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TOMORROW'S WORLD

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P L A N E T E A R T H

Your Inheritance!

Victims of Our Own Success

Beginning next month, there will be a change in the number of *Tomorrow's World* magazines that you receive each year. Let me explain how we at *Tomorrow's World* are the victims of our own success.

Success is not the same for everyone. For many, it means living a happy life, which is often considered to be a life with enough money to do the things one likes to do. For some, this includes marriage and children, leading to grandchildren. For others, it means “climbing the corporate ladder” or attaining celebrity status. In my message to you last month, I discussed the meaning of life. What greater success can there be than discovering and fulfilling God’s purpose for your existence?

On a different level, we must ask what success is for *Tomorrow's World*. Most enterprises look at the proverbial *bottom line*—the more sales, the greater the income, the greater the success. But here at *Tomorrow's World*, we measure success differently. Success, to us, is how many magazines we can give away, how many people we can reach with the truth of the Bible—and that truth, by the way, is not what most people think. More broadly, success for us is doing the Work that God has called us to do. That is to preach the good news of the coming Kingdom of God and to warn the world of what will surely come to pass unless there is a massive turning-around to move in a different direction. We see no evidence of that change.

Devoted to Truth

Truth, in our postmodern world, is often seen as fluid. We hear it said that “your truth is not my truth.” It is true that not everyone’s perception of truth is the same. But truth is truth, and it is not left up to each individual to determine. We don’t construct bridges or build airplanes based on someone’s *perceived* truths of engineering. While there are varying designs, there is no “fluidity” in what works and what does not when it comes to engineering, math, and a host of other subjects.

The rub comes in when discussing human behavior. Morality is easier to argue than aerodynamics,

and people are more than happy to promote their own perception of moral standards. If we are the result of blind chance through evolutionary processes, then anyone’s ideas might be correct. But, even when it comes to human behavior, some things work and some do not.

For example, a faithful, monogamous marriage between a man and a woman works far, far better than the many “alternative” arrangements suggested today. Activists Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen were arguably the men most responsible for selling acceptance of homosexuality to America and the world, and their landmark work, *After the Ball: How*

America Will Conquer Its Fear and Hatred of Gays in the



'90s, provided a virtual road map to the new sexual morality of our time. Yet in many ways their work acknowledges that much of what they saw in homosexual behavior was flawed. They admit, “Relationships between gay men don’t usually last very

long.... [The] romantic pairing of man with man [is] inherently less stable than the pairing of man with woman. (Sorry if the truth hurts.)” (p. 318). Compared to heterosexual couples, they conclude that “surely the cheating ratio of ‘married’ gay males, given enough time, approaches 100%” (p. 330).

All of our attempts to define right and wrong on our own inevitably make life worse for humanity, not better.

Only God can define right and wrong (Psalm 16:2). Only God determines the end from the begin-

How Your Subscription Has Been Paid

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ning (Isaiah 46:9–10). Only God will prevail when the story is fully written (Revelation 11:15). *Tomorrow's World*—through our magazine, weekly telecasts, booklets, DVDs, CDs, *Bible Study Course*, and more—is committed to proclaiming the truth of God as contained in His word.

What Is Changing and Why

At the beginning of the COVID-19 lockdowns in March 2020, we expected donations to drop, and I expressed this in a letter to members of the Living Church of God and our co-workers, the sponsors of *Tomorrow's World*. They responded generously as they were able, and we were very thankful for their loyalty and support so that all could continue receiving our resources free of charge.

But something unexpected occurred over the next two years. A man with a large estate named us in his last will and testament, and other special donations came to us as well. We suddenly found ourselves in the best financial condition in our history, and we did not want to take our ease and sit idly by while the world came apart. We planned to draw down these reserves by expanding the Work. We immediately prioritized the magazine, and the number of subscribers more than doubled, from 301,000 in January 2020 to 615,000 by January 2023. At similar financial cost, in 2021 we increased the number of issues per year from six to ten.

Of course, at the same time, we seek a large *readership* rather than simply a large *subscriberhip*. So, wanting to be fiscally prudent, when we do not hear from someone—for example, no requests for any booklet for three years—we want to know if that subscriber is still interested in our material, so we ask that he or she renew the free subscription. If a subscriber does not reply to the free renewal offer, we stop sending the magazine. Over time, we decreased the renewal period from three years to two years, which is why the number of subscribers has dropped below 600,000 in recent months. The magazine remains free of charge to all subscribers, and always will—as Jesus commanded, “Freely you have received, freely give” (Matthew 10:8). However, we want to know that each subscriber actually *wants* the magazine.

We also hired several needed personnel in television production and editorial and increased our budget for buying time on television stations. However, we now recognize that the time has come to put the brakes on spending. Printing costs and postage costs have increased significantly. Even small increases there add up when more than a half-million magazines are involved, and four extra issues per year are no small matter when you also double the number of subscribers. This is why we are going back to publishing *Tomorrow's World* six times per year, beginning with the September-October issue.

In many respects, we are victims of our own success. We are thrilled to see our subscription list double. We are pleased to have increased the number and quality of the television stations airing *Tomorrow's World*. We are thankful for the new hires who contribute to the quality and output of our work. We are thankful that, for the better part of two years, we were able to increase the number of magazines sent to you. And despite having to slow down on some spending, we continue to move forward.

As most of you readers know, mankind is headed in a very bad direction. The world is in geopolitical turmoil as old alliances are falling apart and new ones are forming. Some believe the opening shots of World War III have already been fired, as brought out in our April-May 2023 *Tomorrow's World* issue, the cover of which asks, “Has World War III Already Begun?” The United States and other countries are descending into a financial abyss, the consequences of which will be devastating. Europe is in crisis, and it is out of crises that charismatic, decisive, “strongman” leaders arise to offer their “solutions.” They may appear as saviors at first—but, as we know from history, their bids for power do not always end well. Bible prophecy reveals that an end-time political leader and a charismatic religious leader will bring destruction in the near future.

We must not fail to proclaim the good news that Jesus brought of the coming Kingdom of God (Luke 4:43; Mark 16:15)—and we must not fail to warn mankind “and hold back those stumbling to the slaughter” (Proverbs 24:11).



5 Planet Earth: Your Inheritance

Jesus Christ said that the meek will inherit the earth. So, what does that mean for those who are looking to heaven?

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Pornography is rotting the soul of the Western world—and beyond. But even if you are enslaved to it, there is hope.

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Many are fooled by false currency, and even more are fooled by false Christianity. Can you recognize it?

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PLANET EARTH Your Inheritance

By **Richard F. Ames**

Playing a harp, rolling around in heavenly clouds, lounging blissfully in permanent retirement—this is how countless millions expect to spend eternity after they die. That may sound peaceful, but is it biblical? Jesus Christ promised a very different future for Christians. In the famous Sermon on the Mount, He proclaimed, “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5).

So, will *you* inherit the earth? Do you want to receive the reward the Savior has promised? And what does it mean to “inherit the earth,” anyway?

Confused About the Future

A September 2021 Pew Research poll found that 73 percent of Americans believe in heaven and that 62 percent believe in hell. About a quarter—26 percent—said they believe in neither heaven nor hell, with around 7 percent saying that they believe in some other kind of afterlife and 17 percent saying that they do not believe in any kind of afterlife.

You may be shocked to learn that most who believe in heaven and hell don’t understand what either

of those things are—nor what Jesus has promised to those who are faithful to Him in this present age. Is God’s plan simply that you “go to heaven” when you die? Or will you be resurrected to a reward involving planet Earth? This isn’t something Jesus was hiding. He spoke about it plainly:

And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:1–5).

If you read that passage carefully, you may realize that while Jesus promised His faithful followers the kingdom *of* heaven, He did *not* promise them a kingdom *in* heaven. Consider this example: Britain’s monarchy is called the House of Windsor. It is not, however, *only* in Windsor—it reigns over a number of nations all over the earth. Similarly, the kingdom of heaven extends *from* heaven but exercises its rule on the earth.

Indeed, as we will see, when Jesus Christ returns He will make Jerusalem, on the earth, the capital of His kingdom. When He returns, today's faithful Christians will receive as their inheritance a position of service, ruling in that kingdom under Him. He tells us, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34).

Kingdom or Calamity?

Jesus taught us to pray, "Your Kingdom come" (Matthew 6:10). He didn't teach us to pray, "Take us to Your heaven." But why did our Savior tell us to pray that God's kingdom will be established on the earth? Because our world is suffering from the sins of mankind. Just think of the hundreds of millions in the last century who died as a result of warfare or genocide. Even right now, more than two dozen wars are raging between nations or peoples around the globe. And with the advent of nuclear weapons in the last century, we can no longer take for granted that a regional war will stay regional—with guided missiles, space communications, and smart bombs, and with global alliances controlling the movement of weapons, two warring European nations can put the entire planet at risk, as we are seeing in the worldwide concern over the war between Russia and Ukraine.

Does this mean that our world has already entered the "Great Tribulation" that Jesus Christ foretold? Have the Four Horseman begun their prophesied ride?

No, not yet. But we are headed in that direction, and it is an ominous direction; Jesus warned that "unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved" (Matthew 24:22).

Those who fear the escalation of today's regional conflicts are not mistaken. Current military trends, left unchecked, will lead our planet to total annihilation. But Jesus Christ will intervene—on the earth—to put an end to mankind's wars and warlike nature before we destroy ourselves.

And, far from the idea of the afterlife as an eternal retirement in an idyllic heaven, Christians will, instead, have a job to do. In His kingdom, Jesus Christ will make today's Christians "kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:10).

Yes, under Christ's righteous leadership, today's faithful Christians will rule under their Savior, teaching the world the *true* way of life. All the nations of planet Earth will come to Jerusalem to learn the way to peace. Scripture tells us that the whole earth will learn to observe the same biblical Festivals that Jesus and the Apostles observed: "And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles" (Zechariah 14:16).

Yes, every nation on earth will worship the King. But when will that take place? And when will faithful Christians inherit the Kingdom? The great resurrection of faithful Christians will take place at Christ's return:

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17).

Preparing for God's Kingdom

Christians today are preparing for their future service. Jesus taught that the greatest goal of a Christian is to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33). That search will lead to a position of service in the Kingdom of God, when resurrected Christians will help their Savior bring righteousness to the people of planet Earth.

Yes, the meek shall inherit the earth, as Jesus Christ said. He will rule all nations as King of kings and Lord of lords. Faithful Christians will assist Him in ruling over the nations. My friends, God is calling many individuals to serve Him and His work, to prepare to serve in His coming kingdom as kings and priests. "Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:6). Those thousand years are often called "the Millennium"—the first thousand years of Christ's coming eternal rule.

A kingdom has a ruler, territory, subjects, and laws. The ruler of the Kingdom of God on earth will be Jesus Christ as King of kings, and today's true Christians will be resurrected to assist Him as kings and priests. So, what territory will the kingdom rule over? *The earth*, where Jesus Christ will rule from *Jerusa-*

How shocking it is that so many today who call themselves Christians reject the truth of God's law—the very law that will bring peace to our world under Christ's rule. This law is far above mankind's often contradictory and unjust laws. Jesus taught us to keep the Ten Commandments—remember that

He said, "But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matthew 19:17). He then stated several of the Ten Commandments. He also magnified the commandments in the Sermon on the Mount, making them more binding, as when He

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lem. We read, "Thus says the LORD: 'I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, the Mountain of the LORD of hosts, the Holy Mountain'" (Zechariah 8:3).

In fact, the city will have another name. At the very end of the book of Ezekiel, we read that "the name of the city from that day shall be: The LORD Is There" (Ezekiel 48:35). That name of the city in Hebrew is *Yahweh Shâm*. When Christ returns to establish the Kingdom of God, its territory will be planet Earth. And who will be the subjects of that Kingdom? *All the nations* of planet Earth. We read that "the LORD shall be King over all the earth" (Zechariah 14:9).

Governed by God's Law

The subjects living under Christ's rulership will be physical human beings—people living on planet Earth during the Millennium—and they will be governed by God's law.

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

explained that to gaze at a person with lust is to commit the sin of adultery (Matthew 5:27–28).

But this will not be a harsh and oppressive rule; it will bring peace and happiness to all the inhabitants of the Earth when they obey their King. We read, "He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore" (Isaiah 2:4).

This is the Gospel—the good news of the Kingdom of God. Yet how many professing Christians really understand it? Millions believe they will go to the place of their reward when they die—but is that true?

Can a Soul Die?

The Apostle Paul made a statement that is widely known, but not so widely understood. He wrote that "the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23, *King James Version*). Notice that the scripture does *not* state, "The wages of sin is immortal life in hell-fire." The consequence of sin is not immortal life; it is death, the *absence* of life. If human beings already had immortal souls, they would not need eternal life as a gift, as the verse states.

Yes, a soul *can* die. "The soul who sins shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4). The Hebrew word for soul here is *nephesh*, which means physical or natural life—the same word that is translated "creatures" and describes animal life in Genesis 1:21. Jesus taught the

same in the New Testament, warning His followers: “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28). That “hell” is the Greek word *géenna*, picturing the burning trash pits outside Jerusalem where refuse was destroyed, burned into ashes—not kept forever burning. For more on this vital topic, you can visit us online at TomorrowsWorld.org to read or listen to our January 2023 article “Are You Going to Hell?”

Of course, the Bible does teach that there is a human spirit—the spirit in man is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 2:11, for example. But this is not an immortal soul. There are many other scriptures to demonstrate that human beings do not have immortal souls. As God inspired the prophet Ezekiel to state, “The soul who sins shall die” (Ezekiel 18:4).

This is why the resurrection from the dead is so important. Your Bible reveals three general resurrections from the dead. The first resurrection is primarily described in two chapters of your Bible: 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4. Today’s faithful Christians will receive their inheritance at that first resurrection.

So, what are dead Christians doing right now? Are they alert in a disembodied state, waiting for their inheritance? And what about the billions who have died in the centuries from Adam and Eve to the present? Are they now disembodied spirits waiting to learn of their eternal fate? Or are deceased non-Christians already burning in torment?

The truth is that *those who have died are simply dead*. Scripture explains that “the living know that they will die; but the dead know nothing” (Ecclesiastes 9:5). Knowing nothing, it is as if they are asleep. Their next moment of awareness will come when they are resurrected. To learn more about this resurrection to “everlasting life” (John 3:16), you can read or listen to our June 2023 article “Four Hidden Truths of John 3:16.”

The Rest of the Dead?

The Apostle John described the first two general resurrections:

And I saw thrones, and they sat on them,
and judgment was committed to them.

Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished (Revelation 20:4–5).

Who are the “rest of the dead”? These are human beings from our present age of human rule who will remain dead at the time of the first resurrection, but will be resurrected a thousand years later. Here we see that the “rest of the dead,” the billions who died without having their minds opened to true Christianity, will be resurrected *after* the Millennium to a time known as the White Throne Judgment—a future physical lifetime in which they will have their first opportunity to accept Jesus Christ’s teaching and learn to live His way. And it is the resurrected firstfruits who will be teaching them, under Jesus Christ. By then, they will have had a thousand years of experience living and reigning with Christ, as we’ve read in Revelation 20:4–5. Scripture describes this resurrection to physical life:

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books (Revelation 20:11–12).

The Greek word translated “books” here is *biblion*. The good news is that the books, or the Bible—the Holy Scriptures—will be opened to the understanding of the masses for the first time. The Book of Life will finally be opened to those resurrected in the White Throne Judgment, as we see in Revelation 20:12. This will be their first opportunity to learn the truth. This is not a “second chance,” as some critics call it—all human beings will be held accountable for

their actions and thoughts. But this will be the *first* time for many to become *aware* of their sins. They'll have the opportunity to repent of those sins and accept Jesus Christ as their Savior.

All who are dead will be resurrected to one of the three resurrections. If you genuinely belong to Jesus Christ in this present age, you will be in the first resurrection. It is called "a better resurrection" (Hebrews 11:35), because it's a resurrection to eternal life—immortality.

Those who are in the first resurrection will become the Bride of Christ. The parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25 warns us to be ready for Christ's return and the marriage of the Lamb, when today's faithful Christians will be united with Him for eternity. "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready" (Revelation 19:7).

All who have died as true Christians in this present age will be in the First Resurrection when Christ returns to establish the Kingdom of God. They will assist Him in ruling in that kingdom during the Millennium, when the people who live through the imminent end-time events and into that new era will experience life under God's benevolent rule.

During the White Throne Judgment, the rest of humanity—those who were not called in this present age—will be resurrected to a physical life, during which they will have their first opportunity to hear the true Gospel and live God's way. Their minds will be opened to the Bible and the awesome reality of God's truth.

Then, after all who have ever lived have received a genuine opportunity for salvation, those who died after knowingly and permanently rejecting their opportunity to live God's way will be resurrected and thrown, with the unrepentant who are still alive, into the Lake of Fire. They will be burned up forever and will never again exist. This is the third resurrection.

A New Heaven and Earth


After the Millennium, the White Throne Judgment, and the Lake of Fire, God will bring heaven and earth

to a glorious new stage, for which all that came before was preparation. We read of this awesome plan:

Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" (Revelation 21:1–4).

By this time, all human beings will have had an opportunity to hear and respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Inheriting the Earth will be only our first step, as we read: "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son" (Revelation 21:7). Yes, for those human beings who accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and who learn to live by His ways, a time will come when they will not only receive their earthly inheritance, but inherit "all things"—the entire universe.

Until then, the firstfruits will have a job to do, as we have seen in this article. Yes, they will rise above planet Earth at the first resurrection, when Christ takes them to the great wedding before God's throne in heaven (Revelation 15:1–2). But, contrary to what so many professing Christians expect, the resurrected saints will not just *stay* in heaven, absorbed idly in a trance of the so-called "beatific vision." After God pours out the seven last plagues on the earth, they will return on white horses with Jesus Christ to conquer the nations and establish His kingdom on the earth (Revelation 19:14).

Dear reader, your Father in heaven loves you and wants you to be part of His family—to receive salvation, to inherit the earth, and to inherit all things. Will you respond to His call? 

**MAY WE
SUGGEST?**

What Happens When You Die? Most of us have asked the question at least once in our lives. Want to know the answer? Request this **free** printed booklet from the Regional Office nearest you, or order at TomorrowsWorld.org. PDF, ePub, and Kindle are also available.



Measuring Up

We live in an age addicted to measuring things. If we think about it, weights and measures are integral to modern living and can make all the difference to engineering, manufacturing, construction, commerce, trade, food preparation, and industry—almost every area of life. Accuracy of measurement means the difference between functioning successfully and breaking down. But how many have considered what important lessons we can learn from the Bible's perspective on measuring things? Do we measure up to God's standards? They are more important than most might think.

Origins of Measurement

The origin of measurement relates to something we have all probably done at some point. When you need to measure something and you have nothing to measure with, you use your feet or your hands to do a quick estimate. This is essentially where many of our systems of measurement originated in the ancient world. A finger breadth was a *digit*; the width of a thumb under the nail became an *inch*; a handbreadth across the knuckles was a *palm*; the span from heel to big toe became a *foot*; from the elbow to tip of the middle finger a *cubit*; and so on. Although, of course, these measurements vary from one person's body to another, and from one part of the world to another, they were close enough to form an agreeable basis for bartering and early trade.

The history of different units of measurement reflects the trade interactions of different peoples and the empires in power. In the British Isles, many mea-

surement units came from the Romans, who in turn had gained their measurement systems from the Greeks and Babylonians.

The Magna Carta, written in 1215, contains the earliest declaration of uniformity in the measurement of grain and wine. This was built on the earlier royal standard of a *bushel*, which dated from the tenth century and was later named the Winchester standard, after the English capital at the time. King Henry VII (reigned 1485-1509) reaffirmed and expanded the Winchester standard, sending actual, physical yardsticks throughout his realm. English Standard Units prior to the Imperial System included units you may have never heard of: *barleycorn* (third of an inch), *gill* (five fluid ounces), *peck* (quarter of a bushel), and *grain* (one seven-thousandth of an avoirdupois pound). The British Imperial System of Units was first defined in the Weights and Measures Act of 1824 under King George IV (reigned 1811-1820).

From 1965, British government policy supported the voluntary adoption of the metric system, also known as the International System of Units. Today, the International System goes to great lengths to make a highly accurate definition of one metre, linking it to the distance light travels in a vacuum in 1/299,792,458 of a second. The International System is used almost everywhere around the world; however, it is only partially adopted in Canada and the United Kingdom, and very minimally in the United States, Liberia, and Myanmar.

For those attending school in 1970s Britain, while the International System was being brought into use, it meant being taught a confusing mix of metric and Imperial units. Though the metric system is based



upon simpler units in multiples of ten, many in Britain accepted it only reluctantly, and to this day many still think in Imperial units.

Since Brexit, the British government has taken steps toward the return of Imperial weights and measures in shops and on market stalls. This is hailed as an example of the country's post-Brexit freedoms, with many Britons viewing the metric system as an unwelcome relic of European Union interference.

Spiritual Measurement

God has very strong opinions on the use of accurate measurements, which deter merchants stealing from a customer or customers taking more than they pay for at the shops. Our measure of generosity to others affects how God blesses us. Even more important for us to consider is how we measure up to the *spiritual standard* Jesus Christ set for us.

In Scripture, God expresses concern that traders should deal justly with customers and not steal by using dishonest weights on their scales. They should ensure that when they sell one pound of flour, it is exactly one pound and not a little less because of weights dishonestly made lighter. We read, "Dishonest scales are an abomination to the LORD, but a just weight is His delight" (Proverbs 11:1). God wants us to deal justly with others and requires us to use honest measurements to do so (Leviticus 19:35–36). These statutes of God are the practical application of the Eighth Commandment, which forbids stealing.

These principles of Scripture go beyond the practicalities of physical weights and measure; they apply to how we interact with one another. God expects us to

show outgoing concern for others and a generous, giving attitude (2 Corinthians 9:7). When God sees this in our actions, He promises to reward us in abundance—but if we use a small measure and give little, we will be blessed with little. Christ assures us, "Give, and it will be given to you: good *measure*, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you" (Luke 6:38).

The Apostle Paul describes Christ's appointment of faithful ministers to edify the Church and teach God's way of life. And Christians, as we overcome, should become more like Jesus Christ in our behaviour. Scripture tells us it is unwise to compare ourselves against other fallible human beings (2 Corinthians 10:12). We must compare ourselves maturely, not to other people, but to Christ's standard of conduct—then, our measurement will be pure and accurate, "till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the *measure* of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ" (Ephesians 4:13–15).

The Greek word translated "measure" here is *metron*, from which we get our English words metre and metric, and it is defined as, "proverbially, the rule or standard of judgment" ("Lexicon: Strong's G3358—metron," BlueLetterBible.org). When we measure ourselves as spiritually immature and falling short in doctrinal understanding and practice, we can make corrections with God's help. By measuring ourselves with God's standard of judgment, using the standard of Jesus Christ's example (1 Peter 2:21), we can grow stronger spiritually, coming closer to the spiritual maturity of our Elder Brother, as God wants us to do.

Our Father holds us to account in how we measure what we buy or sell, how we give to others, and, most importantly, how we assess our true spiritual condition. He requires the standard we use to be just, true, and accurate. He gives us His perfect standard in the Ten Commandments and in how our elder brother Jesus Christ followed them. To learn more, request a free copy of *The Ten Commandments* or read it online at TomorrowsWorld.org.

—Simon R. D. Roberts





The Pitfall of Pornography

By **Rod McNair**

It can start out so “innocently.” Just a glance, a quick look—a jolt of excitement. And then another look. A moment of curiosity turns into a fascination. It pulls you in, until you are sinking in a quicksand of shame and guilt. One time becomes two, then three. One minute becomes an hour. A momentary diversion becomes a habit that recurs over months and years.

This is the pitfall of pornography, which is nothing less than an addictive drug. Every month, 70 percent of men aged 18–34 visit websites dedicated to pornography, which make up 12 percent of the Internet itself. And it’s not just a problem for men; roughly 17 percent of women are addicted to porn. And 90 percent of children aged 8–16 have seen some—in fact, boys aged 12–17 are porn’s most frequent consumers. With every *second* that passes by, 30,000 people are viewing porn, and roughly \$185,000 is spent on porn every minute—leading to at least \$10 *billion* spent on porn each year (“Revealing Statistics Re: Pornography Addiction,” FHE Health, January 15, 2023).

What is going on? Is there hope for the millions who are being swallowed up by a lifestyle of lust?

The Silent Takeover

Pornography has been called “The Public Health Crisis of the Digital Age” (*Psychology Today*, April 15, 2021)—and rightly so, because it affects the brain in exactly the same way that illicit drugs do. When

a person views pornographic material, the brain is over-exposed to pleasure chemicals like dopamine, serotonin, oxytocin, and epinephrine. The brain rewires itself to accommodate the extra chemicals, building up first a tolerance and then a dependency, first wanting the pleasure chemicals and then “needing” them. Pornography is a drug epidemic—and it has taken the world by silent storm.

Just as with any other addiction, thousands brazenly profit from its victims. To protect their multi-billion-dollar industry, pushers of this perverted “self-expression” unabashedly fight attempts to curb illicit material, no matter how vulgar or debasing it may be. Media portray it as harmless fun. Some misguided counselors even encourage couples to watch porn to help solve marital problems—a tragically destructive mistake.

Some will argue that looking at a few erotic images is no big deal—a “victimless crime.” But what about the people—overwhelmingly women—who sell themselves, or are sold, to fuel the porn industry? And what about the addicts themselves? Are they really satisfied by a habit that chains them to a cycle of uncontrolled lust followed by a downward spiral of self-loathing?

A growing body of research shows the devastating effects of pornography on those who fall under its spell: increased chance of severe clinical depression, feelings of loneliness, difficulty establishing and developing relationships, loss of jobs, financial difficulty, marital infidelity, and divorce. Perhaps the most sur-

prising effect of porn is that it causes many addicts to lose their ability to enjoy or even engage in real sexual intimacy. And that's not all, as the anti-porn organization Fight the New Drug describes:

[One] study found that frequent pornography consumption was significantly related to greater depression, anxiety, and stress as well as poorer social functioning. And in yet another study, researchers at Columbia University, Yale University, and UCLA, found a link between compulsive pornography consumption and poorer mental health, low self-esteem, and poor attachment in relationships (“5 Ways a Porn Habit Can Harm Your Mental Health,” May 29, 2023).

So, what is the solution?

Ancient Advice

Thousands of years ago, the patriarch Job wrote that he was very careful about where he allowed his eyes to stray: “I have made a covenant with my eyes; why then should I look upon a young woman?” (Job 31:1). Proverbs 6:23–25 continues, saying, “The commandment is a lamp, and the law a light; reproofs of instruction are the way of life, to keep you from the evil woman.... Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, nor let her allure you with her eyelids.” The Apostle John echoed the same warning: “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever” (1 John 2:15–17). Sexual lust and covetousness are not new at all, but a very old temptation that has brought down many “strong men” (Proverbs 7:26).

The Apostle James explained how temptation occurs and where it leads: “But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed” (James 1:14, *King James Version*). The next verse says that lust leads to sin, and sin leads to death (James 1:15). What type of death does pornography cause if it is never overcome? Death of your character and self-esteem. Death of trust and integrity. Death of

honor and self-confidence. Death of enjoyment of healthy relationships. And, ultimately, death in the lake of fire, the “second death,” where the “cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars” will be burned up (Revelation 21:8). God does not want anyone to die, but rather to repent and live. “‘As I live,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways’” (Ezekiel 33:11). God hates porn because it destroys the lives of His children, whom He wants to have in His Kingdom.

If you are hooked on porn but want to change, there is good news—you *can*. But first you must understand that you have a powerful enemy—Satan, the devil, who does not want you to change. He has deceived the whole world and led people into sin (Revelation 12:9). And the Apostle Peter warns us to be aware of his attacks. He said, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world” (1 Peter 5:8–9).

Satan capitalizes on shame. He wants addicts to feel overwhelmed. If you are addicted to porn, Satan wants you to feel that you are the only one battling such a problem. He wants you to feel alone, isolated, and unworthy of God’s forgiveness.

But *nothing could be further from the truth*. As the Apostle Paul wrote, “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry” (1 Corinthians 10:13–14).

God wants us to be free. Jesus said, “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). He continued, “Whoever commits sin is a slave of sin” (v. 34). Paul echoed the same teaching: “Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?” (Romans 6:16). God wants us to be free from the chains of sin, and become “slaves of righteousness for holiness” (v. 19).

He wants us to have “fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life” (v. 22).

You Can Become Clean

If you have been enslaved by sexual lust but want to be free, turn to God with all your heart—everything you have. He hates porn, but He does *not* hate you. Submit to Him in every part of your life. All of it belongs to Him anyway, because He *made* you. Humble yourself before the ever-living God. As James writes, “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up” (James 4:7–10).

Ask God to grant you repentance, and to have a real relationship with Jesus Christ. Your Savior felt the temptations of the flesh, yet He never sinned (Hebrews 4:15). He overcame temptation, and He can give you power, through His Spirit, to overcome. “For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted” (Hebrews 2:18). In other words, there *is* hope to overcome.

If you really want to overcome addiction, you will need to make some concrete changes in your life. You will have to stay away from environments that put you in compromising positions (Proverbs 7:25). If old friends cause you to fall into old habits, it is time to find new friends (Proverbs 1:10). Your old acquaintances may not be thrilled by your new standards (1 Peter 4:4)—but freedom from addiction and the prize of eternal life are worth the sacrifice.

God does not just counsel us to resist immoral conduct—He says to flee far from it (1 Corinthians 6:18). Learn your addiction “triggers.” When do you fall into temptation? When you are under stress? Depressed? Bored? When you have not been praying or studying, and are not close to God? By knowing yourself, and analyzing the patterns of your behavior, you can be better equipped to know when you are in danger, and take steps to avoid “falling off the cliff.” For the porn addict, those steps likely include Inter-




net filters and accountability partners—people you can trust who can check up on you from time to time. *It is worth it.*

Be Filled With God’s Spirit

The ultimate solution to addiction is greater spiritual depth and purpose—a deeper relationship with God. And to really overcome forces as powerful as addictions, we need God’s help. As Paul wrote, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20, *King James Version*).

Porn is not an insurmountable enemy. But victory requires commitment to yourself and your relationships. As author Matt Fradd wrote in *The Porn Myth: Exposing the Reality Behind the Fantasy of Pornography*, “We stand against pornography in order to stand for the honor of the human person. Anytime we capture the image of another—be it for artistic purposes or for entertainment—the display of that image should lead others to celebrate the mystery and the depth of humanity, not encourage them to treat the person as a cheap assembly of body parts” (“Introduction,” 2017).

The Christian life is a fight all the way to the end. “But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life” (1 Timothy 6:11–12). If you are struggling, do not lose heart. Jesus Christ living in you can change your thoughts. He *can* change your life—but you must make the choice. 

**MAY WE
SUGGEST?**

The Ten Commandments Tap into the liberating law that is more powerful than any addiction. Request this **free** printed booklet from the Regional Office nearest you, or order at **TomorrowsWorld.org**. PDF, ePub, and Kindle are also available.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In our increasingly vulgar society, our choice of words really does matter to God!

Question: I understand that it is not polite to use “curse words,” since many people consider them vulgar and offensive. But why do some people object to such seemingly inoffensive outbursts as “gosh,” “gee,” or “Jiminy Cricket”? Surely these are preferable to the harsh and vulgar words some would use in their stead. Am I mistaken?

Answer: When we hear someone exclaim “shoot!” or “fudge!” we may appreciate their avoiding an overt vulgarity, but at the same time their choice of words can still bring that “avoided” vulgarity to our mind, however unspoken. As Christians, we know that our words matter to God; the Apostle Paul instructed the Ephesians, “Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers” (Ephesians 4:29).

“But ‘gosh’ isn’t ‘God’ and ‘Jiminy Cricket’ isn’t ‘Jesus Christ!’” some will object. “What’s wrong with using a ‘minced oath’ or a ‘euphemism’ instead of God’s name?” Well, as the dictionary explains, euphemism is “the substitution of a mild, indirect, or vague expression for one thought to be offensively blunt or harsh” (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*). A vague allusion to God’s name is still alluding to God’s name, and thus should not become a “substitute curse word.” If we casually use God’s name, or a euphemism for God’s name, to express shock, surprise or even profanity, we are showing contempt for our Creator, whether or not those around us may consider our words “vulgar.”

Why is this so? Scripture warns, “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain” (Exodus 20:7). Such misuse of God’s name is actually a more serious matter than mere vulgarity. People’s sense of what is vulgar may vary over time, as a community’s customs and language go through changes. The wording of 1 Samuel 25:22 would not have seemed vulgar to readers of the *King James Version* in 1611, yet today’s readers may be discomforted when they see how the *KJV* translators rendered a phrase containing the Hebrew word *shâthan* (*Strong’s* 8366). The *NKJV* translators, by contrast, rendered

the clear sense of that verse’s Hebrew idiom without resorting to a word that most today would find vulgar. We should certainly be considerate of others in how we choose our words, and thus should avoid vulgarity. But, again, taking God’s name in vain is a different—and far more spiritually serious—matter.

Honoring His Name

With this in mind, how *should* we use God’s name? In the New Testament, Christ instructed His disciples to pray to God the Father through His name. “And what-

The words we use are important to God. We should be sure that our speech reflects our honor and reverence for Him.


ever you ask in my name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (John 14:13). And when we pray, we should give honor to God’s name. “In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name” (Matthew 6:9).

The disciples healed the sick through the name of Jesus Christ. “Then Peter said, ‘Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!’” (Acts 3:6). James instructed Christians to continue to follow that example.

He said, “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord” (James 5:14).

In the book of Acts, we read that the disciples preached the Gospel through the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 9:15), and baptized in Christ’s name (Acts 8:16; 19:5).

The psalms are full of praise for God’s name. For example, we read that we should “praise the name of the LORD, for His name alone is exalted; His glory is above the earth and heaven” (Psalm 148:13). We are also told, “Make a joyful shout to God, all the earth! Sing out the honor of His name; make His praise glorious” (Psalm 66:1–2).

The words we use *are* important to God. We should be sure that our speech reflects our honor and reverence for Him. 



Can You Spot a Counterfeit?

By **Wallace G. Smith**

When Warner Brothers decided to revive its popular *Matrix* franchise by releasing *The Matrix Resurrections* in 2021, many were thrilled. The original trilogy that began with *The Matrix* in 1999 stirred the imagination of millions with its futuristic depiction of a mostly passive humankind trapped by robotic overlords in a simulated “counterfeit” reality, unaware of their imprisonment.

In 2003, *The Matrix Reloaded* and *The Matrix Revolutions* continued the tale of underdog human beings breaking free from their illusions and fighting for their freedom in the real world. Though movie critics weren’t as impressed by the sequels, their groundbreaking visual effects—sadly marred by truckloads of gratuitous violence—still captured moviegoers’ imaginations, as well as their wallets.

Two decades later, *The Matrix: Resurrections* did not fare quite so well. Though its \$427 million global box office earnings were by no means a “flop” in a time of much-reduced moviegoing since COVID-19, the highly anticipated new installment earned \$40 million less than the original movie—and that’s without accounting for inflation. And its mediocre 63 percent rating on the popular *RottenTomatoes.com* “Tomatometer” paled in comparison to the first film’s 88 percent. It simply didn’t capture public imagination as its predecessors had 20 years earlier.

What Has Changed? What Hasn’t?

In the 20 years since the original *Matrix* trilogy was released, many moviegoers may have come to consider its once-revolutionary premise almost un-

remarkable. In our modern world of A.I.-generated audiovisuals, it is no longer so shocking to consider that much or all of what you know, see, and experience is, in fact, a deceptive counterfeit—a lie designed to keep you from knowing the truth.

But it is nonetheless a powerful idea. And, according to your Bible, it is *far closer to the truth* than almost anyone today truly realizes.

Indeed, like the human victims of the machines in the *Matrix* movies, most people today—including many of you reading this magazine—live in a world of counterfeit *religion*, designed to keep your mind captive and to prevent you from recognizing the truth that would set you free if you would abide by Jesus Christ’s word. We read that “Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free’” (John 8:31–32).

Yes, becoming free—escaping the counterfeit reality created as a prison for our minds and finding a way to the truth of God—requires us to abide in Christ’s word and to be willing to ask some very difficult and uncomfortable questions.

To do so, we must be willing to examine our own beliefs and ask ourselves whether what we believe, including beliefs we have long taken for granted, is, in fact, true. Frankly, most would rather not do that. Most people go through their lives without a great deal of reflection or examination. From their political views to their stands on the issues of the day, most people are generally more interested in arguing—proving that they are right and that their opposition is wrong—than in actually *examining* their beliefs to see if they square with what is true.

Religious Illusions?

Such a lack of introspection and self-examination extends to our religious ideas, as well. How many people *honestly* put their beliefs about God “under the microscope”? How many people truly examine their ideas about the meaning of life, about right and wrong, and about good and evil? How often do people simply continue in the religious customs and practices they were taught as children, without making sure that the god they are worshipping is the *true* God? How many absorb the faith convictions and practices promulgated by the many and varied spiritual guides today, without evaluating them for soundness?

The Apostle Paul, writing to Christians living just a few decades after Christ’s resurrection, had to prod them into doing such an examination. He wrote, “I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ” (Galatians 1:6–7).

Paul saw that a different gospel was beginning to take root in the Christian Church—a gospel *other* than

The Bible describes a struggle to maintain the purity of the Christian faith—a struggle that began just a few years after Christ established His Church. Even in the penultimate book of the Bible, we see this struggle continuing:

Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ (Jude 3–4).

Who Is the Counterfeiter?

But who was the ultimate source of the counterfeit “Christianity” that was corrupting the young Church? Paul explained that “such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:13–14).

Satan, the devil, was the source of confusion and corruption in the early Church. Paul calls him “the god of this age” (2 Corinthians 4:4) or “the god of this world” (*King James Version*). It was he who was infiltrating the young Church in the first century, deceiving the gullible and presenting a counterfeit gospel, a counterfeit

faith, and a counterfeit Christ.

How did this struggle in the first century turn out? Here we are, twenty centuries later—surely all has turned out well, right? Or has it? We know that Jesus Christ promised that He would build His Church and that the gates of Hades, the grave, would *never* prevail against it (Matthew 16:18). Though it would be greatly persecuted, maligned, and misunderstood, the Church that Jesus Christ founded to teach the “whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27) would never perish from the earth, and it is prophesied to be present at His climactic Second Coming.

Yet what do we see today? A mind-numbing variety of beliefs and practices that claim the name

WHAT DO WE SEE TODAY? A MIND-NUMBING VARIETY OF BELIEFS AND PRACTICES THAT CLAIM THE NAME “CHRISTIAN,” BUT CANNOT ALL BE TRUE.

the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Notice his concern: “But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it” (2 Corinthians 11:3–4).

Paul was struggling against the spread of a teaching that involved a different gospel, a different spirit, and a *different Jesus*. Although its doctrines and customs sounded quite similar to the *true* Gospel of Jesus Christ, *it was a counterfeit*. While deceptively *similar*, it was not the truth.

“Christian,” but cannot all be true. The book of Revelation describes what our world will be like in the days leading up to the return of Jesus Christ. John wrote, “So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, *who deceives the whole world*” (Revelation 12:9).

Yes, Satan deceives the *whole world*. His counterfeiting has *never stopped*. He has not given up in his effort to spread a false Christianity, a false gospel, and a false Christ. He *still* masquerades as an angel of light, he is *still* the god of this world, and he is *still* the father of lies.

Consider this prophecy of the end-time—our time: “Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon” (Revelation 13:11). Here in this description of a great false prophet, the coming antichrist who will soon be revealed to the entire world, we see that he *looks like a lamb*. Indeed, many will assume that he represents Christ. But those who are discerning will recognize that he does not *sound* like the Lamb—rather, he speaks like a dragon, like that serpent of old who is the devil and Satan, who spreads his counterfeit religion to deceive the whole world.

Counterfeit Christianity?

We have seen from Scripture that Satan has been at work powerfully for millennia, deceiving the world. We have seen that the world will be under his influence in the end-times. So, let us consider a difficult question that few will have the courage to answer honestly: Does today’s modern “mainstream Christianity” represent the real Christianity of Jesus Christ, or the counterfeit offered by Satan?

Many historians and scholars have already weighed in on this question. Notice this comment from Protestant scholar Jesse Lyman Hurlbut: “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 120 A.D. with the writings of the earliest church-fathers, we find a church in many aspects very different from that in the days of St. Peter and St. Paul” (*The Story of the Christian Church*, 1933, p. 41).

Hurlbut is *far* from alone in his assessment. But could it really be true that the *counterfeit* Christianity that was invading the early Church like a virus in the

first century could still be present in the *twenty-first century*? Christ calls His true followers a “little flock” (Luke 12:32). Is it possible that the counterfeit could, in fact, be the *dominant* form of what most people call “Christianity” today?

And if so, *how would we know*? How can we determine whether the faith we follow is the truth or the counterfeit?

In our effort to identify a counterfeit faith, we can take a cue from the United States Treasury Department, which fights against counterfeit money. One of the most effective ways to recognize a counterfeit is to be completely and intimately familiar with the *real thing*. When you are deeply aware of how a real \$20 bill feels in your fingers—the intricate details in its artwork, the weight of its paper in your hands, the way it responds when you fold it, the way ink bleeds into its paper, the small fibers that are embedded in its material—you can more capably recognize when you have been handed a *counterfeit*. When you know the “real thing,” the subtle differences in the counterfeit stand out to you like night stands out from day, even though others less familiar would not even notice.

Yet people still try to print and pass counterfeit currency. In May 2023, U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials in Pennsylvania intercepted four shipments containing more than \$14 million in counterfeit currency. For as long as people demand the counterfeit, we can expect that there will be a supply.

This principle also applies to a counterfeit faith, a counterfeit Christ, and a counterfeit Christianity. Once you become familiar with the *true standard*, the counterfeit cannot help but stand out for its differences, no matter how subtle they are. Yet many are still satisfied with the counterfeit.

We can look to U.S. Treasury standards to recognize counterfeit currency, but where can we find the true standard for Christian faith and practice?

We must look to God’s own word—the Holy Bible. Consider the example of the Bereans: “Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to *find out whether these things were so*” (Acts 17:10–11).

What Will Christians Inherit?

What do most professing Christians not understand about Scripture? Consider something as fundamental as the reward of the saved. Many churches teach that when you die, you go to heaven. To some, that means floating around in the clouds with a harp in your hands. Others have described heaven as a “beatific vision” where you simply gaze at the face of God in joy for all eternity.

But what does *the Bible* teach us about the reward of the saved? In the passage of Scripture known as the Beatitudes, Jesus reveals something important: “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5).

God’s word consistently describes the inheritance of the saints as being right here *on this planet*. But what does the Bible tell us the saints will be doing on the earth? Notice that “he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron; they shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels’—as I also have received from My Father” (Revelation 2:26–27). We also read that Christ will make us “kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth” (Revelation 5:10). Later, we find that the saints will reign with Christ for “a thousand years” (Revelation 20:6).

Is that just some sort of symbolic language or metaphor, which we can rationalize away or ignore? The Apostle Paul did not think so, according to what he wrote to Christians in Corinth: “Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?” (1 Corinthians 6:1–3).

Here, as in many other places, the Bible explains that the reward of the saved is literally to *rule* with Jesus Christ in power and glory! And today’s faithful Christians also have Christ’s promise that they will inherit “all things” (Revelation 21:7)—including a vital role on the earth in the soon-coming Millennium, when Jesus Christ will establish the Kingdom of God throughout the world. You can read more about that in Mr. Richard Ames’ article on page 5 of this magazine.

Sadly, you will rarely—if ever—hear this truth proclaimed today in most churches that profess Christianity. But you don’t need to be fooled. The pure word of God gives us a rock-solid standard that allows us to identify Satan’s counterfeit.

The \$20 Bill Test

And what do we find when we apply the “\$20 bill test” to other aspects of traditional “Christianity”? Compared to the word of God, how do they measure up?

Consider some of the traditional celebrations associated with modern “Christianity.” You have probably heard the song proclaiming Christmas as “the most wonderful time of the year.” People exchange gifts, decorate trees, light Yule logs, and enjoy many traditions that have been passed down for generations and celebrated in Christ’s name. At Easter, parents tell their children that the Easter Bunny has brought them colored eggs and candies, and they enjoy hot cross buns and other long-standing traditions practiced in the name of Christ.

Yet any encyclopedia worth reading will clearly explain that these traditions and practices originated in *pagan* worship customs and predate Christianity by centuries—or even millennia. People who are aware of these origins sometimes say it is proper to “baptize” non-Christian customs by incorporating them into “Christian” worship. But how does God really feel about the use of pagan practices to worship Him and His Son?

In Scripture, God made His feelings very clear. He plainly commanded that pagan practices are not to be used in worshipping Him. He warned that His people must “not inquire after their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.’ You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it” (Deuteronomy 12:30–32).

As frequent readers of this publication know, Jesus Christ is the God who gave that command—and we should expect His true Church to obey Him. What did He say about those who reject His commands in favor of their own ideas? He told the Pharisees, “All too well



you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition” (Mark 7:9). Christ condemned a practice that is *pervasive* in “mainstream Christianity” today—attempting to worship Him by using traditions designed for the worship of *false* gods.

What Will You Choose?

The Matrix is just one of many science-fiction stories in which a hero discovers that the world around him is not as it seems, but is in fact a cunning deception—a *counterfeit reality*—designed to keep him from knowing the truth.

In these stories, a moment often comes when the hero begins to learn the truth and must make a difficult decision: *Do I go back to the comfortable world I’ve always known, even though I know it is a lie, or do I bravely take the next step and fully embrace the truth, regardless of how uncomfortable that decision may seem?* Like those who knowingly spend counterfeit currency, many who encounter the reality of God’s word are willing to trust their future to what is not real.

Similarly, as you discover the true Christianity of the Bible and come to appreciate how it differs from the “Christianity” practiced all around us, *you* who

are reading this magazine may come to such a moment in your own life.


If you do, you will not be alone. I know that feeling. I’ve been there, too. It takes courage to act on what you are learning. You may experience an anxious feeling, wondering where the road will end once you start putting into practice what you learn in your Bible.

But you need not—you *should not*—settle for the counterfeit. As I found, there is a real joy and exhilaration when you discover truth you have never learned before. Bible passages you may have read many times, but never fully understood, come to life and fit into a larger picture.

As you discover parts of the Bible you once ignored, you begin to see what a marvelous book the whole Bible is. You begin to appreciate that God truly is *not* the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33). You experience for yourself the abundant life He has promised to those who obey Him (John 10:10).

Yet you may sometimes wonder whether you are alone in pursuing true Christianity instead of the counterfeit. Here, again, the Bible provides the answer—in Jesus Christ’s promise that He would build His Church and that the grave would never prevail against it (Matthew 16:18). As you read your Bible, you will come to see that His true Church *does* exist and will be *present* at His Second Coming, waiting for the day when it will be presented to Him as a bride who “has made herself ready” (Revelation 19:7).

The Apostle Paul calls the true Church—not the counterfeit—“the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15). And, as we read earlier, Jesus says that “you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). It takes courage to abandon a comfortable lie and begin reaching for the truth. But somewhere, like a small but precious gemstone amid a pile of counterfeits, is the Church that faithfully teaches the truth of Jesus Christ, the very same message and way of life that He brought to this earth.

How strong is your desire to find that Church? Then, once you find it, are you willing to let go of the counterfeit? 

MAY WE
SUGGEST?

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TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

By **Douglas S. Winnail**

Ragnarök, or the “twilight of the Gods”—heralded as *Götterdämmerung* in the opera by composer Richard Wagner—may be known to the general public as a popular superhero film, but how many know its true origins? This story from pagan Norse mythology describes a series of natural disasters and a great battle that results in the death of several gods and brings the end of the world, after which the earth is reborn anew.

From a very different perspective, the Bible’s prophecies—far more ancient—have long foretold something similar. The twentieth century saw the rise of numerous social theories that were promoted as the “saviors” of nations and the world. Yet the dramatic failure of these modern “gods” left a trail of tears, suffering, and destruction in their wake. The history of the last century clearly demonstrates the persistence of God’s truth and the amazing accuracy of prophecies inspired by the real God of the Bible that are still coming alive today.

The Real God

When Egypt was the most powerful nation on earth, God began to do a series of great miracles through Moses. Egyptian magicians, frustrated when they could not duplicate God’s miracles and realizing they were dealing with a power greater than any they had ever encountered, concluded, “This is the finger of God” (Exodus 8:19). God then visibly spared the land

of Goshen—where the Israelites resided—from the plagues He brought on the rest of Egypt (Exodus 8:22; 9:4, 26; 10:23).

The Israelites and the Egyptians witnessed the power of God when He parted the waters of the Red Sea to aid the Israelites’ escape from their Egyptian overlords (Exodus 14–15). The Israelites also saw God stop the waters of the Jordan River as they crossed into the Promised Land (Joshua 3:14–17), and they witnessed how God supernaturally intervened in battle during the conquest of their new homeland (Joshua 6:5; 10:11). The Bible records that even pagan kings—Nebuchadnezzar and Darius—came to see that the God of Daniel “is the living God” who “delivers and rescues, and He works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth,” and that “there is no other God who can deliver like this” (Daniel 6:25–27; 3:28–29). The God of the Bible repeatedly and openly declares that He alone is able to predict the future and then bring it to pass (Isaiah 41:21–24; 45:21; 46:8–10). The Bible records these remarkable events as verifiable history. For more on this vital topic, you can request a free copy of *The Bible: Fact or Fiction?* or read it online at TomorrowsWorld.org.

Moreover, Moses also warned the ancient Israelites not to drift away from the living God and follow false gods, to “take heed to yourself... lest you forget the things your eyes have seen.... Take careful heed to yourselves... lest you act corruptly and make for yourselves a carved image... in the form of anything which the LORD your God has forbidden you” (Deuteronomy

4:9, 15–19, 23). The living God of the Bible clearly instructed His chosen people, “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt.... You shall have no other gods before Me” (Exodus 20:2–3).

Yet, despite often witnessing the miraculous power of the real God, the Israelites turned away and began to worship an idol during the 40 days that Moses was on Sinai receiving the laws of God (Exodus 24:18; 32:1–9). Recognizing the Israelites’ tendency to forget the living God and look to false gods, Moses warned, “I know that after my death you will become utterly corrupt, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you. And evil will befall you in the latter days, because you will do evil in the sight of the LORD” (Deuteronomy 31:29). The Old Testament records the sad story of how the nations of Israel and Judah repeatedly turned away from the real God to worship the false gods of neighboring nations (2 Kings 17:7–8, 18–20).

The prophets of God also foresaw what would happen to the descendants of the Israelite nations in the last days. Jeremiah prophesied of a “time of Jacob’s trouble” in the “latter days” when false teachers—including misguided religious leaders—would “cause My people to err by their lies and by their recklessness” (Jeremiah 30:3–7, 12–15, 24; 23:13–16, 32). God used the prophet Jeremiah to indict the Israelite nations for worshipping a different god: “They have forsaken Me... and hewn themselves... broken cisterns that can hold no water” (Jeremiah 2:4, 5–13). The prophet bemoans the fact that the Israelite nations have created their own “gods.” Jeremiah warns that there will be serious consequences for rejecting the living God: “it is an evil and bitter thing that you have forsaken the LORD your God” (Jeremiah 2:19).

False Gods of Modernity

The false gods with the greatest influence over our modern world are not the glaring idols of wood and stone created by the Norse and other ancients. Today’s most dangerous false gods are gods of the mind. These are the intellectual constructs of misguided thinkers, largely stemming from philosophers who sought to dethrone the real God and His inspired word, the Bible, and replace Him with a secular philosophy that essentially deifies human reasoning.

This fundamental intellectual shift laid the groundwork for fertile human minds to conceive of Marxism (the socialist vision of a “new man” without God, stemming from secular humanism), National Socialism (which made a “god” of nationalism and racialism), and crony capitalism (using “free” markets to amass wealth and gain power over others). Other new “gods” around us include consumerism (worshipping the output of human hands), radical environmentalism (elevating the creation as “Mother Earth” above the Creator and promoting macroevolution), and hedonism and sexual indulgence (seeking pleasure without regard for the good of others).

It should not be surprising that all of these false gods have proven—and still prove—to be dismal failures. Marxism turned out to be a colossal mistake. National Socialism perished in flames that ravaged the continent of Europe. Socialism and capitalism are both struggling today. Environmentalists are not saving the planet, and the hedonistic pursuit of sexual indulgence has unleashed on the world a plague of sexually transmitted disease, moral and social confusion, and suffering. When communities are forced to adopt unbiblical values of “anything goes,” under the pretext of “tolerance” and “diversity” without regard for biblical standards of love toward neighbor and obedience to God, it leads to breakdowns in trust, people withdrawing into themselves, social and political divisions becoming aggravated, and social tensions increasing.

Long ago, the prophets of the real God warned His chosen people that, if they rejected Him, “Your own wickedness will correct you, and your backslidings will rebuke you” (Jeremiah 2:19)—in other words, they would *reap what they sowed*. The blood-soaked history of the twentieth century vividly illustrates the tragic results that occur when people make false gods of man-made philosophies. For those with eyes to see, the last century witnessed the death of many false gods—these flawed ideas generated by misguided individuals who rejected the true God of the Bible.

Thankfully, the real God will soon intervene in the affairs of mankind by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to establish His Kingdom on earth and bring peace, justice, and the knowledge of the true God to the peoples of the world (Isaiah 9:6–7; 11:1–9). That great event is just ahead. TW

MORE GENTLENESS, PLEASE

There is great power in being calm and kind.

The spirit of the modern age, at least if you pay much attention to news and social media, seems to be one of protests and bullhorns, aggression and brazen demands—where the loudest and most extreme often seem to get their way. God’s word teaches a far better way, however, and emphasizes a virtue that, while not very common at this moment of history, would nevertheless greatly benefit everyone in society: gentleness.

The *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* defines *gentleness* as “the quality of being calm and kind.” How beneficial and pleasant would the physical, mental, and emotional results be if everyone around us grew in this quality? If only the United States could place a large, advance order of gentleness as it heads into its 2024 presidential election.

The Bible describes gentleness as one of the fruits of God’s Holy Spirit, which include “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, *gentleness*,” and “self-control” (Galatians 5:22–23). Followers of Jesus Christ are expected to exhibit these beautiful qualities in their dealings with others.

James, a half-brother of Jesus, also wrote about gentleness, saying that “where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, *gentle*, *willing to yield*, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy” (James 3:16–17). Again, how wonderful would a bit more gentleness be—a bit more willingness to yield—in society, in the news, in politics, on social media, and on the busy streets and roadways?

Our Gentle Savior

Gentleness is a practical and beneficial trait to develop in life. King Solomon of Israel gave one of the most practical biblical instructions, and one that very often works almost instantly: “A *soft* answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger” (Proverbs 15:1). News media, social commentary, and social media—especially Twitter—seem to ignore this principle, since harsh arguments usually generate more clicks and more comments. This incentivizes loud, brazen, and

extreme behavior, which is unfortunate, because the few who exhibit moderation, humble manners, and gentleness don’t get the publicity needed to succeed. In the political realm we see this so often on both sides of the aisle, and in both men and women—all the more saddening when we consider the Bible’s instruction for ladies to be “of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God” (1 Peter 3:4).

Gentleness is not some shallow, polite quality of “nice” people. We see it in Jesus Christ’s own character, and He says, “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for *I am gentle* and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Matthew 11:29). Jesus, the God of the Old Testament, also dealt very gently with the nation of Israel, as the prophet Hosea described: “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son.... I taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by their arms.... I drew them with *gentle* cords, with bands of love, and I was to them as those who take the yoke from their neck. I stooped and fed them” (Hosea 11:1, 3–4).

These scriptures show God acting as a loving parent to Israel—dealing with His young son with gentleness in order to lead, guide, and sustain him. And God still cares for His people today with love, mercy, and gentleness.

Modern society pushes people to demand instead of yield, to shout instead of speak softly, to be aggressive instead of humble, and to act with brazenness and brashness instead of gentleness and kindness. Christians must resist these trends by striving to imitate Jesus Christ’s many wonderful character traits and by following the Apostle Paul’s instructions to Christians long ago: “Let your gentleness be known to all men” (Philippians 4:5).

If you’d like to read more about the fruits of a true Christian, you can request a free copy of *What Is a True Christian?*, or read it online at TomorrowsWorld.org.

—Josh Lyons

The Middle East in Prophecy

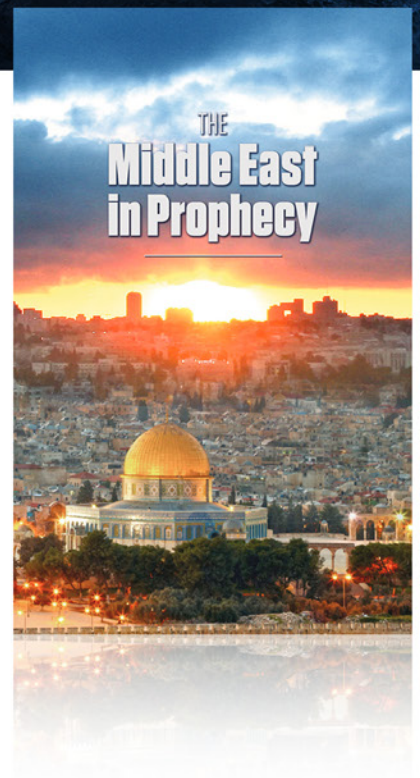
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THE Works OF HIS HANDS

Nature's Micro Flier

On May 21 of this year, SpaceX launched its Falcon 9 rocket—its second privately funded, manned flight to the International Space Station. People were amazed by the incredible power of the rocket's engines, which provided 1.7 million pounds of thrust to push it into space. They were even more impressed when the first-stage rocket landed itself, ready for reuse. The technology used to bring the AX-2 mission crew to and from the station is certainly impressive, and many are dreaming about a future mission to colonize Mars. If we were to send a spacecraft to Mars, it would need to provide everything humans need for the eight- to nine-month voyage, as well as the supplies necessary for beginning a new community on the red planet.

But what if God's creation already included a capsule that could colonize new places while carrying life, with all the supplies needed to sustain it? Let us further stipulate that this vessel contain sufficient programmed information to control the birth, growth, development, and reproduction of its contents for untold generations of life. Then let's add the capacity to adapt, within the limits of its programming, to challenging environments. A protective capsule, means of transportation, necessary food provisions—all would need to be included.

Further, what if the Creator shrank all that technology and payload into something the size of a pencil eraser and made it seemingly lighter than air? What if all this technology were contained completely within a quarter-inch capsule weighing less than 500 micrograms—and had to function without a team of computer-wielding engineers, physicists, and meteorologists? Is this ludicrous?

Not at all! Such technology is likely trampled under the shoes of sky-gazing viewers of SpaceX launches. Under their feet, embedded in soil, lies the common but remarkable dandelion seed.

Truly a Flying Machine

Dandelion seeds are some of the best fliers in nature, catching the wind and spreading as far as 150 kilometers (about 93 miles)—all without generating a single pound of thrust. Each seed is harnessed by a long stem to a parachute-like canopy made of hair-like bristles. The flower seeds and their parachutes make up the puffballs that children scatter into the wind. Recent research creates an intricate picture of these seeds, unmistakably engineered for flight.

In a 2018 study, scientists simulated dandelion seeds' flight with a wind tunnel and man-made silicon imitations, along with actual dandelion seed specimens. What they found was a very distinct "bubble" of wind pattern that formed around the seed as it stabilized in flight—similar to what you might see in flowing water as it forms eddies around a rock in a stream. This bubble forms when just the right amount of air is allowed to pass through the parachute ("porosity") and just the right amount of air is resisted by the parachute. The resulting air turbulence "connects" to the seed as long as the porosity stays between 77.42 and 84.97 percent. Remarkably, the seed itself expertly achieves this optimal zone of porosity! This remarkable balance is achieved in countless successful seed "flights" on six of the earth's continents. No government or private space program has achieved such a success record ("Innovative plant: How does

the dandelion drift its seeds?," University of Notre Dame, 2021).

However, this little hang glider occasionally folds its "wings" and declines to fly. The dandelion seed is capable of making adjustments that are much like calling a rocket launch off at the last minute when a storm system moves in. When moisture levels in the atmosphere are high, the dandelion parachute closes, letting the seed drop near a possibly well-watered parent plant. The seed is also able to open the canopy fully, to take advantage of breezes more likely to occur in dry atmospheric conditions.

Miniaturization at Its Best

How moisture alters the dandelions' parachute shape was a mystery until 2022, when a team of international researchers used humidity-controlled chambers and an electron microscope to study this action. At the base of the hair-like bristles that form the parachute, scientists found plant tissues that let the bristles open and close. These activating tissues absorb moisture to varying degrees, expanding in dry conditions and contracting in wet conditions—yet no valuable energy is used in this passive process.

Examining parachute bristles under their electron microscope, researchers saw the intricate way plant tissues are attached, arranged in a radial fashion that ensures coordinated, simultaneous, and symmetrical opening and closing of the parachute. This self-directed, weather-dependent, pre-flight preparation, along with its propulsion technology, is no less remarkable than any rocket ("Dandelion pappus morphing is actuated by radially patterned material swelling," *Nature Communications*, May 6, 2022; "Engineers uncover secret 'thinking' behind dandelions' seed dispersal," Imperial College London, *Imperial.ac.uk*, June 1, 2022).

And there is even more remarkable complexity to the lowly dandelion seed than its flight apparatus. Like all seeds, it contains the genetic information needed to form a new plant that will itself produce seeds. Even the smallest seeds contain an immense amount of information. According to *Scientific American*, "The 74 million million bytes of information in the Library of Congress could be crammed into a DNA archive the size of a poppy seed—6,000 times over" ("DNA: The Ultimate Data-Storage Solution," May 28, 2021).

The dandelion seed also has a component called the endosperm, which contains all the necessary nu-

trients for the embryo to form a seedling to take root in its destination soil. And the seed coat, without the aid of materials and metals composing a rocket shield, is sufficient to protect the valuable spark of future life within. This remarkable coat can even stay intact through the entire digestive tract of a seed-ingesting bird or mammal, so the seed can germinate and develop wherever it is deposited into soil.

Our Amazingly Engineered "Life Capsule"

Human beings existed for thousands of years without the benefit of rockets. But what would happen if a seed were not complete, unable to sprout and eventually mature? What if one part or one piece of an intricate seed were missing, or only partially developed and formed? Were it not for its synergy of parts and pieces, it could not replicate and form a seed-producing plant

The dandelion seed is capable of making adjustments that are much like calling a rocket launch off at the last minute when a storm system moves in.

to continue to exist. It would be as useless as a multi-billion-dollar space shuttle with a loose screw. Seeds, which form a crucial platform for life on earth, would cease to be—and life itself would be jeopardized.

Rockets are built by engineers, machinists, and teams of scientists. But by whom was a seed first built? If it came from a plant, where did that plant come from? Some, like well-known scientists Fred Hoyle and Richard Dawkins, have entertained the idea of *panspermia*—that alien organisms seeded our planet. This is an imaginative way to avoid the mathematical improbability of life on earth arising by chance. But the problem remains—how did the supposed aliens and organisms come to be?

We don't need to imagine the amazing reality of the dandelion seed. Even a lowly dandelion plant does not leave its succeeding generations without a full genetic account of the information governing its life. Might your Creator have left you an account of your beginnings? Wouldn't it be interesting to find out for yourself? Begin today with the Bible's book of Genesis to learn how God formed a "space capsule" even more intricate than a dandelion seed. We call it Earth.

—Bryan Fall

Laziness: Britain’s Latest Plague

In a sobering May 16 commentary for *The Telegraph*, journalist Philip Johnston lamented the trend he sees in Britain—adults choosing to live on welfare rather than working. The number of British citizens who choose not to work is at an all-time high. Ninety percent of farm laborers are immigrants, and still there are not enough workers to keep fruit from rotting in British fields. Net migration in 2022 was about 1 million, many of whom were brought in to fill vacant UK jobs—jobs that many unemployed people could have taken but chose not to. Efforts to recruit UK citizens to work on farms or in the service industry, or even in certain trades, have more or less failed. Yet foreigners are pouring in and willing to work.

Bible prophecy warns that at the end of the age, the citizens of many of the Israelite-descended nations will descend “lower and lower,” while foreigners will rise “higher and higher” (Deuteronomy 28:43). God also warned, “You shall plant vineyards and tend them, but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them” (v. 39). Britain is not alone, and the peoples of many prosperous modern nations will feel the impact of this prophecy as more and more otherwise capable men and women grow content to live on the public dole instead of doing their part.

Many who live in the most blessed nations of the earth find that a society filled with ease and plenty is too often also an environment where laziness abounds. In contrast, the Apostle Paul admonished first-century Christians tempted to laziness and unwilling to work, “If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat” (2 Thessalonians 3:10). In the future, this biblical principle will be a powerful motivator against laziness—a trait God condemns throughout the Bible.

Violence Against Teachers Is Increasing

In December 2022, students in a Nevada middle school assaulted a teacher who saw them sneaking in through an exit-only door (*Wall Street Journal*, June 4, 2023). As she told them to turn around, they slammed her face into a locker in the hallway. According to law enforcement, students in the school district have committed over three dozen acts of criminal battery against school staff so far this school year.

In a recent nationwide survey of almost 15,000 teachers, 14 percent reported experiencing violent events perpetrated by students. Nearly half of the teachers surveyed said they wanted to quit their jobs or move to a different school. A major cause cited for the increased violence is the lowering of disciplinary standards, emboldening students to feel they can commit violence against teachers without any fear of consequences. Long-

time teachers report that students are far quicker now than in years past to turn to physical force instead of just inflammatory words. Some school districts now equip teachers with panic buttons in case they feel unsafe or need assistance to quell student violence.

The prophet Isaiah warned of a time immediately before Jesus Christ’s return, when “children are their oppressors” (Isaiah 3:12). However, Isaiah also foretold a coming time of world peace after the return of the Messiah as the Prince of Peace, when children and their elders will live in harmony, respect, and safety (Zechariah 8:4–5).

Medicalized “Gender Transition” Called into Question

The prestigious *Economist* magazine recently ran a story titled “The evidence to support medicalized gender transitions in adolescents is worryingly weak” (April 5, 2023). The article reviewed current research

studies and highlighted trends in treatment. One major finding was that these transition treatments are seldom questioned in the United States. However, in many European nations, there are grave questions and many concerns about so-called “gender transition therapy.”

A review of the research reveals major concerns about these procedures and that many studies that propose to assess “gender transition” treatments are significantly flawed. These include a review study that purported to find few side effects with “transition” procedures but failed to examine whether the therapy was even effective. Other studies repeatedly show that this “therapy” has detrimental effects. Although the research is currently limited, three recent studies have shown that of those who start “gender transition therapy,” 7 to 30 percent chose to stop the therapy before it was completed. The thrust of the *Economist* article speaks to just how aggressively medicalized



“gender affirmation” is being pushed by advocates, even within professional institutions, in spite of its clearly questionable effectiveness and unknown long-term outcomes.

Society appears intent on promoting practices without considering their consequences or morality. Doctors, once tasked with “doing no harm,” seem to have cast that philosophy aside. As Isaiah prophesied about society at the end of the age, “the whole head is sick” (Isaiah 1:5). Ultimately, we see in modern medicine, and society as a whole, a parallel to the degraded morality of the pre-monarchic Israelite peoples: “In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes” (Judges 17:6). Without the moral compass of the Bible and a submission to the authority and leadership of God, there is no central source for morality. We should not be surprised by what we are seeing—it is just one more reason we need the return of the Lawgiver Himself, Jesus Christ, to change this corrupted world.

Human Body Designed for Earth

As mankind “boldly goes” to space to study and learn, scientists are studying the effects of microgravity on the body and the brain. They have found that spending long amounts of time in space (six months or more) causes changes in the brain’s anatomy (*Reuters*, June 8, 2023). Results from NASA-funded research show

that prolonged exposure to microgravity causes body fluids to pool in the brain and enlarge the brain’s ventricles. Scientists also discovered it takes three years in Earth’s gravity for the brain to recover. This led researchers to suggest that astronauts should not go on back-to-back extended trips to space.

Researchers have long known that age-related expansion of brain ventricles leads to decreased cognitive abilities. So, it appears that space travel may negatively impact the thinking ability of those spending extended time in space. Some scientists are encouraged that ventricular changes in the brain do not increase further between six months and a year, which may bode well for extended space travel—for example, to Mars. However, there is no data on brain recovery time after these longer trips. Scientists also know that time spent in space causes “bone and muscle atrophy, cardiovascular changes, issues with the balance system in the inner ear and a syndrome involving the eyes. Elevated cancer risk from the greater exposure to solar radiation that astronauts may encounter the further they travel from Earth is another concern.”

Human beings have long desired to travel to the stars. However, as more research is conducted, it is becoming obvious that the human body was specifically designed to operate on Earth. Our true voyages into space will only come

when humans are changed from mortal to immortal after the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:50–54).

A Coming “Brain Chip”?

Elon Musk’s Neuralink company just received approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to study the effects of this new technology in human subjects (*BBC*, May 26, 2023). The tech firm intends to implant microchips in the brain to address certain health conditions such as paralysis and blindness and to enable access to computers by the disabled. Some instances of this technology are already working. Recently, “a 40-year-old Dutch man who was paralyzed in a cycling accident 12 years ago” received implants which helped him regain the ability to walk (*The Guardian*, June 7, 2023).

However, there are concerns about where this technology is headed. A director of the Information Commissioner’s Office in the UK recently noted, “Neurotechnology collects intimate personal information that people are often not aware

of, including emotions and complex behavior. The consequences could be dire if these technologies are developed or deployed inappropriately.” Yet, through Neuralink, Elon Musk is hoping that his company’s implants will become a “general population device” with the potential to serve as “a backup drive for your non-physical being, your digital soul.”

Humans have long desired to play God—not unlike Satan, the devil, who tried to usurp God’s throne (Isaiah 14:12–15). While this neurotechnology may allow doctors to cure previously incurable diseases, human beings need to be careful about assuming godlike prerogatives—because there is a real God. The Bible records that God intervened powerfully at the tower of Babel to stop the direction that godless society was going and limit humanity’s capabilities (Genesis 11:1–6). Few in our increasingly secular world sufficiently recognize the dangers of allowing our technological growth to outpace our moral capacity to wield new technologies in an ethical way. TW



Elon Musk, co-founder of Neuralink and OpenAI, at Vivatex in Paris, France

LETTERS TO TW

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK



I have been a Christian apologist for several decades. The article entitled “The War Against Normal” in your January 2023 issue is absolutely awesome. It should be *required reading* for all politicians, members of Congress, political think tanks, and all academics in our places of “higher learning.” I have gladly received your publication for several years, and I cannot find any error, contradiction of scripture, or untruth contained therein. Keep up the good work of strengthening the faith of true believers.

—Subscriber in Ontario

[Editor’s Note: The following letter comes from a guest at one of our live and in-person Tomorrow’s World Presentations, which are held in cities all around the globe. If you are interested in seeing if there is a soon-coming presentation in your area, you can find a schedule of planned presentations on our website at TomorrowsWorld.org.]

I attended the presentation “The Gathering Storm” presented by Mr. Rod McNair and Mr. Brandon Fall. Exceptionally well done. Knowledgeable and very sincere in every aspect of the discussion. With the question and answer session, the program lasted about two hours and no one was in a hurry to leave! Thank you for taking the time and effort to cover these critical topics of discussion, especially as they relate to Bible prophecy. Everyone working to support this event was very polite and genuinely concerned to ensure the program ran smoothly—which it did! Very professional, in line

with your TV broadcasts. Again, thank you for a great message and a job well done!

—Subscriber in Colorado

Bula, *Tomorrow’s World*! Thank you very much for renewing my subscription. I was very worried about losing out as it’s so interesting to read. It’s made me more interested in news about Israel and on the various subjects about our world now and in the past. Thank you for your good work in helping readers like me to be knowledgeable.

—Subscriber in Fiji

Many thanks for the booklet *John 3:16*, which I am currently reading, also for the June 2023 issue of *Tomorrow’s World* magazine, the lead article ties in well with the booklet. I liked the article “Our Wonderfully Round Earth,” which answers the “Flat Earth” conspiracy theory both graciously and informatively. Also, the article “Israel’s Son and America’s Future” I found fascinating and will be looking further into the subject.

—Subscriber in Scotland

What a blessing the study guides [*from the Tomorrow’s World Bible Study Course*] have been. I find myself doing the whole study guide in one day. Can’t seem to put it down. What a joy to have the word open up! I will be sad as my last lessons should be here soon. I enjoyed them so much, I am going to read them again.

—Subscriber in Virginia

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Mail your letters to “Letters to the Editor” at one of the Regional Offices listed on page 4 of this magazine, or send email to Letters@TomorrowsWorld.org. Letters may be edited for space and clarity.

TOMORROW'S WORLD

TELEVISION LOG



AUSTRALIA

Nationwide 7TWO SU 7:00 a.m.
Nationwide SC10 SU 7:30 a.m.

BARBADOS

St. Michael CBC 8 SU 2:00 p.m.

JAMAICA

Kingston TVJ SU 7:00 a.m.

NEW ZEALAND

Nationwide TVNZ2 SU 8:00 a.m.
Nationwide TVNZ2 +1 SU 8:00 a.m.

PHILIPPINES

Nationwide TV5 MO 11:30 p.m.
Nationwide TV5 TU 12:00 a.m.

SOUTH AFRICA

Nationwide CTV/SA SU 11:00 a.m.

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

Nationwide CNC3-TV SU 8:00 a.m.

UK & NW EUROPE

WORD (TWN) Sky TV 590 SU 11:00 a.m.
Sky TV 590 SU 12:30 a.m.
Sky TV 590 FR 12:00 a.m.



CANADA

Nationwide Networks (All times Eastern)

Vision SA 3:30 a.m.

FAITH TV SU 5:30 p.m.
MO-FR 10:30 p.m.
TU 5:00 p.m.

CHNU MO-FR 10:00 p.m.
CTV (Maritimes) SU 7:30 a.m.
CTV (Alberta) SU 1:30 p.m.

UNITED STATES

Nationwide Networks (All times Eastern)

Binge SU 9:00 a.m.

Charge Network SU 7:30 a.m.

Circle TV SU 8:00 a.m.

COMET SU 7:30 a.m.

The CW Plus SU 8:00 a.m.
MO 2:00 a.m.

getTV SU 7:00 a.m.

Impact TV SU 11:00 p.m.
MO 10:30 p.m.
SA 11:00 p.m.

NewsNation (formerly WGN) SU 6:00 a.m.

Rewind SU 9:00 a.m.

The Word Network SU 6:00 a.m.
SU 7:30 p.m.
FR 7:00 p.m.

DISH Network* (All times Eastern)

Impact Ch. 268 SU 11:00 p.m.
MO 10:30 p.m.

DIRECTV* (All times Eastern)

Word Ch. 373 SU 6:00 a.m.
SU 7:30 p.m.
FR 7:00 p.m.

For the most up-to-date listings, please go to
TomorrowsWorld.org/tune-in

AK Anchorage KYUR SU 6:00 a.m.
Fairbanks KATN SU 7:00 a.m.
Juneau KJUD SU 6:00 a.m.

AL Dothan WTVY (CW) SU 7:00 a.m.
Huntsville WZDX SU 9:30 a.m.
Montgomery WBMM (CW) SU 7:00 a.m.
Opelika WLTX SU 7:30 a.m.

AR El Dorado KNOE SU 7:00 a.m.
Fayetteville KHOG SU 7:00 a.m.
Fort Smith KFTA SU 10:00 a.m.
Fort Smith KHBS SU 7:00 a.m.
Jonesboro KAIT SU 7:00 a.m.
Little Rock KASN SU 10:30 a.m.

AZ Tucson KMSB SU 8:30 a.m.
Yuma KECY (CW) SU 9:00 a.m.

CA Bakersfield KGET (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Chico KHSL (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

El Centro KECY (CW) SU 9:00 a.m.

Eureka KECALD/KVIQ (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Monterey KION (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Palm Springs KCWQ (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Salinas KION (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

San Francisco BAVC (Public Access) WE 8:00 a.m.

San Luis Obispo KSBY (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Santa Barbara KSBY (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Santa Maria KSBY (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

CO Colorado Springs KXTU SU 9:00 a.m.

Colorado Springs KXTU SU 10:30 a.m.

Grand Junction KJCT (CW) SU 7:00 a.m.

CT Hartford WWLP (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

DC Washington DC WDCA SU 7:30 a.m.

DE Harrington WMDT (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

FL Ft. Lauderdale WBFS SU 6:30 a.m.

Gainesville WCJB SU 6:00 a.m.

Gainesville WCJB (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Jacksonville WCWJ SU 6:30 a.m.

Miami WBFS SU 6:30 a.m.

Panama City WJHG (CW) SU 7:00 a.m.

Tallahassee WTLF SU 8:00 a.m.

Tampa Bay WTOG SU 8:00 a.m.

GA Albany WALB (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Albany WALB SU 11:00 a.m.

Atlanta WATL SU 10:00 a.m.

Augusta WAGT (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Columbus WLTX (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Macon WMAZ SU 8:00 a.m.

Savannah WSAV SU 8:00 a.m.

Thomasville WTLF (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

IA Ottumwa KWOT SU 8:00 a.m.

ID Boise KBOI SU 7:00 a.m.

Idaho Falls KIFI SU 7:00 a.m.

Twin Falls KMVT SU 7:00 a.m.

IL Chicago WJYS SU 8:00 a.m.

Chicago WJYS SU 8:30 a.m.

Peoria WHOI SU 7:00 a.m.

Quincy WGEM SU 7:00 a.m.

IN Fort Wayne WPTA SU 7:00 a.m.

Fort Wayne WPTA SU 7:30 a.m.

Lafayette WFLI SU 7:00 a.m.

KS Kansas City KCWE SU 7:30 a.m.

Topeka KTKA SU 7:00 a.m.

KY Bowling Green WBKO SU 7:00 a.m.

Lexington WTVQ SU 7:00 a.m.

Louisville WBNA SU 9:30 a.m.

Paducah WDKA SU 11:00 a.m.

LA Alexandria KALB SU 7:00 a.m.

Lafayette KATC SU 7:00 a.m.

Lake Charles KPLC SU 7:00 a.m.

Monroe KMCT SU 6:00 a.m.

Monroe KNOE SU 7:00 a.m.

New Orleans WNOL SU 7:00 a.m.

Shreveport KSHV SU 10:00 a.m.

West Monroe KMCT SU 6:00 a.m.

MA Springfield WWLP SU 7:00 a.m.

ME Bangor WABI SU 8:00 a.m.

Presque Isle WBPQ SU 8:00 a.m.

MI Alpena WBAE SU 8:00 a.m.

Lansing WLAJ SU 8:00 a.m.

Lansing WLAJ SU 11:00 a.m.

Calumet WBKP SU 8:00 a.m.

MD Cloquet KDHL (CW) SU 8:00 a.m.

Duluth KDHL SU 8:00 a.m.

Mankato KMNF/KEYC (CW) SU 9:00 a.m.

Rochester KTTC SU 7:00 a.m.

MO Columbia KOMU SU 7:00 a.m.

Joplin KFJX SU 8:30 a.m.

Kansas City KCWE SU 7:30 a.m.

St. Joseph KNPG SU 7:00 a.m.

St. Louis KPLR SU 6:30 a.m.

MS Biloxi WXXV SU 7:00 a.m.

Columbus WCBT SU 7:00 a.m.

Greenwood WBWO SU 7:00 a.m.

Hattiesburg WHLT/WXXX SU 7:00 a.m.

Meridian WTOK SU 7:00 a.m.

MT Billings KTVO SU 7:00 a.m.

Butte KBZK SU 7:00 a.m.

Butte KXLF SU 7:00 a.m.

Glendive KWZB SU 7:00 a.m.

Great Falls KRTV SU 7:00 a.m.

Helena KTVH SU 7:00 a.m.

Missoula KPAX SU 7:00 a.m.

NC Asheville WGGG SU 9:30 a.m.

Asheville WGGG SU 11:30 a.m.

Asheville WAGN SU 9:00 a.m.

Charlotte WMYT SU 8:30 a.m.

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Greenville WHKY MO 7:30 p.m.

Hickory WRAZ SU 7:30 a.m.

Raleigh WWAY SU 8:00 a.m.

Willmington WWAY SU 8:00 a.m.

ND Bismarck KXMA (CW2) SU 7:00 a.m.

Fargo KJXB (CW) SU 7:00 a.m.

Williston KXMD SU 7:00 a.m.

NM Albuquerque KBWB SU 8:00 a.m.

Albuquerque KBWB SU 8:00 a.m.

NV Reno KOLO SU 7:00 a.m.

NY Binghamton WBNG SU 8:00 a.m.

Brooklyn BRIC SU 7:00 p.m.

Brooklyn BRIC MO 12:30 a.m.

Elmira WENY SU 8:00 a.m.

Watertown WWTI SU 7:00 a.m.

Utica KYWKTV SU 8:00 a.m.

OH Cincinnati WSTR SU 9:00 a.m.

Cleveland WUAB SU 8:30 a.m.

Columbus WOXB/WXC/WGCT/WOIZ SU 8:00 a.m.

Toledo BBCL SU 7:30 a.m.

Zanesville WBZV SU 8:00 a.m.

OK Ada KTEN SU 7:00 a.m.

Lawton KAUZ SU 7:00 a.m.

Tulsa KCWC SU 8:00 a.m.

OR Bend KTVZ SU 8:00 a.m.

Eugene KMTR SU 8:00 a.m.

Medford KTVL SU 8:00 a.m.

PA Erie WSEE SU 8:00 a.m.

Philadelphia WPSG SU 7:30 a.m.

Pittsburgh WPCW SU 7:30 a.m.

SC Charleston WCBD SU 8:00 a.m.

Columbia WOLO SU 11:00 a.m.

Greenville WWMB SU 8:00 a.m.

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Myrtle Beach WWMB SU 8:00 a.m.

Rock Hill WAXN SU 9:00 a.m.

Rock Hill WMYT SU 8:30 a.m.

SD Rapid City KKLO (ION/CW) SU 7:00 a.m.

Sioux Falls KFSY SU 7:00 a.m.

TN Jackson WBJK SU 7:00 a.m.

Knoxville WKNN SU 12:00 a.m.

Knoxville WKNN SU 7:00 a.m.

Knoxville WKNN SU 7:30 a.m.

Knoxville WKNN SU 6:00 p.m.

Memphis WLMT SU 10:00 a.m.

TX Abilene KTXS SU 7:00 a.m.

Amarillo KVI

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UPCOMING TELECASTS

Have You Taken the Mark of the Beast?

Your Bible warns of a mysterious and dangerous mark that true Christians must not accept!
July 27–August 2

The Coming Four Horsemen

Will you recognize these mysterious prophesied figures when they burst onto the world scene?
August 3–9

Will You Inherit Heaven or the Earth?

God has an amazing reward awaiting those who will stay faithful to their Savior, Jesus Christ!
August 10–16

The Fall of Rome: Lessons for Us

Civilizations rise and fall. What can the fall of the Roman Empire teach us about our future?
August 17–23

When Atheists Attack!

How can you respond to atheists' doubt and disbelief? You can know the powerful answers!
August 24–30

Seven Proven Keys to Answered Prayer

If you feel that your prayers aren't being heard, consider these strategies for a breakthrough!
August 31–September 6

Schedule subject to change

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