

Tomorrow's World

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

The Acts

of the Apostles

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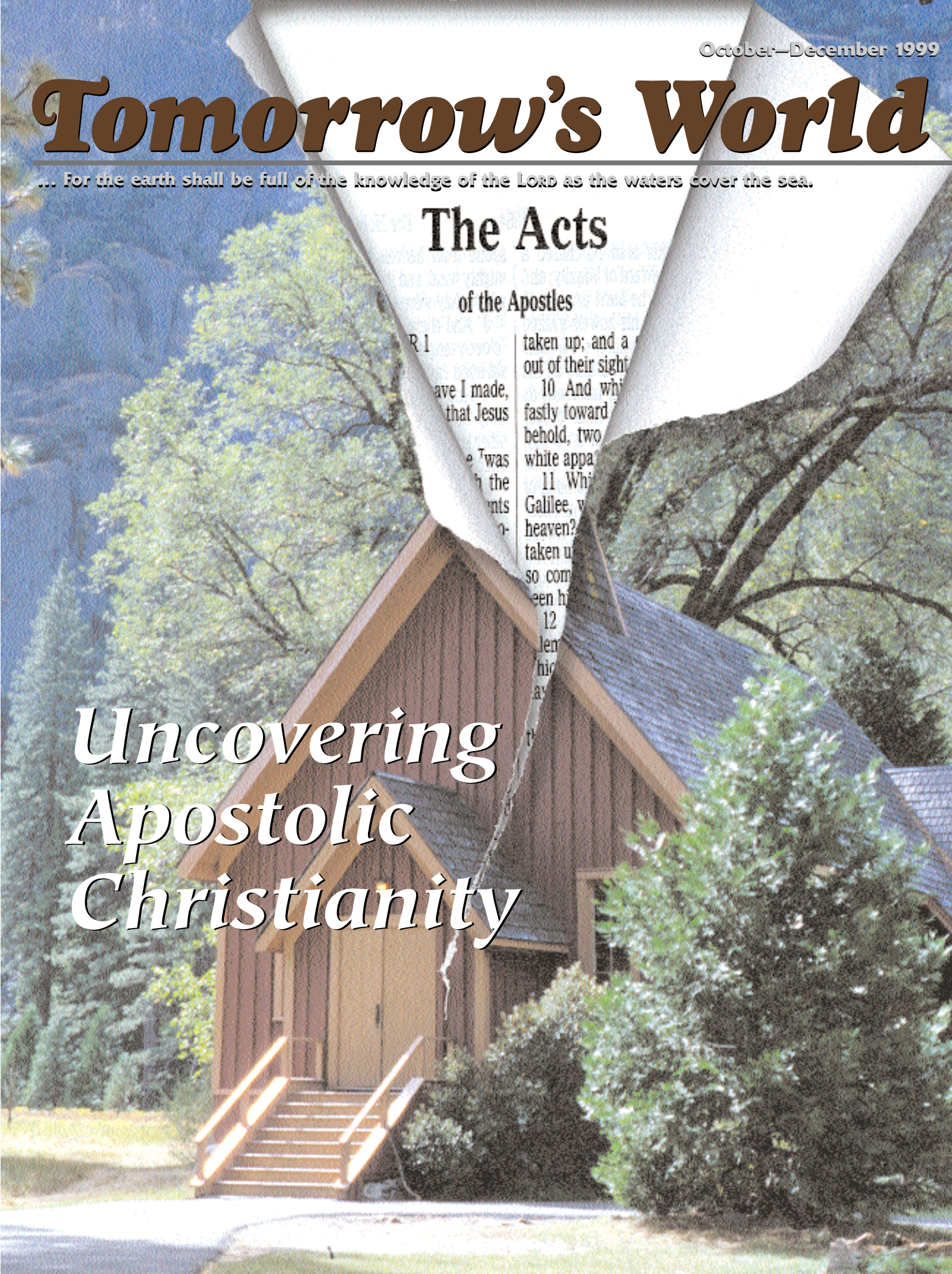
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*Uncovering
Apostolic
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If Jesus of Nazareth were to return to Earth today, He would scarcely recognize the religion that is using His name. True Christianity has largely disappeared from this world. Yet a remnant of the true Church of God has always existed alongside mankind's counterfeit Christianity, seeking to restore the understanding of the true gospel and way of life taught by Jesus Christ.

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The Most VITAL Knowledge of All!

What is really of top importance? Most people don't seem to know. They just don't "get it"!

The majority of people in our western culture spend vast amounts of time and money studying and learning about how to make money, how to improve their health, how to "get ahead." They seem oblivious to the fact that we are near the end of 6,000 years of human experience—that we are now near the END of an age. They are ignorant of the fact that the Great GOD of Creation will intervene SOON and set up a world-ruling kingdom based on His eternal, immutable spiritual laws. This, of course, will CHANGE everything.

So what is really important?

Jesus Christ said, "But seek FIRST the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33). If our relationship with God is correct, then He will see to it that we have plenty to eat and to wear—that all our material needs will be taken care of. For God is REAL and His coming Kingdom will soon really be set up on this earth with world Headquarters at Jerusalem! God's Word tells us that in the latter days: "Many people shall come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:1-3).

The most vital knowledge concerns this coming, world-ruling government. That is why Jesus Himself constantly preached this message: "Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel'" (Mark 1:14-15).

Although we at Tomorrow's World will be helping you understand the meaning of world events and where we are in the fulfillment of biblical prophecy, we all need to realize that this is secondary to our spiritual preparation for the coming Kingdom of God. After describing a number of character traits we should be developing, the Apostle Peter was inspired to write, "Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you DO THESE THINGS you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:10-11).

If any of us refuse to totally surrender to let Jesus Christ live His life within us through the power of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 2:20), we will NOT be in the Kingdom of God. For the true God will not countenance a bunch of self-willed rebels entering His eternal Kingdom and Family! So we must dedicate ourselves to building virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and LOVE (2 Peter 1:5-7). We must actively do our part and zealously yield to God so that He may place within us His very divine nature—the very nature of Christ and the Father (v. 4).

Although it is interesting and helpful to understand the intricacies of END-time prophecy—and we will help you do this—it is FAR more important to develop the very CHARACTER of Jesus Christ so that we will "be there" when the Kingdom of God is set up here on earth!

Over the course of my 50 years in the Work of God, I have encountered many "prophecy nuts"—as they are sometimes called. These are folks who go way overboard and devote most if not all their Bible study to prophecy. They spend countless hours poring over chronological charts wherein they try to predict the exact date of Christ's return to this earth, and other such matters. I have noticed in some religious publications that some of these

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Uncovering Apo

The Acts

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If Jesus of Nazareth were to return to planet earth today, would He recognize the religion that is using His name? Would He be shocked to find that people claiming to be His followers have been waging WAR against each other almost continually for the last 1,900 years? That His professed followers believe *totally contrary* doctrines to what He taught, observing *different* days of worship, *different* customs? And—most importantly—that they have a *totally different concept* of God and of His purpose than Jesus and the original Apostles did?

Jesus might wonder, why are they putting MY name on all this “stuff”?

Yet, most genuine religious scholars recognize that VAST changes have overshadowed professing Christianity—rendering it *totally different* from the Christianity of Jesus and the Apostles! Respected mainline Protestant scholar, Jesse Lyman Hurlbut called it an “age of shadows,” further acknowledging:

Apostolic Christianity

By Roderick C. Meredith

True Christianity—the Christianity of Jesus and His Apostles? Does this type of Christianity have mainly disappeared from the earth? But how can it be discovered and restored?

For fifty years after St. Paul's life a curtain hangs over the church, through which we strive vainly to look; and when at last it rises, about 120AD with the writings of the earliest church-fathers, we find a church in many aspects very different from that in the days of St. Peter and St. Paul. (*Story of the Christian Church*, p. 41)

If the leaders of the “age of shadows” to which Hurlbut referred were filled with and led by God's Spirit, then *why* would the church suddenly be “very different”? For the Bible tells us that Christ is “the SAME yesterday, today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). Yet the professing Christian church today is NOT even remotely the same as the one Jesus founded.

Describing the time period after all the original apostles and their successors had died out, Hurlbut writes:

The services of worship increased in splendor, but were less spiritual and hearty than those of former times. The forms and ceremonies of paganism gradually crept into the worship. Some of the old heathen feasts became church festivals with change of name and of worship. About 405 A.D. images of saints and martyrs began to appear in the churches, at first as memorials, then in succession revered, adored, and worshiped. The adoration of the Virgin Mary was substituted for the worship of Venus and Diana; the Lord's supper became a sacrifice in place of a memorial; and the elder evolved from a preacher into a priest. (p. 79)

Notice Hurlbut's statement that “some of the old heathen feasts *became* church festivals.” They “became” that way because God Himself had predicted that EVIL men and false leaders would take over

most of the church! Remember this inspired warning the Apostle Paul gave the Ephesian elders: “For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears” (Acts 20:29–31).

When Paul realized the depth of the APOSTASY, which would cover most of the church, it hit him emotionally. He then “did not cease to WARN everyone night and day with tears”! Very few people today seem to be concerned enough to even begin to shed tears over this awesome change.

HOW Could This Happen?

This massive apostasy occurred because men and women back then, just like today, did not zealously PROVE to themselves where God's Truth was being taught. That is why the Living Christ corrected those Christians living near the end of the Apostolic Era: “Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place; unless you repent” (Revelation 2:4–5).

What about today? How can we account for the more than 400 different denominations and sects—all calling themselves “Christian”? All of them have different ideas, traditions and approaches, yet claim to follow the same Jesus Christ!

Part of the answer is the fact that EXTREMELY few professing Christians really study their Bibles! So they do not “PROVE” virtually *anything* they believe by *carefully researching it in the Bible!* They may enthusiastically study books and articles on health, on self-improvement or on investing and making more money, but somehow it does NOT

occur to them to thoroughly study *the most* VITAL *subjects* of all: Is there a REAL God? If so, what is His *purpose* in creating us human beings? And *how* can we fulfill that purpose? Yet the Bible commands, “PROVE all things, hold fast that which is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21, KJV).

Haven't most of *you* just “accepted” the religion passed down through your family? Haven't *you* just “gone along” with the beliefs and the traditions you were taught as a child?

Los Angeles Times religion writer, Teresa Watanabe, reports:

According to one religious research firm, two-thirds of Americans don't regularly read the Bible or know the names of the Four Gospels. More than half of Americans surveyed can't name even five of the Ten Commandments. And the majority say they find the Good Book irrelevant....

“We still hold the Bible in high regard, but in terms of actually spending the time reading it, studying it and applying it—that is a thing of the past,” said George Barna. The reasons cited range from changes in American culture to the intrinsic difficulty of the text itself.

Now religious organizations are making a major effort to jazz up the ancient Scripture's doddering image. Bible publishers are producing a dizzying array of products, with translations and editions pitched to every conceivable niche market, to convince people that the book is neither arcane nor irrelevant. (*Los Angeles Times*, July 23, 1999).

Of course, the *real underlying cause* of this massive religious apostasy is that this is Satan's world and that he has totally DECEIVED the vast majority of humanity. In the comfortable surroundings of our western civilization, most Americans, Canadians and others fail to realize that the OVERWHELMING MAJORITY of human beings have never believed in ANY form of “Christianity”—let alone the real Christianity of Christ and the Apostles!

If you will study and believe your own Bible, you will find that Satan the devil is described as the one “*who deceives the WHOLE world*” (Revelation 12:9). You will also find Satan referred to as “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience” (Ephesians 2:2). For Satan “broadcasts” a selfish, *rebellious* attitude throughout this earth. *He* is the one who is influencing deceived men

into injecting ENORMOUS amounts of licentious sex, violence and a general spirit of disrespect and lawlessness into the so-called “entertainment” you and your children see or hear on television, at the movies, on the radio or when playing various kinds of perverted computer games which simulate almost indescribable acts of perversion or violence. Do you know who is *really* laughing at all this “fun stuff”? *Satan is!*

For by perverting mankind's normal interest in sex and excitement, and by cleverly injecting sick humor into so many “situation comedies,” Satan is able to cleverly mislead humanity into abusing itself, degrading itself and ultimately DESTROYING itself if God does not intervene at the last minute to stop it (Matthew 24:21–22). Satan is truly the “god” of this present world! The Apostle Paul was inspired to write, “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).

Most important of all, Satan has injected into mainstream “Christianity” a whole series of *totally* FALSE ideas about the origin and destiny of man, of what God is like, of what God's awesome PURPOSE is, and *how we are to achieve that great purpose*. Satan has “covered up” the truth. Additionally, Satan has confused people about prophecy so much that most professing Christians and even most professing Christian ministers and priests simply throw up their hands and *almost totally neglect* biblical prophecy. Yet our Creator devotes about one-fourth of the entire Bible to the “sure word of prophecy” (2 Peter 1:19, KJV).

Key Facts to Consider

The first issue to consider, then, is that mankind has been truly DECEIVED. We see that we have gone “way off the track” when we compare modern professing Christianity with the religion of Jesus and the apostles. As noted professor of religion, Rufus M. Jones, writes:

If by any chance Christ Himself had been taken by His later followers as the model and pattern of the new way, and a serious attempt had been made to set up His life and teaching as the standard and norm for the church, Christianity would have been something vastly different from what it became. Then “heresy” would have been, as it is not now, deviation from His way, His teaching, His spirit, His king-

dom. (*The Church's Debt to Heretics*, pp. 15–16).

The truth is clear. Modern “Christianity” *has* become VASTLY DIFFERENT from the Christianity of Christ!

Some might say, “So what?” But this is *no small matter* we are talking about. Frankly, we’re talking about *the way* to eternal LIFE on the one hand, or eternal DEATH on the other (Romans 6:23). And if you do not have the Christianity of *Christ*, *you have no Christianity whatsoever!*

Jesus Himself warned, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’” (Matthew 7:21–23). It is important to realize what Christ will say to those failing to do the “will” of the Father: “I NEVER knew you.” In plain language, these deceived churchgoers will be told that they were, in fact, *never* acquainted with the Christ they claim to serve. They were *never* really converted. They were *never* really “Christian”!

Again, Jesus said, “Why call you Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46). A “lord” or “master” is someone you OBEY. But most professing Christian ministers and their followers do NOT want to follow the clear teachings and examples of Jesus and the apostles. And most of them don’t even bother to *deeply study* their Bibles to find what those teachings and examples are!

Restoring Apostolic Christianity

The key issue, then, is our desire and willingness to get back to the *true* Christian faith, “the faith which was ONCE FOR ALL delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). Are *you* willing to *genuinely* try to follow the Christianity of *Christ*? Or are you willing to “take a chance” in your relationship with God and in your quest for eternal life?

Frankly, the “little flock” (Luke 12:32), the true Church of God, has *always* understood the need to



The Western Wall and Temple Mount in Jerusalem. © PhotoDisc Image

pattern itself after the teachings and examples of Christ and the apostles. Although very few have seriously attempted to follow this pattern, many scholars and religious historians have understood the concept of the “Jerusalem Church of God.” This is a vital concept to understand if we are sincerely interested in contending “for the faith once delivered.”

The Apostle Paul was inspired to write to the Thessalonians, “For you, brethren, became IMITATORS of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus” (1 Thessalonian 2:14). The book of Acts makes it clear that the earthly “headquarters” Church of God—for many decades—was the *Jerusalem* Church. It was here that the Holy Spirit was originally poured out on the true Christians (Acts 2). It was here where Peter, James and John carried on most of their ministry for many years (Acts 4:1; 8:1; 11:1–2, etc.). Later, it was to the leadership at *Jerusalem* that Paul and Barnabas came to settle the major question of circumcision for the Gentiles and related questions (Acts 15:4). As renowned historian Edward Gibbon wrote:

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).

As indicated above, the only major ministerial conference indicated in the New Testament was held at Jerusalem. Here lived the leading original Apostles. Here was the true “mother” Church—NOT Rome! And it was to Jerusalem Paul and Barnabas had come even earlier, lest, as Paul had put it, “I might run, or had run, in VAIN” (Galatians 2:1–2).

After the major Jerusalem conference, Paul and Silas traveled through Asia Minor visiting the churches: “And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, which were determined by the Apostles and elders AT JERUSALEM” (Acts 16:4).

Paul Looked to Jerusalem

Clearly the original Apostles and the Jerusalem Church of God set the inspired “pattern” for true Christianity—NOT just for *that* time—but for ALL time! Contrary to the heretical Protestant ideas that the Apostle Paul later was used by God to “reinvent” Christianity, the *real* Apostle Paul of the Bible—as we have seen—constantly showed deep respect for the original apostles and deferred to the *leadership at Jerusalem* in all major matters! And it was the Apostle Paul who wrote the primarily Gentile church at Corinth, “Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is what matters” (1 Corinthians 7:19).

Noted Historian Carl Von Weiszäcker wrote in 1895:

Paul was far from confining his interest to the Gentile Christian Church which he had himself founded. His thoughts were much too lofty to leave Jewish Christianity to itself. He toiled not merely for his own work, but for the Church of God... the *whole* Church. **He never forgot for a moment the true birthplace of the gospel.** And for him the Christians in **Jerusalem** were always the [saints].... He did not however merely entertain a grand policy of ecclesiastical union, but his first and constant thought was that **the primitive Church was the foremost divine institution under the Gospel...** In the early Apostles he saw... the Apostles of the Lord. From them the testimony

of the Resurrection emanated (1 Corinthians 15:1 ff.). **They were ever the Apostles, whom God had placed at the head of His Church,** the first of those divinely commissioned men who held the leading office in the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:28) [*The Apostolic Age of the Christian Church*, pp. 12–13].

Later in Paul’s ministry, he traveled again to Jerusalem: “And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present” (Acts 21:17–18). Notice that Paul presented himself to James, the Lord’s brother, who by now was undoubtedly the chief apostle at Jerusalem—Peter probably having gone to the “lost sheep” of the house of Israel in northwest Europe and the British Isles.

After rejoicing in the good news Paul brought about God’s Work among the Gentiles, the Jerusalem leadership told Paul, “You see, brother, how many MYRIADS of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law” (v. 20). The term “myriad” *literally* means “tens of thousands.” So as not to confuse or discourage these many Jewish Christians, Paul was asked by the Jerusalem Church to go through an offering ceremony to publicly demonstrate that he was NOT teaching in any way against God’s laws. As the Jerusalem leaders explained to Paul, “Take these men along and be purified with them and pay all the expenses connected with the shaving of their heads. This will let everyone know there is no truth in the reports they have heard about you *and that you still* REGULARLY *observe the Law*” (v. 24, *Jerusalem Bible*).

If Paul had in fact been teaching *against* God’s Law in ANY way—especially the SPIRITUAL LAW containing the Ten Commandments—he most certainly would NOT have gone through this ceremony of the Law of Moses! That particular ceremony—probably a thank offering at the conclusion of the Nazarite vow—was NOT necessary for a New Testament Christian. But it was not “sinful” either! And Paul’s *deep respect* for God’s Law, for the original mother Church and the pattern of OBEDIENCE to God’s Law—all guided his decision to go ahead and participate in this ceremony. By guiding Paul in this—*and putting this example in the Bible*—God is showing ALL of us that Paul’s approach was one of OBEDIENCE to law, NOT one which tried to do away with or “reason around” God’s spiritual laws as so many Protestant theologians teach!

Speaking of the *common practice* of the MAJORITY of early Christians, Historian W. D. Davies wrote:

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. According to some scholars, **they must have been so strong that right up to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 they were the dominant element in the Christian movement [Judeo-Christianism, "Paul and Jewish Christianity," 1972, p. 72, quoted by Samuele Bacchiocchi, *From Sabbath to Sunday*, p. 151].**

So for about the first FORTY YEARS of Christianity, guided by the Holy Spirit, the "dominant element" in the Church of God still followed Christ's example of keeping the weekly and annual Sabbaths commanded by God. They were still following the example set by the Jerusalem Church of God!

Who DARED to change all of that?

As we have seen, it was NOT the Apostle Paul. It was certainly NOT any of the original twelve apos-

ties. Rather, as the time period—which is fittingly called the "Dark Ages"—began to get underway, misguided Catholic bishops and popes began to change virtually EVERYTHING that had made the Christian religion *totally different* from the pagan cults of the Roman Empire.

It is important that all our readers fully recognize that those of us in this Work—those of us on the staff of *Tomorrow's World* magazine, of the *Tomorrow's World* television program and those of us involved in this Work of the Living Church of God—are all dedicated to the task of RESTORING APOSTOLIC CHRISTIANITY!

As you read our articles and booklets and as you view the *Tomorrow's World* program, it is vital that you recognize where we are coming from. For we intend to preach and teach the SAME MESSAGE which Jesus and the early apostles did. We intend to uncover and restore—in all of *its spiritual aspects*—the way of life which Jesus and the apostles lived and taught. Also, guided by God's Spirit, we will preach the inspired prophecies of the Bible—and warn those willing to listen of what lies ahead.

As the time of God's intervention in human affairs and the soon-coming GREAT TRIBULATION approaches, it is absolutely *vital* that you and your loved ones make sure that you truly belong to Jesus Christ—the Christ of the Bible. That you are worshipping God "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23). And that you are part of the *true* Church of God which teaches and practices *Apostolic Christianity*—the Christianity of Jesus and the original apostles. "He who has ears to hear, let him hear" (Revelation 3:13). TW

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The Middle East—

Will A New Millennium Bring Peace at Last?

By John H. Ogwyn

As the 20th century draws to a close, world attention is once again focused on that most ancient of locales, Jerusalem. This ancient city lies at the heart of the ongoing peace negotiations in the Middle East. When Ehud Barak's new Israeli government was sworn in this past summer, hopes were raised in many world capitals that an ever-elusive Mideast peace might finally be visible on the horizon.

Prime Minister Barak, shortly after taking office, "...set another deadline for himself: After campaigning on the promise that he would bring the Israeli army out of Lebanon within a year, he raised the ante... and set a 15-month time frame for negotiating peace with Syria and finalizing agreements with the Palestinians" (*Jerusalem Post*, July 23, 1999). According to this announcement, that would mean peace in the Middle East by October 2000.

Will this happen? Can it happen? What does the future hold for this ancient and long-troubled corner of the world? Will Jerusalem, whose name in Hebrew means "city of peace," finally cease to be the sticking point for a long-awaited peace settlement?

Make no mistake about it: events in the Middle East and in Jerusalem in particular will profoundly affect your world in the years to come! This ancient city is

destined to play a central role during the years that mark the dawning of a new millennium. What will that role be—and what will it mean for you and your family?

Setting the Stage

Jerusalem. The very name evokes emotions that run deep in the adherents of three major religions—Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

For the 3,000 years since ancient King David captured the Jebusite citadel and made Jerusalem his capital, Jerusalem has been the most important of cities for the Jewish people. It was the city of King David, the location of Solomon's temple and later of the second temple, and the capital of the Jewish state until the Roman destruction in 70AD. It has been the subject of psalms, hymns and personal prayers and yearnings for most of three millennia.

Christians look to Jerusalem as the city where Jesus Christ was crucified and resurrected. It is the city where the Church began and where the Apostles ministered. Almost a thousand years ago the Crusades were launched from Western Europe to recapture Jerusalem from the Muslim Arabs. This became a focus of European energies for the next two centuries. Then the 19th and 20th centuries saw a resurgence in Western focus on Jerusalem and the Middle East.

As for the Muslims, following their capture of Jerusalem in the seventh century, it has been a center of worship and the locale of one of the holiest shrines in the Muslim world. Over the centuries, Arab and later Turkish forces contended with the nations of Europe for control of this hub of ancient history.

Muslim control of Jerusalem lapsed when British troops under General Allenby entered the Old City in 1917. The British soon learned that capturing Jerusalem was much easier than administering it. The Palestine Mandate, as it was called, proved to be a troublesome burden for a succession of British governments over the next 30 years.

Finally, in 1947 the United Nations passed Resolution 181, partitioning the Palestine Mandate between the Arabs and the Jews and internationalizing the city of Jerusalem. The Arabs, who were convinced that they could win all of Palestine by force of arms, vehemently rejected the resolution. The Jews, on the other hand, were fresh from the horrors of World War II and deeply anxious simply to have a place of their own. They accepted the UN resolution.

Before the British could even withdraw their troops, Jerusalem was under siege. By the beginning of 1948 the highway to Jerusalem was virtually impassable and the city's Jewish population was reduced to a state of near-starvation. In the fighting that followed, the Arabs destroyed 27 of the historic synagogues in Old Jerusalem.

On May 14, 1948 David Ben-Gurion announced to the world the formation of the new State of Israel. The Arab League reacted with predictable fury and its armies began advancing on all fronts. Though the armies of six Arab nations combined with the express purpose of pushing the Jews back into the sea, events

soon took a remarkable turn. On front after front the Arabs were fought to a standstill and were even pushed back. The Old City of Jerusalem, however, formed the weakest link in the new state's defense chain. Finally a cease-fire was arranged and



Palestinian demonstrators chant slogans in Gaza City on August 29, demanding the release of Palestinian and Arab prisoners from Israeli jails. © Reuters Photos

troops froze in position. Two weeks after independence, the last of the elderly Jews living in the Old City passed through Zion Gate, and the massive gate was irrevocably shut behind them. Thus Jerusalem became divided, and the Jews were once again denied access to their ancient city.

For 19 years this remained the status quo. Then in June 1967 came the incredible Six Day War, and with it the Jewish recapture of the Old City of Jerusalem. As Jewish troops swept out in all directions, Arab armies fled in disarray before them. Israel advanced east to the Jordan River and also seized the strategically vital Golan Heights from Syria. Israeli forces quickly moved into the Gaza Strip and the region of Sinai. While much of this was of great strategic value, nothing could compare to the excitement of the moment

that Jewish troops came through Zion Gate and seized the Old City. None who witnessed the event can ever forget the emotional fervor displayed as Jewish troops finally reached the western wall of the Temple Mount, better known as the Wailing Wall.

For centuries, religious Jews had concluded festival observances with the prayer, "Next year in Jerusalem." Finally, for the first time in almost two millennia, Jerusalem was united under Jewish control. It was quickly proclaimed as Israel's "eternal and undivided capital."

More than 30 years have passed since those momentous events. Since then, we have seen

cessors have failed? Inevitably, all attempts at peace stand or fall over the issue of Jerusalem. What is to be the destiny of the "City of Peace" and what part will that destiny play in the future of the Middle East and, indeed, of the world itself?

Jew Against Jew

Not only have the Jews been engaged in an ongoing struggle against the Arabs, but there has been increasingly bitter strife among the Jews themselves. It is important to understand the origin and development of this conflict in order to grasp the nature of the forces at work in Israel today.

Enlightenment of the century before, the rise of a movement to abandon their distinctiveness. Many felt that this was the way to end their isolation and persecution once and for all. As the 19th century progressed, however, many Jewish intellectuals became reluctantly convinced that however secular they might become, to his neighbors a Jew was always a Jew.

This set the stage for the Zionist movement, a late 19th century movement among secular European Jews to have a place of their own. The last two decades of the 19th century saw an upsurge in persecution of Jews in the Russian Empire. This helped precipitate a massive wave of emigration by Eastern European Jews. While most of them came to America, many migrated to Palestine, then a province of the Middle Eastern empire ruled by the Ottoman Turks. For decades afterward, the Jews coming to the future state of Israel were overwhelmingly European in origin and secular in outlook.

In the aftermath of the Six Day War, however, there came an influx to Israel of Jews from surrounding Arab lands. In 1977, ten years after the war, a government formed by the Likud bloc came to power in Israel. Menachem Begin, the new Prime Minister, was the first religiously observant Jew to lead the nation. He took power on a political platform that invoked Biblical justification for Jewish settlement of occupied lands.

In the more than two decades since that time, Israel has become divided with increasing bitterness between its religious and secular communities. Deeply religious Jews view the land of Israel as deeded to them by God Himself. To give even part of it away is viewed as virtually sacrilegious. To



An Israeli soldier mourns while resting his head on a friend's grave at Mount Herzl during a military ceremony honoring Israel's fallen soldiers and civilians killed in terrorist attacks. © Reuters Photo

the Yom Kippur war, the Camp David agreements, the Oslo accords, and the Wye River peace agreement. What we have not seen, however, is peace in the Middle East. There have been stalemates, skirmishes, invasions and assassinations, but no lasting peace.

Is Ehud Barak now destined to succeed where all of his prede-

After the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD, the Jewish people were a stateless nation. Dispersed among other nations, they were seldom welcomed, sometimes tolerated, and often maligned and persecuted. Always, however, they were a people apart.

The 19th century saw among European Jews, influenced by the

consider abandoning Jerusalem, and with it their centuries-old hope of rebuilding the temple, is thought of as akin to blasphemy. Secular Jews, on the other hand, tend to take a pragmatic view of the peace negotiations. They have no desire to see a temple built and view their devout kinsmen as fanatics who could plunge them into a disastrous war.

Currently, the state of Israel is fairly evenly divided between religious and non-religious populations. Any peace settlement must take into consideration the aspirations of both groups. The pragmatist and the idealist—how can they be reconciled?

The Source that Unveils the Future

In the midst of all of the turmoil that troubles our world, there is only one source that makes sense of it all. This much-overlooked source is that which is given to us by the One who declares “the end from the beginning” (Isaiah 46:10).

Just think of it. For centuries Jerusalem remained little more than a footnote to world events, notable only for historical and religious reasons. The Jewish presence in the ancient land of their forbearers was minuscule and impotent. Who could have foreseen that after so many centuries away, millions of Jews would be regathered to their ancient land? Who could have imagined that a formidable Jewish army would overwhelm neighboring states after a lapse of more than two millennia since such developments?

There is a source, however, that did foresee just such events! It is your Creator’s instruction book, the Holy Bible. A variety of

prophecies in the pages of the Bible foretold that the Middle East, and Jerusalem in particular, would be a major focus on the world scene in the end time. Some of these prophecies are found in the Old Testament while others were spoken by Jesus Christ Himself, shortly before His crucifixion.

Notice the writings of the ancient Jewish prophet Zechariah, recorded over 2,500 years ago. “The burden of the word of the LORD against Israel. Thus says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man

within him: ‘Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and... In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile, and like a fiery torch in the sheaves; they shall devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left, but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place—Jerusalem’” (Zechariah 12:1–2, 6).

Nearly 19 centuries elapsed from the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD until the fulfillment of these words during the Six Day War of 1967. After all of these centuries Jerusalem was once again inhabited and ruled by the governors of Judah. Surely no human source could have foreseen so improbable an event! However, the God of the Bible foresaw just such an event—and not only foresaw it, but brought it to pass!

From the beginning of his administration, Prime Minister Barak committed himself to bring-

ing about a final peace settlement by October of the year 2000. Early steps toward this goal were taken last September when Israel and the Palestinian Authority agreed on a



Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak (L) greets Palestinian President Yasser Arafat during their July 27 summit meeting. © Reuters Photo

new land-for-security deal, the “Wye Two” accord, and transferred another 7 percent of the West Bank to Palestinian civil control. By September of next year, if the deal remains in force, an additional 11 percent of the West Bank will pass to Palestinian civil control.

What will come of this arrangement? Peace deals in the Middle East have proven fragile, and some influential Israeli leaders have spoken against the latest arrangement. “Everyone needs to consider whether he wants security, development and peace—or momentary gain,” said new Likud leader Ariel Sharon. Yet Prime Minister Barak spoke of the agreement’s importance, observing that, “the sacredness of man and his liberty, equality, the freedom of choice and democracy and the right of the people of Israel to a sovereign life in its land, stand in contradiction to ruling over millions of Palestinians against their will.”

Given this great divide in opinion, and the history of wars

and failed agreements in the region, does the Bible give us any clue as to what will occur next?

Several key prophecies focus on Jerusalem at the time just prior to God's intervention and the return of the Messiah. Among the most important are those included in the writings of Daniel and Zechariah and in the words of Jesus Himself spoken during His Olivet discourse.

Since we have already briefly quoted from Zechariah, let's look further at his message. Clearly Zechariah 12 shows Jerusalem being a focus of international attention at the end time. It also describes the governors of Judah subduing enemies and ensuring that the Jewish people can inhabit Jerusalem once again. That's not the end of the prophecy, however. Zechariah 14:2 describes a great multinational force coming against Jerusalem and conquering it, redividing the city and deporting half the population. It is in the aftermath of this tragedy that the Messiah will return in power and glory to set up His government and to put a stop to man's wars forever.

Daniel brings out two major details concerning Jerusalem and the Middle East in the end time. One, in Daniel 11:40 describes an end-time King of the South who will "push at" an end-time King of the North. This is followed by the King of the North invading the Middle East and occupying a number of countries. The second, in Daniel 12:11 he speaks of an "abomination of desolation" that will mark the beginning of a countdown to the Messiah's return. Jesus Christ referred to the abomination of which Daniel spoke and said that it was to be the signal for His true followers to flee from the area of Jerusalem (Matthew 24:15–16).

Daniel links the setting up of the abomination with a forced cessation of daily sacrifices (Daniel 11:31). Historically the Jews connected this prophecy with the efforts of the Seleucid king, Antiochus Epiphanes. In 167BC he stopped the daily sacrifices in the temple in Jerusalem, sought to destroy all copies of the scriptures, set up an idol of Jupiter Olympus in the Holy of Holies and offered swine upon the altar. Three years later the Maccabee-led armies defeated the Seleucid forces and cleansed and rededicated the temple. This event is still celebrated in the Jewish community as Hanukkah, the Feast of Dedication.

However—and this is vital to understand—this historical event wasn't the final fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy! Jesus Christ said that the final fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy about the abomination lay in the future, shortly before His return (Matthew 24:14–16). What happened in the 2nd century BC was merely a type of end-time events.

This would clearly imply the future construction of a temple, or at least the dedication of an altar for the resumption of sacrifices. How could such an event occur? While the details of the *how* are hard to imagine at the current time, just such astounding events ARE going to happen! Remember, a couple of decades ago it was impossible to imagine how the Berlin Wall could be brought down and Germany reunited!

In recent years, the Vatican has played an increasingly important behind-the-scenes role in negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. It has also insisted for decades that Jerusalem be made an international city. The religious community in Israel will

not agree to any peace plan involving a change in status for Jerusalem unless some type of major concession is granted to them. In order to break a stalemate, will some sort of plan be offered that includes restoration of temple services? We'll simply have to watch and see how the details work out.

But make no mistake about it, Jerusalem will prove to be the end-time flashpoint for world events. There is an economic colossus arising in Europe that is taking on increasing political and military overtones. The time is soon coming when it will take on religious overtones as well. This coming European superpower is destined to play a crucial role in the events currently shaping up in the Middle East.

Jesus Christ said that events centering on Jerusalem will usher in a time of trouble greater than any the world has ever seen (Matthew 24:15–22). While there is a crisis coming that will cause catastrophic upheaval all over the world, there is good news beyond that!

The ancient prophet Zechariah summed it all up very clearly: "For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken... Then the Lord will go forth... and in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east... And in that day it shall be that living waters shall flow from Jerusalem... And the Lord shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be—"The LORD is one," and His name one" (Zechariah 14:2–4, 8–9).

Yes, the new millennium WILL see peace finally come to Jerusalem, the Middle East, and the entire world—but in a way that current world leaders least expect! TW

Questions & Answers

QUESTION:

I have been told by a minister that it is wrong to pray to Jesus Christ, since His sacrifice lifted the veil between human beings and God the Father, to whom we should now pray. Is this true?

ANSWER:

No, it is not wrong to pray to Jesus Christ. God is our loving Father, but we should not neglect His beloved Son, Jesus Christ. We can see from scripture that Jesus Christ is worthy of receiving our prayer. We understand that Jesus Christ was the God of the Old Testament (1 Corinthians 10:1–4). He was with God the Father from the beginning (John 1:1–4). The Word, who was with God at the beginning, became flesh (John 1:14–15).

Scripture gives us the example of the deacon Stephen—the first recorded martyr of the Apostolic Church. “And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit’” (Acts 7:59). Even at the very end of his life, while he was being murdered for his bold preaching, Stephen called out not to God the Father but to Jesus Christ, his Savior. Stephen knew that he had a profound relationship with both God the Father and with Jesus Christ.

Jesus accepted worship, the reverence of others, towards Him. When He appeared to His disciples after His resurrection, “...they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him” (Matthew 28:9).

Yet we must not neglect God the Father directing the majority of our prayers to Him. Jesus Christ stated that He and the Father are one in thought, attitude and purpose (John 10:22–39; John 17:20–23). Since His resurrection, the glorified Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of God the Father (Hebrews 10:12; 1 Peter 3:21–22).

Jesus Christ is God, as God the Father is God. And we can understand that without Jesus

Christ’s sacrifice, the veil between humans and God the Father would not have been lifted (2 Corinthians 3:14). If we do not pray to the Father, we are minimizing this great gift that was given to us by Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray to the Father, whom He acknowledged was greater than He (Matthew 6:9; John 14:28). We must not ignore His instruction to honor our loving Father.

Yet even when we pray to God the Father, we do so by the authority of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ. “And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him” (Colossians 3:17).

The Apostle Paul also wrote of his hope that Christians’ “...hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:2–3). Our Savior not only taught us to pray to God the Father, but He made those prayers possible. Nevertheless, God the Father does not want us to avoid a loving, personal relationship with His beloved Son. (Matthew 17:5)

Scripture shows us that God the Father is the foremost member of the God Family, as Jesus Himself acknowledged. Before Christ’s sacrifice, a veil separated humanity from God the Father, and it was Jesus Christ’s sacrifice that removed the veil. We can see that, as Jesus Christ taught, God the Father should be the primary recipient of our thanks, praise and petitions in prayer. Yet we also see that these prayers go to God the Father in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, with whom we should have an intimate and personal relationship. As part of that relationship, we may certainly follow the Biblical example of Stephen and direct some of our prayers to the beloved Son of God the Father, Jesus Christ.

THE REAL GOD

Why is the God of the Universe not real to most people today?

By Douglas S. Winnail

Does God actually exist? Can you prove it? Is there one true God, or are there many gods—or is the *idea* of God merely the product of the human imagination? You need to know the *real* answers to these questions about God. You cannot afford to remain in the dark about such fundamental issues. The real answers may both shock and amaze you!

Modern Superficial Religion

Surveys indicate that about 95 percent of Americans believe in God—yet most Americans live their lives as if God doesn't exist. More than 80 percent of Americans seldom or never attend church or read a Bible. Only about 30 percent of Americans view the Word of God, the Bible, as the ultimate

authority in their lives; most just follow their consciences. In European countries the belief in God is much lower and the number of people who do not regularly practice any faith is even greater. While interest in religion among Americans runs high by some measures (e.g. religious books sold), America has been described as a secular and materialistic society. Vanderbilt Divinity School professor Edward Farley asserts “religiosity is marginal” to most of our cultural institutions (government, business, education and entertainment), and pollster George Gallup reveals that America is a “nation of biblical illiterates” where less than half of all adults can name the four gospels of the New Testament (*The Empty Church: The Suicide of Liberal Christianity*, Reeves, 1996, pp. 49, 63).

Many Americans practice what has been described as a superficial “consumer Christianity” or “cafeteria religion”—that is, they pick and chose what religious tenets they wish to believe and reject doctrines that do not appeal to their interests. For many Americans, religious beliefs are often generalized, casual and personal. Levels of confidence and conviction are often rather low. Doctrinal specifics are usually fuzzy. Each person believes what seems right in his or her own eyes. One teenager when asked by a reporter about what she thought about God answered, “God is everywhere. God is in me. I am God.”

America, Canada, Australia and other European countries appear to have entered a “post-Christian” era (cf. Reeves, chapter 2). In this age of watered down religion, ideas about God are vague, and awareness of His power and purpose is just not real to most people. But *how* did this happen in Europe and America—in countries that had shared the God of Abraham with the world? Did a *real* Almighty God foretell that this very era would occur?

Reason Replaces Religion

The United States—whose very coinage proclaims to the world “In God We Trust”—developed from European roots. The knowledge of the God of the Bible was carried to Europe from Jerusalem by the Apostles, the disciples of Jesus Christ. In the book of Acts we read of how Paul informed pagan, superstitious Greeks in Athens about the One true God. Noticing an inscription “TO THE UNKNOWN GOD,” Paul stated: “The One whom you worship *without knowing*, Him I proclaim to you: God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord

of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands” (Acts 17:23–24).

What many today do not realize is that the knowledge of the true God and the teachings of true Christianity, which Paul brought to Greece and Rome, were soon mixed with pagan religious ideas and corrupted. As Catholic historian Will Durant writes, “Christianity did not destroy paganism; it adopted it.” The form of Christianity that developed in Europe and later spread to America and the rest of the world “was the last great creation of the ancient pagan world” (*Caesar and Christ*, Durant, 1944, p. 595). Durant and other historians explain how the One true God became a “Trinity” as a result of the influence of pagan philosophy, how Gnostic ideas “obscured the Christian creed” (beliefs) and how theologians schooled in pagan philosophy tried to explain the nature of God through speculation, instead of teaching what God had revealed about Himself in the Scriptures. After centuries of such debate, the often abstract God of modern Christianity bears little resemblance to the *true* God of Scripture.

However, other ideas also emanated from Europe that altered and undermined ideas about God. The Enlightenment of the 18th century, and the discoveries of science that seemed to contradict traditional understanding of the Scriptures, led some to conclude the Bible and its God were only myths (see *God’s Funeral*, Wilson, 1999). Darwin’s speculations about evolution seemed to remove the need for a God of Creation. Julian Huxley, a promoter of Darwin’s ideas, asserted “operationally, God is beginning to resemble not a ruler, but the last fading grin of a cosmic Cheshire cat.” He further stated that “our concept of God needs to stress *religious experience* instead of belief in a particular dogma.” In other words, God is the warm feeling you get in your heart—not a Supreme Being, whose existence you can prove and who intervenes in history. Sound familiar? Just believe—no need to prove anything. This idea was promoted in the 1600s by the French philosopher Pascal who said: “It is the heart that experiences God, and not the reason”. Yet Paul told a Greek audience to “Prove all things; hold fast what is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21). The prophet Malachi quotes God as saying “Prove Me” (Malachi 3:10). Proof involves solid, convincing reasons—not just warm feelings in the heart!

Over the last two centuries belief in God has come under direct attack by many intellectuals in the West. Nietzsche said, “God is a thought.” Freud

termed belief in God a form of mental disorder that mankind would eventually grow out of. Karl Marx termed religious belief “the opium of the people.” Atheist H. L. Mencken asserted, “God is the immemorial refuge of the incompetent, the helpless, the miserable.” Playwright Tennessee Williams described God as a “senile delinquent.” Prominent theologians in the 1960s actually proclaimed that “God is Dead.” In light of such outright attacks on belief, combined with the *near absence* of powerful teaching of biblical truths by clerics, it is not surprising that the *real* God of this universe remains little-known to most people today. But are the critics right—or have they been deceived? Have the rantings of secular, atheistic intellectuals *tragically misled* our society about God? Let us notice some important lessons we can learn from the Bible and our recent past.

Emerging Evidence

David wrote in the Psalms over 3,000 years ago, “The *fool* has said in his heart, ‘There is no God’” (Psalm 14:1). Solomon states: “The mouth of fools pours forth foolishness” (Proverbs 15:2). Looking back over the last several hundred years, it is becoming painfully obvious that many of the “enlightened” intellectuals—who have molded our modern world—were *simply wrong!* They were essentially the blind leading the blind. The communism envisioned by Marx and enforced upon millions has proven to be a dismal failure. Freud’s psychological theories have largely been discredited. While Freud proclaimed religion a neurosis, one of his students (Carl Jung—who later rejected his teacher’s ideas) found religion to be very beneficial in treating psychologically disturbed individuals (*God: The Evidence*, Glynn, 1997, p. 69). There is a growing body of scientific literature that documents the positive effects of certain religious beliefs on personal health. Sigmund Freud, whose ideas did much to secularize our society by undermining its religious and moral foundation, was *mistaken* about many things.

The evolutionary theories of Charles Darwin, that supposedly did away with the need for God, have also come under increasing criticism in recent decades. While random changes and natural selection can explain the appearance of a certain amount of variety (essentially within species), Darwin’s theory was not, and is not, adequate to explain the origin of new species. Darwin saw

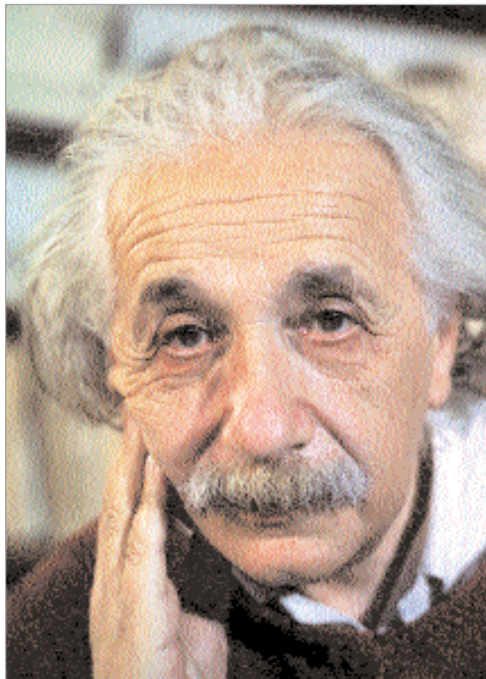
variations in finches, turtles, and dogs and concluded that—given enough time—nature alone could create entirely new species. The problem is that nature doesn’t work that way. New species appear in the geological record quite suddenly and fully developed—they appear to have been *created*—they do not appear to have evolved. The many intermediate forms that his theory postulates are simply not there. The actual fossil record, compiled over the last century does *not support* Darwin’s ideas. The theory of evolution, which has been termed “the greatest engine of atheism ever invented” does *not* refute the existence of God (see “Debating Darwin,” *Christian Century*, July 15–22, 1998, pp. 678–681).

Some of the most remarkable evidence for a powerful Creator God has emerged in recent decades from astronomy, cosmology, physics and biochemistry. For most of this century the idea has prevailed that the universe and life on earth developed gradually over eons of time as a result of random, mindless, accidental occurrences. This now appears *not* to be the case at all. The Big Bang theory indicates the universe began *suddenly*. Scientists are coming to realize the conditions for life on earth are so delicately balanced that all this had to be “*pre-planned*” from the very beginning. As one author states, “Far from being accidental, life appeared to be *the goal* toward which the entire universe from the very first moment of its existence had been orchestrated, fine-tuned” (Glynn, p. 8). This is called the “anthropic principle” (Greek *anthropos*=man).

The modern emerging line of evidence strongly suggests that the universe must have been *designed*. Design requires an *intelligent designer*. This has been one of the traditional proofs that there must be a God who designed the universe—and for a purpose. The Bible states quite plainly that “In the beginning God *created* the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). This is exactly what Paul told the Athenian Greeks as he explained to them about the one true God (Acts 17:24). The secular notion that life, animals and man, is merely the result of random biochemical accidents is *not supported* by the accumulating evidence. The actual evidence points in the opposite direction—to a *real* God who is a designer and creator and sustainer.

This is how David describes God when he states, “I will praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14). Solomon writes,

“The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding He established the heavens” (Proverbs 3:19). Abraham Lincoln commented, “I can see how a man can look upon the earth [man’s activities] and be an atheist, but I cannot conceive how he can look up into the heavens and say there is no God.” Even Albert Einstein realized “God is not playing dice with the Universe.” The creation requires a *real* Creator. Design requires a *real* Designer. Mindless, accidental occurrences over eons of time are *totally inadequate* explanations for the origin of life and the universe.



Albert Einstein saw design in the universe.
© Reuters Photo

Evidence Ignored

The Apostle Paul told an audience in Rome that we can see the evidence for God and how He operates by observing what He has created. He also cautioned his audience that if we *ignore the obvious*, and follow our own theories that are contrary to what we observe in nature, we would become *fools* (Romans 1:18–22). Paul even indicates in these verses that the truth about God would even be suppressed. That is exactly what has happened in the last century.

Numerous experiments have been carried out over the last 50 years, in an attempt to validate the evolutionary theory that life developed by accident in a primordial pool of chemicals. Yet *none* have succeeded. Stanley Miller, a professor of chemistry who did one of the early experiments has admitted: “The problem of the origin of life has turned out to be much more difficult than I, and most other people, envisioned” (*The Creation Hypothesis*, Moreland, 1994, p. 175). This should not be a surprise. For years, biology textbooks have described the law of biogenesis, that life only comes from life—not non-life. While this law has been downplayed or ignored

in textbooks in recent years due to the influence of evolutionary theory, it has *never* been refuted. The Scriptures assert that God imparts life (Genesis 1:11,24). God made Adam’s body out of the elements of the earth, then “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being” (Genesis 2:7). Man’s attempts to create life from non-living matter have all failed. Is that because we are foolishly trying to do something that is not possible? Are we trying to assume a prerogative of the Creator God?

For years biology texts have referred to another law known as the fixity of the species—that there exists a genetic limit to the amount of variety that can occur within a species. Plant and animal breeders are aware of these limits. The Bible states plainly and repeatedly that God created creatures to reproduce “according to its kind” (Genesis 1:24–25). As we have already noted, Darwin saw that variety was possible within species (e.g. birds, turtles, dogs, horses and cattle), but he speculated that *given enough time and chance* this could produce new species. However, this just doesn’t happen. Scientists have tried and failed. This, too, ignores what is plainly revealed in the Bible and the evidence in nature that substantiates what God has said in His Word. This evidence—basic laws of biology that point to a supernatural Law Giver—is simply ignored and suppressed today.

However the physical laws of biology are not the only laws that have fallen from favor in the last century. The moral and spiritual laws of God—the Ten Commandments—have been subject to derision and ridicule. Secular humanists have assumed that these are merely the ideas of men, and that they can be disregarded without consequence. This approach is also turning out to be a social disaster. The idolatry of our materialistic society produces only empty lives. Fornication not only ceases to be fulfilling, it is dangerous—as many AIDS victims are learning. Adultery is destroying the family—the fundamental building block of a stable society. In a culture saturated with media violence, human life has little value. Today, killing is commonplace—whether on city streets or in the birthing rooms of hospitals or abortion clinics. Crime is epidemic around the world. We have been led to believe there is no God, no purpose for human life, and that the laws of God can be ignored. The moral breakdown around us is the result of such ignorance. Physical and moral

laws are sustained by a *real* God. Those laws apply whether or not we believe in God. They cannot be ignored without consequence. The existence of immutable laws points to existence of a *real* God.

Back to the Future

Many prophecies that date to the time of Abraham (2000BC) reveal in remarkable detail the future course of history that many modern nations would take. Because of Abraham's obedience, God prophesied his descendants would become great, inherit blessings and be a blessing to mankind (Genesis 12:1–2). In their ascent to greatness they would gain possession of the gates of their enemies (22:17), eventually becoming a great nation and a company of nations (35:11; 48:19) that would spread colonies around the world (49:22). These and other incredible promises have actually been fulfilled by the United States of America and the nations of the British Commonwealth. However, additional prophecies indicate that because of our disobedience to the laws of Almighty God, the blessings and privileges we have been given are going to be taken away as God teaches our peoples some very important lessons (for more on this topic, request our free booklet entitled *What's Ahead for America and Britain?*).

Speaking of the "latter days," the God of the Bible also describes an empire that would undergo a series of revivals, arising for the last time just before the return of Jesus Christ to this earth (see Daniel 2:28,40–45; 7:7–8,19–28; Revelation 13,17,18). This great system which began as the Roman Empire appears to be rising again in Europe. Initially, this will seem like a good thing, yet this Central European union of nations will turn into an aggressive war-making power that for a short period of three-and-a-half years will blaspheme the true God and persecute true believers (Revelation 13:1–9). The God of Scripture foretold over 2,500 years ago this three-and-a-half year period would be "the time of *Jacob's trouble* (Jeremiah 30:1–7). God will use this resurrected Roman Empire to correct the rebellious and backsliding nations of Israelite origin who forgot the true God. Remarkable as it may seem, the God of the Bible *predicted* to Moses that the very peoples He chose to be an example to the world (Deuteronomy 4:1–10) would forget the true God and wind up in deep trouble in the "latter days" (Deuteronomy 4:23–30; 31:27–29). The *real* God is going to intervene dramatically and decisively in human affairs in the not too distant future. Mankind is going to come

to see and understand there is a real God. These events will shock the world and impact your life!

Judgment and Salvation

While the God presented to the world by mainstream Christian religion is loving, forgiving and endlessly patient, barely believable and probably used evolution to accomplish His purpose, the *real* God of the Bible is a study in striking contrasts. The God that emerges from the Scriptures is a powerful Creator, an intelligent Designer who sustains what He has created and the laws He has put into affect. Although loving and merciful, He is also a God of justice and judgment who rewards us according to our works (cf. Revelation 22:12)—He lets us reap what we sow. The God of the Bible commands His true servants to "cry aloud and show His people their sins" (Isaiah 58:1) and not just preach "smooth things" that deceive people (Isaiah 30:9–10). The real God forgives us when we repent—when we come to understand how God defines sin (see 1 John 3:4) and begin to change our lives to actually live by every word of God (Matthew 4:4).

The Bible reveals that the *real* God is going to send Jesus Christ back to this earth to judge this earth in righteousness (Psalm 96:13; Revelation 19:11). He is going to put an end to human suffering and misrule and point mankind in the proper direction—towards peace, justice and truth (Isaiah 9:6–7; Revelation 11:15–18). The prophet Micah relates, "He shall judge between many nations afar off; and rebuke strong nations afar off; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nations shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Micah 4:3). The prophet Ezekiel was inspired by the *living* God to write, "So I will make My holy name known in the midst of My people Israel, and I will not let them profane My name anymore. Then the nations *shall know* that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel. *Surely* it is coming, and it *shall* be done, says the LORD" (Ezekiel 39:7–8).

The God of the Bible is *real*. The Creator, Designer and Sustainer of the Universe is *alive*. He is bringing to pass what He has prophesied in His Word. This all-powerful God is preparing to intervene dramatically in the affairs of this world. Jesus Christ is going to return to this earth to establish the kingdom of God that will rule over all nations. The powerful, loving and just God, our Father, is going to save us from ourselves. This is what the gospel is all about. You can be part of this exciting future *if* you get to know the REAL GOD. The question is—*Will you?* TW

Letters to the Editor

Thank you for the first copy of *Tomorrow's World*. I am impressed, not only with the quality but also the content. I was especially enlightened by the article "The Fourth Reich." May God continue to bless you so that this marvellous work can continue.

M.K.
Buff Bay, Portland
Jamaica

All I can say is "Very good!" You all are wonderful stewards of the physical and spiritual resources available to you. Thank you for your work and faithfulness!

M.J.
Marine, Illinois

I enjoy the *Tomorrow's World* programme on Sunday mornings on WGN with presenters Dr. Roderick C. Meredith and Mr. Richard Ames. They are reminders of such programmes of the Worldwide Church of God in Mr. Herbert Armstrong's days.

C.W.
St. Kitts
West Indies

I enjoy your program very much. I feel that it is very informative and brings understanding of what our Father and Jesus Christ want from us—to live our Father's word. I enjoy the prophetic messages taken from our Father's word, and hearing of the great plan He has for our future.

M.W.
Hartford, Connecticut

I watch your *Tomorrow's World* telecast every Sunday. It gives me more understanding in Bible prophecy than I get here in prison. Here we have many denominations—they all talk about how we must improve our lives, but do not talk about Bible prophecy. Is one-third of our Holy Bible prophecy? Then why don't these professing Christians teach us about prophecy? No wonder this world of ours is headed toward destruction. Thank you for opening up my mind, heart, soul and eyes to this most precious understanding of world events and how they coincide with Bible prophecy. Your booklets, magazines and other reading materials have given me true understanding. I can reread these teaching aids along with my Bible and see what God is trying to teach all of us. Thank you so very much for your programs and for the materials you offer on your programs. May God bless you all in your work!

G.F.
Kincheloe, Mississippi

Thank you for continuing to do the Work of God—to preach the Good News of the Kingdom of God and to warn this world of the soon coming of Jesus Christ to this earth. Keep up the great work of preaching the true message of God's Kingdom and his purpose for mankind which so desperately needs His Kingdom on this earth to bring hope, peace, joy, love and faith.

D.N.
Phoenix, Arizona

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@tomorrowworld.org. Letters may be edited for space and clarity. Remember to include your name, address and daytime phone number.

Divorce Decree

Marriage vs. Immorality

By Mark Mendiola

The United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand are in the throes of a major shift in attitude toward the sanctity of marriage that bodes ill for their future. Can a nation that abandons the traditional family unit continue to survive? History and common sense teach otherwise.

If there were any doubt that the United States is undergoing a dramatic social restructuring that undermines traditional esteem of marriage and family, a shocking new report drives home the point. In fact, most English-speaking nations no longer necessarily view matrimony as “holy” and virtually mock its importance as a foundational institution, setting a deplorable example for the rest of the world.

On July 1, Rutgers University’s National Marriage Project released a report titled, “*The State of Our Unions. The Social Health of Marriage in America*,” which found the U.S. marriage rate has dipped by 43 percent from 1960 to 1996, leaving it at its lowest point in recorded history! The report’s findings led its authors to conclude “the institution of marriage is in serious trouble.”

Confirming this conclusion, the U.S. divorce rate has soared more than 30 percent since 1970 before recently declining slightly. Today, nearly half of U.S. marriages are projected to end in divorce or permanent separation. The married people who reported being “very happy” fell from 53.5 percent in 1973-76 to 37.8 percent in 1996.

Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, a co-author of the report, told the Reuters news service that Ameri-

cans are less likely to marry than ever before and those who do marry appear to be less happy than previous generations.

“The current generation has grown up in the midst of the divorce revolution, so they are extremely wary and cautious about entering into marriage,” she said.

Whitehead blamed a change in what Americans expect from marriage, prolonged prosperity and the secularizing of society for the precipitous drop in the nation’s marriage rate. “We are economically doing very well, but maybe as a nation we’re emotionally not at that level,” according to the report.

David Popenoe, the report’s other author, told the *Washington Post* that marriage’s decline should be a matter of national debate, but isn’t despite the profound impact it’s having on society.

In the immediate post-World War II generation, 80 percent of children grew up in a family with two biological parents. That number has dipped to an estimated 60 percent. Out-of-wedlock births and teen pregnancy are commonly accepted as a social norm. Popping birth control pills and aborting unborn children are viewed as convenient means of mitigating the consequences of sexual promiscuity.

Sexually-transmitted diseases are diagnosed 12 million times a year in the United States, including a staggering three million cases among teenagers, reports the Institute of Medicine, an arm of the National Academy of Sciences. Americans suffer 10 to 50 times more sexually-transmitted diseases than people in other developed countries, the institute notes.

Sexually-transmitted diseases include dozens of disorders from syphilis and gonorrhea to the liver-destroying hepatitis B and the

deadly AIDS virus. Americans have been bombarded with AIDS prevention campaigns, but other sexual diseases are largely ignored each year. Gonorrhea strikes 150 out of every 100,000 Americans versus only three out of 100,000 people in Sweden and 18 for every 100,000 Canadians.

Scandals in High Places

Britons, Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders and Americans in recent years have had to cringe in embarrassment at the spectacle of sexual scandals aired like dirty laundry from Buckingham Palace and the White House.

The infidelity of members of the Royal Family, the president of the United States and delegates in Parliament and Congress has further lowered the moral standards of English-speaking peoples who historically have looked to their leaders to set exemplary examples.

Instead, the actions of these leaders have succeeded in persuading many people in “Christian” nations, where the Bible historically has been preserved and widely distributed, that the laws pertaining to marriage and family within its pages are antiquated and irrelevant for the modern age. Adultery, fornication and even homosexuality are considered acceptable. Meanwhile, the traditional family unit of husband, wife and children suffers as marriage comes under heavy assault. Society’s bedrock principles are being blasted out from under civilization!

From Old Testament to New Testament, the Bible lays down guidelines to preserve marriage and family. The Seventh Commandment against adultery is designed to protect both institutions and forbids sex outside marriage. In Malachi 2:15–16, God thunders

against dealing treacherously with one’s wife and against divorce.

In the context of divorce and marriage, Jesus Christ Himself confirmed in Matthew 19 that God created human beings male and female (v. 4) and “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh” and “Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate” (v. 5, 6).

He also stated: “And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced, commits adultery” (v. 9).

Jesus Christ strongly condemns divorce, adultery and sexual immorality. He emphatically confirms that marriage is to be between male and female. Yet, British-descended peoples who claim to be Christian are leading the western world’s downward slide in morality and its correlating rise in divorce, sexually-transmitted diseases and deviant sexual behavior.

The Gay ‘90s

Perhaps one of the most dramatic developments in Anglo-American society, underscoring the extent to which fundamental moral codes have been discarded, is the increasingly widespread acceptance and outright promotion of the so-called gay rights agenda.

On June 11, U. S. President Bill Clinton issued an unprecedented presidential proclamation declaring June 1999 as National Gay and Lesbian Pride Month, a move that infuriated many religious leaders. Earlier in the month, the National Park Service added the Stonewall Inn—a gay bar in Greenwich Village, N.Y., where a homosexual riot occurred

30 years ago—to the National Register of Historic Places.

“I encourage all Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities that celebrate our diversity, and to remember throughout the year the gay and lesbian Americans whose many and varied contributions have enriched our national life,” Clinton proclaimed.

Clinton is the first sitting President to speak at a gala dinner of the Human Rights Campaign, the nation’s largest gay and lesbian political organization. He recently circumvented the normal Senate confirmation process by appointing James Hormel—a homosexual San Francisco millionaire—as U.S. ambassador to Luxembourg during a congressional recess. America’s first openly gay ambassador’s nomination had been blocked in the U.S. Senate for 20 months.

Britain also has been rocked by sex scandals in its government. At least three cabinet members in Prime Minister Tony Blair’s government have been exposed as homosexuals. There are so many homosexuals in Blair’s government that one British newspaper wondered if it isn’t being run by a “gay mafia.”

Blair’s government contains Britain’s first openly homosexual Cabinet minister, Culture Secretary Chris Smith. Several legislators have declared themselves gay, and one deputy minister announced, after the Labor Party was elected in May 1997, that she is a lesbian. Blair has favored a measure in Parliament that would lower the age of consent for homosexual acts to 16 years.

Canada’s Supreme Court recently ordered Ontario to amend its laws to recognize same-sex couples, saying the province’s definition of a spouse as a person of the opposite sex is unconstitutional.

That could mean hundreds of laws must be rewritten because other provinces as well as the federal government have similar definitions.

In Australia, an annual gay pride days parade featuring the grossest of perverted behavior is one of the most popular television programs in the nation. New Zealand Prime Minister Jenny Shipley, a professing Christian, officially opened Auckland’s 1999 gay parade, which received corporate sponsorship from some of the nation’s largest companies.

Thirteen percent of all U.S. employers have quietly extended health benefits to the partners of homosexual workers, according to an annual health insurance survey by KPMG Peat Marwick, an accounting firm. For companies with more than 5,000 workers, the figure is one in four.

A Sign of the Times

Jesus Christ warned that rampant sexual immorality, high divorce rates and widespread prosperity would be conditions that would precede His return to earth. They would be barometric readings of the tumultuous times leading to the sudden destruction of life as we know it in the western world.

In Luke 17:26–27, Christ states: “And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: they ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.”

There’s nothing wrong with eating, drinking and marrying, but in this context, Christ strongly implies that in Noah’s time these were being done to the point of gluttony, drunkenness, divorcing and remarrying. People were so overindulging in satiating their

appetites they were clueless as to the ominous conditions and their imminent destruction.

Christ continues: “Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed” (v. 28–30).

Christ points out the similarity of conditions in the times of Noah and Lot. Both were times of affluence, in which people were well-fed—eating and drinking. But when comparing Lot’s society with Noah’s world, He includes important additional description. They were buying, selling, planting and building. It was a time of commerce, farming and construction. In other words, prosperity abounded!

Christ also contrasts Lot’s days with Noah’s days by making a conspicuous omission. He makes no mention of marrying and giving in marriage to describe Lot’s society as opposed to Noah’s time because Sodom’s culture was immersed in homosexuality and other illicit activity.

A careful study of Genesis 19 shows that “the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young” surrounded Lot’s house to sexually abuse the two angels God had sent to determine the wickedness of the city. God said Sodom’s sin was very grievous (Genesis 18:20), and He ended up unleashing fire and brimstone that engulfed it in what we today would liken to a nuclear holocaust!

In addition to its widespread sexual immorality, Sodom also was a very prosperous, decadent metropolis like a New York, London, Toronto, Sydney or Auckland today. Notice Ezekiel 16:49–50:

“Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty and committed abomination before Me; therefore I took them away as I saw fit.”

Internal Corruption

In the book of Ezekiel, Jerusalem symbolizes the entire House of Israel (Ezekiel 4:1, 3). In Ezekiel 16, God inspires the



prophet to warn that Jerusalem had become more corrupt and had multiplied her abominations even more than Sodom.

In what could be the most prosperous time in all recorded history, the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand have squandered their wealth by producing, promoting and exporting some of the most sexually explicit materials imaginable. Pornography in all forms is widely consumed and readily available via the Internet, cable television, videotapes and magazines.

As a result of this breakdown in sexual morals, marriages and

families in British-descended nations are rapidly deteriorating, following the downward spiral of Greece, Rome and other civilizations. Commenting on his times, the Roman statesman and philosopher Seneca stated: “They divorce in order to remarry. They marry in order to divorce.” God is no respecter of empires! History is replete with accounts of great nations that have rotted from the inside out and collapsed.

In Leviticus 18, God outlines laws of sexual morality that forbid incest, adultery, homosexuality

and bestiality, which He says defiles entire nations. Peoples who indulge in such behavior will be vomited out of the land, He warns. (v. 24–28)

God also warns through the Prophet Jeremiah that a day of reckoning is coming for those people who indulge in conduct He considers abominable, including the misuse and abuse of sex. Sexual relations between a man and his wife are designed by God for within the confines of marriage to protect and preserve families. Yet, sexual promiscuity often accompanies times of affluence and prosperity.

“When I had fed them to the full, then they committed adultery and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots’ houses. They were like well-fed lusty stallions; Every one neighed after his neighbor’s wife. Shall I not punish them for these things?” says the LORD. ‘And shall I not avenge Myself on such a nation as this?’” (Jeremiah 5:7–9)

God again warns through Jeremiah: “Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed, nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; In the time of their punishment they shall be cast down,’ says the LORD” (Jeremiah 8:12).

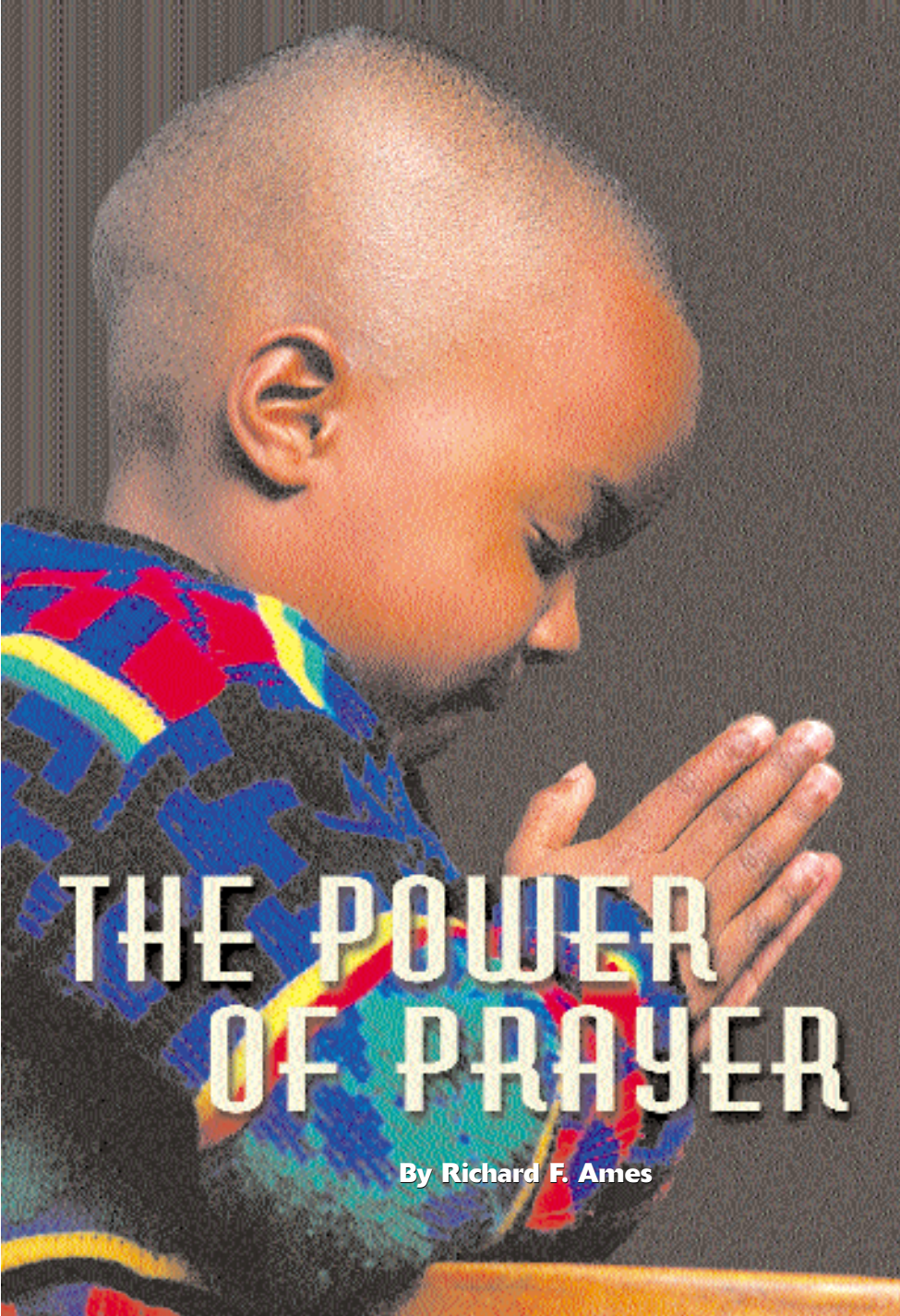
Yes, a time of extreme punishment is coming on the British and American peoples because of their blatant disregard for divine laws of sex, marriage and family. The consequences of embracing and endorsing a sexually immoral lifestyle diametrically opposed to Biblical tenets that have served as our nations’ mainstays will bring unthinkable heartache and suffering. We have sown the wind and will reap the whirlwind! Destruction worse than the days of Noah and Lot is looming.

A Wonderful Future

Yet, beyond that waste and desolation lies a wonderful world to be established at Christ’s Second Coming. Parents will be honored, children reared in happy homes and the marriage institution restored and exalted in the Kingdom of God.

Jeremiah describes it as follows: “‘At the same time,’ says the LORD, ‘I will be the God of all the

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THE POWER OF PRAYER

By Richard F. Ames

Millions of religious people pray every day to some higher power they call God. But do their prayers mean anything? Is anyone up there really listening? The Bible shows us that prayer really does make a difference. You can get answers to your prayers, if you genuinely act on the inspired instructions of your Bible!

Perhaps you pray. Perhaps you tried to pray and became discouraged because you didn't seem to get any answers. Maybe you memorized prayers as a ritual and hope that some kind of superstitious obeisance to an

unknown God will somehow keep you out of Hell.

But what does the Bible say? In His kindness and mercy to tiny human beings, God has given us the gift of truth through the book we call the Holy Bible. But you must read it and seek to have a relationship with its author, the Creator God and His Son Jesus Christ. And when you do, you'll find the Bible gives us promises that money can't buy! Take a look at one of the Bible's promises of what God can do for you: "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." Listen to what the Bible claims God can do for you! God "is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think!" (Ephesians 3:20).

What kind of problems do you have? Do you have health problems? Financial problems? Mental health problems? Employment problems? Family problems? Social problems? Academic problems? God can help you solve ANY PROBLEM YOU HAVE! Of course you have to do YOUR part, but the Creator God has ALL POWER in the universe. He can give you dramatic deliverance and help you in miraculous ways!

If God is to help solve your problems and answer your prayers, what does He expect of YOU? See what the Bible tells us in Hebrews 11:6: "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."

As you read the Bible accounts of how God helped people and delivered them from tremendous stresses and trials, you will come to have more faith. Read the stories of Daniel in the lions' den; the deliverance of Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego from the fiery furnace of Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon; and the escape of the ancient Israelites through the Red Sea. Read about the miracles performed by Jesus of Nazareth—the Son of God—in

healing the diseased, the blind, the lame, and the deaf. Read of how Jesus raised the dead to life! This will help give you faith and hope!

The prophet Jeremiah gave hope to the people of ancient Judah whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken captive to Babylon. After they learned their lessons, God promised to respond to their humble prayer: “For thus says the LORD: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you, says the LORD” (Jeremiah 29:10–14).

That same principle applies to you! You can have a conversation with the Creator of the Universe! He says you can find Him, if you seek Him with your whole heart. You can pray or talk to Him and He says: “I will listen to you!”

How Should We Pray?

What does the Bible teach us regarding how we should pray? After Jesus chose his disciples, they asked Him to teach them to pray: “Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples’” (Luke 11:1).

What did Jesus teach them? He gave his disciples an outline of subjects to talk to God about. “So He said to them, ‘When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one’” (Luke 11:2–4).

Christ’s “model prayer” shows us that the first important aspect of our prayer is the acknowledgment of who God is! He is our Father. The Apostle Paul describes this relationship in prayer: “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).

Since God is your Father, He wants you to acknowledge yourself as His son or daughter, and

recognize in your prayers the very personal and intimate relationship that He desires to share with you. You may also want to acknowledge God as the Creator, as King David often did in his prayers, many of which are recorded in the book of Psalms in your Bible.

If ever you feel that you do not know what to pray about, just open your Bible to the book of Psalms. Many of the Psalms are the heartfelt prayers of David. He was very straightforward, open and honest with God about his feelings, his anxieties and his problems. David stood in awe at the heavens and the expansiveness of the Creation. You can see this in so many of the Psalms; look especially at Psalm 8, or Psalms 18, 19 and 24 to be inspired by David’s example.

Pray For His Kingdom and His Will

What is the next subject Jesus shows us we should pray about? “Your kingdom come” (Luke 11:2). You will want to follow Christ’s example by praying for His Work—that the good news, the gospel will be preached in all the world. Why does Jesus Christ need to come back and rule over the whole earth? When you read your daily newspaper or listen to the news, don’t you often utter an immediate, heartfelt prayer for God’s Kingdom to come soon? The tragedies of Kosovo, the violence, murders and killings—even in our schools—make us yearn for God’s Kingdom.

Our prayers should reflect this yearning. The whole world needs the Kingdom of God. It needs to be reeducated to uphold godly values—the way of life that produces joy and peace. That is the way of God’s law. Jesus will teach the whole world the true way of living—including the Ten Commandments and their magnification and application. There is a way of love that produces right results. Every nation on earth needs that kind of education!

Jesus next taught us in the outline prayer the importance of seeking to do God’s will and not our own. Jesus taught us to pray: “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Luke 11:2). This is an extremely important key to answered prayer. Human beings are by nature extremely selfish. The worldly view is one of lust and greed. We all have had, and maybe you still have, the “get” motive! Billions just want their lusts to be satiated. They want their own way. We read in Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25: “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (KJV). But God’s way, exemplified by Jesus of Nazareth, is the “give” way! Is that the way you pray? Do you pray for others before

you pray for yourself? Pray for God's will to be done in your life—He knows what is best for us!

When Jesus prayed in agony the night before His crucifixion, He asked that the cup of suffering be passed from Him IF it were God's will! Notice that in Luke 22:42, Jesus prayed: "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

Jesus was willing to suffer for YOU! He surrendered HIS will to that of the Father's will! When you are struggling over some problem or trial, ask for God's deliverance, but also pray that His will be done. Do you fear that this is too much to ask, and that you cannot handle a trial? Notice that God *strengthened* Jesus to endure the sacrifice He was to make.

Claim Promises Through Prayer

God also makes His will known in the thousands of promises He gives us in the Bible. You can claim those promises! Let us look at a couple of them. "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19). What do you have need of? Do you have need of food or clothing? Do you have need of a job? Then ask! God promises to provide your every need, but you must do your part! What did Jesus say? "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7). As long as you are asking God's will to be done, not your own, He will provide your every need as He has promised!

We have other needs that we sometimes do not really recognize, such as being put back on the right spiritual track when we have gone astray. Sometimes we need correction. We can be comforted to realize that our Lord will give us the guidance we need to get back on the right track. Sometimes this can be painful, but it is always for our benefit (cf. Hebrews 12).

If we are to experience the power of prayer, seeking God's will, we must have our priorities straight. What are your priorities in life? Do you know what your goal in life should be? In the sixth chapter of the book of Matthew, Jesus emphasized that God will provide our needs, but that we also have a role to play: "But seek FIRST the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33). To what "things" was Jesus referring? He was speaking of all the physical things humans need and often worry about because they do

not trust God! Jesus chided these fearful people for their anxieties: "Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?" (Matthew 6:30).

That's right! There is no need to fear! God has made the wonderful promise that as we seek first the Kingdom of God, we will also be establishing a close relationship with our Father in Heaven, and with His Son—our Savior—Jesus Christ. God knows what we have need of, but He wants us to learn to trust Him and to be dependent upon Him.

Every American knows that his country's currency has imprinted or engraved upon it: "In God we trust." Can we live up to this simple but profound motto?

Pray From The Heart

Another very basic principle in experiencing the power of prayer is this: Just speak from the heart. You do not need to get caught up in memorized prayers that become vain and meaningless. In Matthew's gospel, Jesus warned us about useless repetitions: "And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him" (Matthew 6:7–8).

Many different religions emphasize repetitious prayers—saying the same few words over and over again, or using prayer wheels or prayer flags that supposedly send a message from the practitioner to his unseen god. God says all of that is in vain! Remember, God expects you to seek a PERSONAL relationship with Him. Since He knows your needs, simple requests may be all that are necessary, but one must be sincere and heartfelt as you would be in dealing with a loved one!

You may be familiar with John 10:10 in which Jesus said: "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." Christians do suffer and experience many trials in life. But they have the power of Christ to help them endure. They also have the opportunity to recapture the true values of life and abundant living. So in addition to God's promise that He will provide our every need, there is a special promise concerning the desires of our heart. "Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4). What an amazing promise! Obviously these must be lawful desires, in harmony with God's will. But if you are in harmony with God's will, then there are so many ways in which God is eager to enrich your life and fulfill your desires.

In my own life, God fulfilled this promise in a wonderful way. More than 30 years ago, in 1967, I began to pray for one of the desires of my heart—to travel to the Holy Land and visit the city of Jerusalem, where Christ will establish the capital of the world when He returns. Did God answer my prayer and give me the desire of my heart? Yes, He did, but not right away. Year after year, I thought about the possibility of traveling to Jerusalem. In my thoughts and in my prayers, for 17 years, I shared this heartfelt desire with my Father in Heaven. Then in 1984, 17 years after I began to claim

God wants to share eternity with us. As a loving Father, He promises to give us our basic needs. He promises to give us “good things.” And He promises to give us the desires of our hearts. But we must be willing to seek Him, trust Him and obey Him.

the promise of Psalm 37:4, God gave my wife and me the opportunity to participate in an archaeological excavation in the City of David, just south of the Temple Mount, in Jerusalem. It was hard work, but it was a thrilling experience and an educational one as well. God gave me one of the desires of my heart—even though I had to wait a long time for it. God keeps His promises, but we must claim them with patience and faith and obedience.

Prayer and Unrepentant Sinners

God wants you to pray to Him and to share your life with Him. And as we've seen, prayer changes things. Prayer is your lifeline to God. But does God hear the prayers of unrepentant sinners? Let us understand: one cannot continue to practice sin and think that God will hear his prayers. As the prophet Isaiah wrote: “Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear” (Isaiah 59:1).


God will not hear the prayers of hardened, unrepentant, practicing sinners. But what if you really, deeply, want to change your life? What if your heartfelt desire is to be delivered from your sinful habits?

If you really want God's help to repent and change, and if you exercise the courage to step out and confess your sins personally and privately to God, then God will help you.

How do you know He will? Scripture illustrates this with Christ's story of the Pharisee and the publican: “Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: ‘Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: “God, I thank You that I am not like other men; extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.” And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying: “God, be merciful to me a sinner!” I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted’” (Luke 18:9–14).

God will not hear the prayers of an unrepentant sinner. But He will hear *your* prayer if you are deeply and sincerely sorry, and if you acknowledge your sinfulness, just as God heard the humble confession of the publican. As the Apostle John wrote: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). That is God's promise. It takes courage to admit our sins. But we must all humble ourselves and seek God with all our heart.

What will happen when we do this? God tells us in Isaiah 55:6–7: “Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.”

God wants to share eternity with us. As a loving Father, He promises to give us our basic needs. He promises to give us “good things.” And He promises to give us the desires of our heart. But we must be willing to seek Him, trust Him and obey Him. Read your Bible and follow the instructions of your Savior in praying to your Father in Heaven! You will be on your way to forgiveness, mercy, understanding and indescribable blessings and victories over sin. Remember the promise of Ephesians 3:20 that God “is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think.” Claim God's promises. Establish that lifeline of prayer! It will mean a new life for you now in this age, and the promise of life for eternity through our living Savior, Jesus Christ. 

MARRIAGE VS IMMORALITY **(continued from Page 25)**

families of Israel, and they shall be my people. ... Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the isles afar off and say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd does his flock.' For the LORD has redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of one

stronger than he... Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old, together; For I will turn their mourning to joy, will comfort them and make them rejoice rather than sorrow" (Jeremiah 31:1, 10–11, 13).

Just think. Marriages and families will be happy. Divorce will be obsolete. Promiscuity and the grief that accompanies it will

be abolished. Sexually transmitted diseases will be unknown outside of history books. Leaders setting irreproachable standards will govern society. It is almost unbelievable to contemplate in this licentious day and age, but God's Bible plainly shows that day will be ushered in by Jesus Christ. God speed Tomorrow's World and that glorious Kingdom of God! ^[10]

PERSONAL **(continued from Page 3)**

would-be prophets have CHANGED their dates for Christ's return at least two or three times! As one man commented, "If they keep setting new dates, they will probably accidentally hit the right one sometime!" These people seem to have forgotten that the Son of God specifically told us, "But of that day and hour no one knows, NOT even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is" (Mark 13:32–33).

The Living Christ also inspired the Apostle Paul to tell us: "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:2). So just understanding prophecy of and by itself will NOT help us that much. We may learn about a "place of safety" but we will not be taken there UNLESS the true Christ is living within us. We may understand the basic order of events preceding Christ's coming or perhaps eventually even realize the probable year of His return (not the day and hour!). But we will definitely not be "in" God's Kingdom unless we are filled with and led by God's Holy Spirit (Romans 8:14) and filled with His LOVE—the very love of God.

Paul tells us, "Now hope does not disappoint, because the LOVE OF GOD has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Rom. 5:5). And the Apostle John was inspired to explain to us, "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3). Therefore, we must recognize that GOD'S "priority" is NOT technical knowledge of the Bible or of prophecy—although that is important. Rather, God's priority is the development of GODLY CHARACTER for every prospective Son of God.

True Godly character is based first of all on LOVE—worship, obedience and adoration of God, and out-flowing concern, kindness and affection for our fellow human beings. Those are the two GREAT commandments (Matthew 22:35-40). They are further explained and magnified by the Ten Commandments which tell us how to love God and our fellow man. In turn, the Ten Commandments are further magnified by the teachings of Christ and the apostles in the New Testament.

So in the pages of this magazine you will often find powerful, revealing articles about the details of Bible prophecy. These biblical prophecies describe primarily the series of events leading up to the return of Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. But of even greater importance are our articles explaining THE WAY to enter that glorious Kingdom. For that precious knowledge has been essentially LOST to modern professing Christianity. As explained in the lead article beginning on page 4, the need to restore Apostolic Christianity is vital for our salvation and our eternity.

For all the knowledge in the world about prophetic details regarding Christ's coming Kingdom will not get you there! Let us therefore heed Christ's instruction to seek "first" the Kingdom of God and HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Roderick C. Neveloth

Tomorrow's World TV/Radio Log

International

—AUSTRALIA

Adelaide: *ACE*—Ch 6/31, SUN 11:30 am

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,

—CANADA (nationwide)

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

United States

AL, Birmingham: *Cable*—Ch 3, TUE 4:30 pm

AL, Montgomery: *TCI*—Ch 3, SAT 5:30 pm

AR, Fayetteville: *Access TV*—Ch 8, SUN 8:30 pm

AR, Little Rock: *Comcast*—Ch 27, MON 10:30 am;
THUR 5:30 pm

AZ, Phoenix: *Access*—Ch 22, WED 8:30 pm

AZ, Prescott: *Cable*—Ch 13, SAT 9:00 pm; SUN 8:30 am

AZ, Tucson: *Access*—Ch 54/62, FRI 3:00 pm; SUN 7:00 pm

CA, Anaheim: *Century*—Ch 3, TUE 4:00 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 5:30 pm

CA, Oceanside: *KOCT*—Ch 17, SUN 5:30 pm

CA, Riverbank: *SONIC*—Ch 9, WED 6:00 pm

CA, Sacramento: *RCCTV*—Ch 20, WED 7:00 pm

CA, San Andreas: *Media One*—Ch 4, TUE 4:00 pm

CA, San Diego: *Cox*—Ch 18, & 24 THUR 6:00 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 35, SUN 10:00 am

HI, Honolulu: *Olelo*—Ch 23, & 53 SUN 11:00 pm

IA, Des Moines: *TCI*—Ch 15, SAT 10:00 am;
SUN 11:00 am

IA, Waterloo: *Cable*—Ch 2, WED 9:00 pm

ID, Pocatello: *Vision*—Ch 12, SUN 7:30 pm; FRI 1:30 pm

IL, Bloomington: *TCI*—Ch 10, SUN 10:00 am;

WED 8:30 pm

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

IL, Peoria: *TCI*—Ch 20, SUN 7:30 pm

IL, Springfield: *TCI*—Ch 4, TUE 6:00 pm

IN, Elkhart: *TCI*—Ch 3, THUR 7:30 pm

IN, Flora: *Marcus*—Ch 2, SUN 5:30 pm; TUE 10:00 am

IN, Frankfort: *Marcus*—Ch 2, SUN 7:30 pm

IN, Lafayette: *Insight*—Ch 13, TUE 8:30 pm

IN, Monticello: *Marcus*—Ch 2, SUN 10:00 am

KS, Chanute: *Cablevision*—Ch 5, SUN 7:30 am; TUE 5:30 pm

KS, Parsons: *Time Warner*—Ch 21, WED 7:00 pm;
WED 9:30 pm

MA, Cambridge: *CCTV*—Ch 22, TUE 4:00 pm

MA, Malden: *Access TV*—Ch 3, No set time

MD, Baltimore: *TCI*—Ch 5, SUN 12:30 am

MN, Duluth: *Public Access*—Ch 24, SAT 11:00 am;
SUN 9:00 am

MN, Minneapolis: *NW Community*—Ch 35, SAT 10:30 pm;
SUN 4:30 am, 10:30 am & 4:30 pm

MO, St. Louis: *Double Helix*—Ch 22, MON 4:00 pm

MS, Jackson: *Time Warner*—Ch 11, WED 12:00 am

ND, Bismarck: *CATV*—Ch 12, SUN 3:00 pm

NJ, Hudson County: *Cablevision*—Ch 63, MON 8:30 pm

NJ, Oakland: *Cablevision*—Ch 19/20, SUN 7:00 pm

NM, Albuquerque: *CCC27*—Ch 27, SUN 5:00 pm

NV, Carson City: *Access TV*—Ch 10, SAT 9:00 pm

NV, Gardnerville: *Community Access*—Ch 26, SUN-SAT
(no set time)

NV, Reno/Sparks: *SNCT*—Ch 30/16, SAT 12:00 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, Port Jefferson: *TCI*—Ch 1/99 THUR 11:00 pm

NY, Riverhead: *Cablevision*—Ch 27, MON 4:30 pm

NY, Rochester: *Community TV*—Ch 15, SUN 10:30 am

OK, Tulsa: *TCI*—Ch 9, MON 12:00 am

OR, Portland: *MCTV*—Ch 11, SUN 10:00 am; TUE 1:30 pm

TX, Corpus Christi: *TCI*—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

WA, Bellingham: *TCI*—Ch 10, SAT 8:00 am; SUN 8:00 am

WA, Seattle: *TCI*—Ch 29, FRI 12:00 pm

WA, Vancouver: *Clark/Vancouver*—Ch 49, SUN 9:30 am

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

Join us weekly for
Tomorrow's World

TELEVISION SUPERSTATIONS:

WGN: Sunday 6:00 am ET

VISION, Canada: Sunday 6:30 pm ET & PT

New Stations:

Perth: CETL, Ch 31, Sunday 9:30 am

CA, Norwalk: Public Access—Ch 55, THUR 5:30 pm

MA, Cambridge: CCTV—Ch 22, TUE 4:00 pm

MA, Malden: Access TV—Ch 3, No set time

OR Portland: MCTV—Ch 11, SUN 10:00 am; TUE 1:30 pm

New Radio Stations:

Trinidad & Tobago,

Trinidad Broadcasting Co., Port of Spain—730 kHz AM, THUR 5:00 pm

United Kingdom,

Manx Radio, Isle of Man—1328 kHz AM, 89/97.2/103.7 mHz FM SUN 10:00 pm