *MediaOne*—Ch 4, TUE 4:00 pm
CA, San Diego: *Cox*—Ch 18 & 24 THUR 6:00 pm
CA, San Francisco: *Community TV*—Ch 29 THUR 5:00 pm
CA, Sonora: *TCCCA*—Ch 8, SUN 8:00 pm
CA, Turlock: *Marcus*—Ch 2, MON 8:00 pm
CT, Naugatuck: *Tele-Media*—Ch 10, TUE 9:30 pm
FL, Gainesville: *Cox*—Ch 55, SUN 8:00 pm
FL, Ocala: *Cox*—Ch 19, SUN 10:00 am
FL, Tampa: *Time Warner*—Ch 19 & 20, SAT 8:00 pm; SUN 8:00 pm
GA, Macon: *Cox Cable*—Ch 18, SUN 5:00 pm; TUE 7:30 am; FRI 2:00 pm
HI, Hilo: *Na Leo*—Ch 2, TUE 10:30 pm; FRI 9:30 pm
HI, Honolulu: *Olelo*—Ch 52, THUR 2:00 pm
HI, Kahului: *Akaku*—Ch 44, SAT 9:30 pm
HI, Kailua-Kona: *Na Leo*—Ch 14, TUE 10:30 pm; FRI 9:30 pm
HI, Kauai: *Ho'ike*—Ch 12, MON 1:30 pm
HI, Lanai: *Akaku*—Ch 3, 12 & 13, SAT 9:30 pm
HI, Lihue: *Ho'ike*—Ch 12, MON 1:30 pm
HI, Maui: *Akaku*—Ch 44, SAT 9:30 pm
HI, Molokai: *Akaku*—Ch 3, 12 & 13 SAT 9:30 pm
IA, Des Moines: *AT&T*—Ch 15, SAT 10:00 am; SUN 11:00 am
IA, Dubuque: *TCl of Iowa*—Ch 45, THUR 7:30 pm; FRI 1:30 pm; MON 3:30 pm; TUE 10:00 am; WED 2:00 pm
IA, Waterloo: *Cable*—Ch 2, WED 9:00 pm
ID, Pocatello: *Vision*—Ch 12, SUN 7:30 pm; FRI 1:00 pm
IL, Bloomington: *AT&T*—Ch 10, SUN 11:30 am; WED 7:00 pm
IL, Chicago: *WGN*—Cable, SUN 6:00 am (ET)
IL, Peoria: *AT&T*—Ch 20, SUN 7:30 pm
IL, Springfield: *TCl*—Ch 4, TUE 6:00 pm
IN, Anderson: *Insight*—Ch 3, WED 9:30 pm
IN, Kokomo: *Insight*—Ch 16, WED 10:30 pm
IN, Lafayette: *Insight*—Ch 16, TUE 9:30 pm
IN, Mishawaka: *AT&T*—Ch 3, THUR 7:30 pm
IN, Noblesville: *Insight*—Ch 18, TUE 9:30 pm

IN, Richmond: *Insight*—Ch 17, WED 9:30 pm
KS, Chanute: *Cablevision*—Ch 5, SUN 7:30 am; TUE 5:30 pm
KS, Parsons: *Time Warner*—Ch 21, WED 7:00 pm & 9:30 pm
LA, Monroe: *Time Warner*—Ch 49, WED 10:00 pm
MA, Cambridge: *CCTV*—Ch 22, TUE 4:00 pm
MA, Malden: *Access TV*—Ch 3, TUE 4:30 pm
MD, Baltimore: *TCl*—Ch 5, SUN 4:00 pm, WED 4:00 pm
MN, Duluth: *Public Access*—Ch 24, SAT 7:00 pm; SUN 7:00 pm
MN, Minneapolis: *NW Community*—Ch 35, SAT 10:30 pm; SUN 4:30 am, 10:30 am & 4:30 pm
MN, Roseville: *CTV*—Ch 15, SUN 7:30 pm; MON 3:30 & 11:30 am
MO, Springfield: *KSPR*—Ch 33, SUN 8:30 am
MO, St. Louis: *Double Helix*—Ch 22, MON 4:00 pm
MS, Jackson: *Time Warner*—Ch 11, WED 12:00 am & 4:00 pm
ND, Bismarck: *CATV*—Ch 12, SUN 3:00 pm
NE, Omaha: *KPTM*—Ch 42, SUN 8:00 am
NH, Hanover: *CATV*—Ch 6, SUN 5:00 pm & 11:00 pm; MON 5:00 am & 11:00 am
NJ, Oakland: *Cablevision*—Ch 19/20, SUN 7:00 pm
NM, Albuquerque: *CCC27*—Ch 27, SUN 7:00 pm
NM, Rio Rancho: *CABLE ONE*—Ch 51, THUR, 7:00 pm
NV, Carson City: *Access TV*—Ch 10, SAT 9:00 pm
NV, Gardnerville: *Community Access*—Ch 26, SAT 3:00 am & 3:00 pm; SUN 3:00 am & 3:00 pm
NV, Reno/Sparks: *SNCT*—Ch 30/16, SUN 7:30 pm
NY, Brooklyn: *BCAT*—Ch 56/69, SUN 3:30 pm
NY, Elmira & Corning: *Time Warner*—Ch 1, SUN 9:30 am
NY, Hauppauge: *Cablevision*—Ch 25, FRI 10:30 pm
NY, Irondequoit: *ICAT*—Ch 15, No set time
NY, New York: *Bronxnet*—Ch 70, THUR 5:30 am & 11:00 pm
NY, Port Jefferson: *TCl*—Ch 1/99 MON 9:00 pm
NY, Queens: *QPTV*—Ch 35, WED 11:00 pm
NY, Riverhead: *Cablevision*—Ch 27, MON 4:30 pm
NY, Rochester: *Community TV*—Ch 15, SAT 10:00 am
OR, Portland: *MCTV*—Ch 11, SUN 10:00 am; TUE 1:30 pm
TX, Austin: *Community Access*—Ch 11, to be determined
TX, Corpus Christi: *TCl*—Ch 10, THUR 2:00 pm; FRI 10:30 am; SUN 11:00 am
TX, Dallas: *Community Television*—Ch 14b, FRI 2:00 pm; SAT 1:00 pm; SUN 11:00 am
TX, Temple: *KPLE*—Ch 31/46, SUN 7:30 pm
VA, Chesterfield: *Comcast*—Ch 6, THUR 6:30 pm
VA, Richmond: *AT&T*—Ch 7, SUN 9:00 pm
VT, Barre: Ch 7, SAT 9:00 pm; SUN 2:00 pm & 11:00 pm
WA, Kennewick: *Charter*—Ch 13, SUN 8:00 pm; TUE 8:00 pm
WA, Seattle: *TCl*—Ch 29, SAT 12:00 pm
WA, Vancouver: *Clark/Vancouver*—Ch 49, SUN 9:30 am
WI, Wausau: *Charter*—Ch 10, THUR 9:00 pm; FRI 7:30 am

• IL, Chicago: *WGN*—National Cable, SUN 6:00 am (ET)

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CT, Enfield: Cox—Ch 15, WED 2:30 pm & 7:00 pm

MO, Kansas City: KCWE—Ch 29, SUN 6:00 am

SC, Charleston: Comcast—Ch 2, SUN 6:30 pm

Australia

Melbourne: MCTV—Ch 31, TUE 11:00 pm

Guyana

Georgetown: NBT—Ch 9, SUN 10:00 am

New Zealand

Auckland: Prime Television—Ch 41, SUN 8:30 am

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United Kingdom, Manx Radio—1368 kHz AM, 89/97.2/103.7 MHz FM SUN 10:00 pm

Mexico, Mexico City, Cambio—1440 AM, SUN 12:00 noon

Barbados, Barbados, CBC—900 kHz AM, MON 8:00 pm

Philippines, Ozamiz City, DXSY—1242 kHz AM, SUN 8:00 am

Philippines, Manila, DWBL—1242 kHz AM, THUR 10:30 pm

Philippines, Manila, DZRJ—1242 kHz AM, SAT 7:00 am