



THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

The Official Newspaper of the Church of God International

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"Put on the whole armor of God" (Ephesians 6:13)

Spring 2018

HOW WAS PASSOVER REPLACED BY EASTER...And Who Did It?

Unquestionably, Jesus Christ was Jewish and observed Passover. He never kept an Easter in His life! So, how was this Holy Day changed? And who changed the day He observed, chose, and instituted as the Holy Day for taking His sacrificial emblems, representing His body and blood? Where is the biblical record confirming the authority for this replacement?

by Bill Watson



Bill Watson

Church history is a fascinating story. There are many angles and approaches one can take when exploring the nuances of the ecclesiastical record. However, the means by which Passover was abandoned and replaced with Easter is fairly straightforward and clearly documented as to *who* and *how* it was done. The *real question* underscoring this issue is, did they have the *right* to do it and more importantly, is that what *Jesus wanted*?

Before we go ahead and answer those questions, let's review the historical *facts* of *how* and *who* made this change so we can put this event into its proper context. Otherwise, we might marginalize the *significance* of the result and overlook the real tragedy of this *unauthorized* change.

How Passover Was Abandoned and Replaced

When reviewing the historical record of the *Passover/Easter* controversy, it is undeniable the early New Testament church *DID NOT* observe Easter. They continued observing Passover, but with a *new significance and understanding*. Notice, "There is *no indication* of the observance of the Easter festival in the New Testament, or in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers... The first Christians continued the observance of the Jewish [God's] festivals, though in a new spirit, as commemorations of events which those festivals had foreshadowed" (*Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th Edition, p.828*). In addition, we are informed, "Neither the apostles, therefore nor the Gospels, have anywhere imposed...Easter...The Savior and His apostles have enjoined us by *no law* to keep this feast [Easter]...And that the observance originated not by legislation [of the apostles], but as a custom the facts themselves indicate" (fourth-century scholar, Socrates Scholasticus, *Ecclesiastical History*, Chapter 22). The Apostle Paul confirms he maintained the customary observance of Passover, as was given to him by Christ Himself, when he said, "For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed [*not* Easter Sunday] took bread:" (1 Corinthians 11:23). Keep in mind Jesus Christ was betrayed during the night of Nisan 14 (Luke 22:15-22), which was considered the evening portion of the day of Passover (Exodus 12:6-13). Remember, God begins a new day at evening, commencing at sunset—see Genesis 1.

With this established fact and connection in mind, how then was it changed from the 14th of Nisan (Passover) to the SUNDAY following the first full moon after the vernal equinox and then assigned the pagan name Easter (Ishtarte) to it? This is no minor change from the original observance Jesus Christ exemplified, especially when considering people *died* refusing to obey this change. And furthermore, to supersede the authority of Jesus' own example is obviously presumptuous at best; and at worst, it's outright heretical! How could such a blatant act of contradiction and disregard for our Lord's example and commands be allowed to take place? This is a question all of us should seriously ask ourselves!

We must first understand the contention between the Western congregations led by Rome and the Eastern Asiatic congregations. This debate intensified during the second century, and is historically known as the *Quartodeciman Controversy*. "Quartodeciman" is simply a Latin term indicating "fourteenth." What the ecclesiastical record of the second century reveals, is that there was a controversy over the observance of the fourteenth day. Specifically, it concerned the change from the 14th of Nisan (Passover) to Easter, with all of its pagan connections, associations, and typologies of fertility and fecundity. This was unequivocally contested and rejected by the congregations of the Asiatic East. It came to a head when Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna (who was personally taught by John the apostle), faced off with Anticetus, the preeminent bishop of Rome in about 150 A.D.

Notice what history tells us from the Catholic Church itself, concerning this second century controversy: "The dioceses of all Asia, as from the *older tradition* [*Passover*], held that the *fourteenth day of the moon*, on which day the Jews were commanded to sacrifice the lamb, should *always be observed* as the feast of the life-giving Pasch [*Passover*]...However, it was not the custom of the churches in the rest of the world [*primarily the West, represented by Rome*] to end it at this point [*allegedly a non-biblical based fast ending on Easter Sunday*], as they observed the practice, which from apostolic tradition has prevailed to the present time... Synods and assemblies of bishops [*not Jesus Christ's example or the Gospel records*] were held on this account and all with one consent through mutual correspondence drew up an ecclesiastical decree [*superseding Christ's personal example as recorded in the Gospels*] that the mystery of the resurrection of the Lord should be celebrated on no other day but, the Sunday [*Easter*] and that we should observe the close of the paschal fast on that day only. A letter of Saint Irenaeus is among the extracts just referred to, and this shows that the diversity of prac-

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Open Church Policy

The *Church of God International* is an *open* church.

We have many people attending who are *new* in the faith. Some will not always keep each of God's laws as they should, and some will not believe everything we teach. We pray that they may be strengthened through the services we render and the examples we set as they come to a closer walk with their God. We request that you be neither judgmental nor base your standard for obedience on what you see your brother do. Christ is our standard, not weak and sinful men. Always remember that you will be judged for what *you* do, not what others do. Your job is to pray for them, set the right example, and please the Father in all that you do. Ω

— 2018 Holy Day Calendar —

New Testament Passover

March 29, 2018 (Observed at sundown)

Feast of Unleavened Bread

March 31 - April 6, 2018

Pentecost

May 20, 2018

Feast of Trumpets

September 10, 2018

Day of Atonement

September 19, 2018

Feast of Tabernacles

September 24 - September 30, 2018

More information will be forthcoming.

Last Great Day

October 1, 2018

Holy days are observed beginning sundown the previous evening and end at sundown on the days listed. Passover is observed at sundown on the day listed.

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Our Great Commission

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:19-20).

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Notice!

- It is the desire of the staff to publish *The International News* quarterly. We can do this only if *you*, the reader, help by submitting timely articles, reports, and pictures.
- With few exceptions, submissions should be from 800-1000 words in either .doc, docx, rtf, or .txt format.
- Submissions may be sent either to vancestinson@cgi.org or lloyd Cary@gmail.com or, preferably, to *both*.

DEADLINE for the *next* issue is **May 15th 2018**.

We look forward to seeing you soon... *in print!*



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NOTICE: *The International News* welcomes submissions of articles, features, church news, pictures, or manuscripts. However, it cannot be responsible for the return of unsolicited materials. Materials submitted can sent through the postal service, but electronic submissions are preferred.

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tice regarding Easter had existed at least from the time of Pope Sixtus. Further, Irenaeus states that St. Polycarp [*bishop of Smyrna*], who like the other Asiatic, kept Easter on the fourteenth day of the moon [*which is really Passover*], whatever day of the week that might be, following therein the tradition which he [*Polycarp*] claimed to have derived FROM ST. JOHN THE APOSTLE, but could not be persuaded by Pope Anicetus to relinquish his Quartodecimen observance. The question thus debated was therefore primarily whether Easter was to be kept on a Sunday, or whether Christians should observe the holyday of the Jews... Those who kept Easter [*Passover*] with the Jews were called Quartodecimans” (*Catholic Encyclopedia*) (*ibid.*, *emphasis mine*).

Clearly, the historical record from the Catholic Church proves that they themselves, *not Jesus Christ*, chose to exercise authority to change and sever the connection of Passover. Undoubtedly, there was a long-term agenda to shift and undermine any and all associations connecting Jewish Israeli underpinnings that were foundational to the early Christian Church. Remember, Paul said the household of God—the Church—is “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets [*not Synods, Councils, and bishops*], Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone” (Ephesians 2:20). There was absolutely NO AUTHORIZATION to change the framework of this major point of doctrine, disconnecting from Jesus Christ’s own appearance of worship exemplified by His life, habits, and customs (1 Peter 2:21; 1 John 2:6). It’s important we remember, Jesus Christ NEVER KEPT AN EASTER IN HIS LIFE! It’s undeniable, Easter has no biblical connection, foundation, or authority on the name of Jesus Christ that requires observance and/or recognition by any who claim Christ as their Savior.

Yet, regardless of these facts, this trend finally became law in the year A.D. 325, at the Council of Nicaea. Again notice, from the *Catholic Encyclopedia*: “The emperor himself [*Constantine*] writing to the churches after the council of Nicaea, exhorts, ‘At this meeting the question concerning the most holy day of Easter was discussed, and it was resolved by the united judgment of all present [*regardless of the example and commands of Jesus Christ and the original apostolic fathers, Matthew 26:17–30*] that this feast ought to be kept by all and in every place on one and the same day [*Easter Sunday*]... And first of all it appeared an unworthy thing that in the celebration of this most holy feast we should follow the practice of the Jews [*Passover*], who have impiously defiled their hands with enormous sin... for we have received from our Savior a different way [*Where then is the biblical proof or Christological authorization?*] ...and I myself [*Constantine*] have undertaken that this decision should meet with the approval of your sagacity in the hope that your wisdoms will gladly admit that practice which is observed [*Easter Sunday*] at once in the city of Rome and in Africa, throughout Italy and Egypt... with entire unity of judgment.’”

**“And why call ye me, Lord, Lord,
and do not the things which I say?”
(Luke 6:46)**

And finally, under the article “Councils” in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* again, we read about the purpose of the Council of Nicaea. “The first ecumenical, or council, of Nicaea (325 A.D.) lasted two months and twelve days. Three hundred and eighteen bishops were present. Hosius, bishop of Cordova, assisted as legate of Pope Sylvester. The Emperor, Constantine, was also present. To this council we owe the Creed of Nicaea, defining against Arius the true divinity of the Son of God [*Arius challenged the divinity of Jesus Christ*], and the fixing of the date for keeping Easter [*which opposed the Quartodecimans who observed Passover*].”

It was now made official: Easter Sunday, the day after the first full moon, after the spring equinox, became the day to celebrate Jesus Christ’s resurrection. This was a serious and critical **shift of theology**. Critical, because it not only changed the DAY of the observance, but changed the *focus*, the MEANING of the observance. It now became an observance and celebration of His resurrection, contrary to the biblical admonition of remembering His DEATH!

Notice what Paul says: “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death [*not His resurrection*] till he come” (1 Corinthians 11:26). There is a purposeful point of significance our Lord placed exclusively on Passover *concerning His death*. It’s very fundamental, but crucial to understand. Passover was intended to distinctly address the impeccable fact that it was by Jesus Christ’s sacri-

ficed life and shed blood that we have access to eternal life. Unfortunately, merging His death and resurrection into one holy day, as Easter describes, blurs the deep profound meaning of both these events by taking away the emphasis that each so richly deserves.



**Question: What’s missing
from this puzzle?**

Answer: Jesus Christ!

Unfortunately, on a broader scale, the abandonment of the observance of God’s holy days has contributed to this greatly. Understanding the additional holy days throughout the year, their enriched meanings and sequence they portray, would clarify how each step in the salvation/atonement process is remarkably explained for our understanding and spiritual appreciation. (Ask for our FREE booklet, *God’s Seasonal Plan*.)

**Specifically Identifying
Who Made the Change**

After the Council of Nicaea, the Roman government became more entangled with the ecclesiastical matters of the Church, derailing it further from the original intent by multiple means. “Emperor Theodosius (378–398 A.D.), made Christianity the State Religion of the Roman Empire, and made church membership compulsory. This was the worst calamity that has ever befallen the church. The forced conversion filled the churches with unregenerate people... Christ had designed to conquer by purely spiritual and moral means. Up to this time conversion was voluntary, a genuine change in heart and life. *But now the military spirit of Imperial Rome had entered the Church*. The Church had conquered the Roman Empire. But in reality the Roman Empire had conquered the Church, by making the Church over into the image of the Roman Empire. The Church had changed its nature, had entered its great Apostasy (2 Thessalonians 2:1–12), had become a political organization in the Spirit and pattern of Imperial Rome, and took its nose-dive into the millennium of Papal abominations. The Imperial Church of the 4th and 5th centuries had *become an entirely different institution* from the persecuted Church of the first three centuries. In its ambition to rule it lost and forgot the Spirit of Christ.” (*Halley’s Bible Handbook*, art. *Paganization of The Church*, p. 760).

The combination of Rome’s secular power and the integration of fertility symbols and observances, adopted from many of the existing pagan religions that saturated Rome, took its toll; and by means of forced compliance and/or persecution marginalized the true Church, reducing its influence. Notice again, “Conversion of the Barbarians, the Goths, Vandals and Huns who overthrew the Roman Empire accepted Christianity; But to a large extent their conversion was nominal and this further filled the Church with *Pagan practices*... *Conflicts with Heathen Philosophies*

Even as every generation seeks to interpret Christ in terms of its own thinking, so, no sooner had Christianity made its appearance than it began its process of amalgamation with Greek and Oriental philosophies; and their arose many Sects...” (*Halley’s Bible Handbook*, art. *Paganization of the Church*, p. 761).

Throughout history, the Christians remaining faithful to the commandments and testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:17) have been comparably small when measured against the traditional Christian community that has emerged and been so heavily influenced by the Hellenistic teachings of Greco-Roman culture. The liberties taken by the Catholic Church and many of the Popes, bishops, councils, synods, and emperors to rearrange the theology of Christ’s original teachings is unconscionable. Unfortunately, the hard reality is, much of traditional Christianity, Protestant and Catholic, is NOT theologically correct—and frankly, is primarily of Catholic origin, which has been also adopted by many of the Protestant, Evangelical, and fundamentalist Christian denominations!

Notice what Jesus says: “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye who work iniquity [*lawlessness*]” (Matthew 7:22–23).

Seriously, it would do us all some good to consider this possibility. It is very plausible one can think they are pleasing God when in fact they are not. It’s important to our Lord we worship Him in Spirit and in TRUTH. Love of the truth is *living the truth*. It’s easy

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Our true Passover Lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7)

to say we love and believe the truth, but we must love by *doing* (1 John 3:17–18). The hearers are not justified. Acting on what we know, or *living our faith* is key to justification and pleasing the true God (James 2:15–

26). Notice: “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and *do not* the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me and heareth my sayings, and *DOETH* them, I will shew you to whom he is like:” (Read the remaining verses located in Luke 6:46–49; they are revealing in light of the historical record you just read.) We are expected to believe AND *obey*. God expects us to “be that the Spirit of God dwell in you” (Romans 8:9). In other words, be an example of LIVING THE FAITH.

It is the height of arrogance, vanity, and ego to circumvent God in areas He reserves exclusive prerogative to define “what is to be.” The

historical record of the Passover/Easter controversy is a prime illustration of how man endeavors to evade God, avoiding His authority. History reveals the combination of the Greco-Roman government implemented by the ecclesiastic authority of the Popes and Catholic Councils over the centuries, *replaced Passover with Easter*. There is absolutely *no* biblical directive or Christ-like example throughout the whole Bible authorizing the institution of Easter as a Christian holy day! It is simply a “manmade” tradition adopted, concocted, and assimilated with ancient pagan fertility rites and symbols that are well connected to the sun-worshipping religions of Babylon that came down to us through the Greco-Macedonian/Roman cultures. Lamentably, over the years it has simply contributed to misdirecting much of the vast Christian community, causing it to render the laws of God to no effect because of the traditions of men. Even Jesus Christ had to personally deal with this same principle during His ministry and cautioned against it. Notice what He said. “...Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition” (Mark 7:6–9).

This being the case, why not consider following the example Jesus Christ left us and begin keeping the Passover instead of Easter, as was originally intended? Because, as was mentioned at the outset, what underscores this issue is not that Passover was replaced—that is an obvious historical fact. Instead, what’s really at the heart of this issue is, which laws will you obey?—Jesus the Christ’s?—or the decrees (traditions) of men? Ω

Did Christ *Really* Die On a Friday and Rise On a Sunday?

Shortly before His crucifixion, the murder-plotting religious leaders of Jesus’ day demanded a “sign” that He was, indeed, the Messiah. He gave them a sign—a sign that religionists *disbelieve to this very day*: “For AS Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly, SO [in like manner] shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matthew 12:39–40).

Most of Christendom traditionally believes that Jesus was crucified on Friday afternoon (Good Friday), was placed in the tomb before sundown Friday night, rested in the tomb on the Sabbath (Saturday), and was resurrected on Sunday morning at dawn. Shockingly, either that tradition is *false*, or you have no Savior!

The *sign* Jesus gave was not *just* the fact of His death or even of His resurrection—no, not at all—but the **LENGTH OF TIME** He would be in the heart of the earth—the grave—before being resurrected. Yet millions deny that sign! Was Jesus mistaken? Did He lie? Do the math! Can you honestly squeeze 72 hours between Friday and Sunday? Can you explain this sign to others *right from your own Bible*?

Once you understand the *Three Days and Three Nights*, you will see that there is absolutely *no credibility* for the Easter tradition or Sunday worship.



Was this Christ’s tomb?

Be sure to request your **FREE** copy of this shocking, yet easy-to-read and understand booklet, *The Three Days and Three Nights*! You have never read anything quite like it.

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Should Christians Observe Easter?

When was the last time you went to your public library, obtained one of the leading encyclopedias or histories, and studied an article on the subject of Easter? If you’re like the average person, the answer is probably “never.” We have done your homework *for you*! We have amassed much information in print and on the *Armor of God* program.

To millions of professing, churchgoing Christians, *Easter* is one of their chief religious festivals. But what do eggs, rabbits, new clothing, sunrise services, and hot cross buns have to do with JESUS CHRIST?

These many professing Christians *suppose* they are gathering together to commemorate the anniversary of the precise moment Jesus Christ rose from the dead. They believe they are celebrating the resurrection. Of course, it is doubtful that even one of these sincere people has read what you are invited to read or watch on line. Yet the information is readily available in any reasonably large public library.

- **Should Christians Observe Easter?** (booklet)
- **Exploring the Pagan Roots of Easter**
Join Bill Watson and Wayne Hendrix as they explore the historical origins of the Easter holiday. Go to our web site at:
<http://cgi.org/armor-of-god-web-chat/2015/3/3/ebu0irwgl1gpf431wig3kl9fnlhe26?rq=easter>.
- **The Origins of Easter** by Jeff Reed:
<http://cgi.org/jeff-reed-origins-of-easter/?rq=easter><http://cgi.org/jeff-reed-origins-of-easter/?rq=easter>.
- **Is Easter Christian?** by Bronson James:
<http://cgi.org/armor-of-god-is-easter-christian/?rq=easter>.
- **How to Be a Real Christian**
<http://cgi.org/how-to-be-a-real-christian/?rq=Lent>.

May God bless you as you follow His lead!

Ω



George Roper

Agape Love

by George Roper

In the United States, much attention has been drawn of late to gender relations, primarily in the work place. A movement of

accountability has grown that confronts a culture where men,

often in positions of influence, infringe upon the personal boundaries of the women in their circle. This movement challenges the dynamic between the sexes where a misogynistic undertone has become enmeshed with chivalry. Gallantry of this sort reveals itself in casual banter, comments, and actions that exhibit various degrees of lascivious innuendo. These practices, that have recently been the subject of many exposés, are incongruous to the Christian walk. Be they expressed out of naivete, insensitivity, or a proclivity to yield to one's inhibitions, if present in oneself, these are aspects of one's own discipline that need to be reformed. The walk that the followers of Christ are to follow is opposed to the degradation of women but instead mandates that women are held in great esteem.

The vast majority of women can personally identify with being objectified in some form or fashion. For many, it is a perpetual circumstance with which to contend. In the exchange between men and women, many men can be impervious as to how untoward comments and behaviors actually resonate with women. Were even well-intentioned men to first empathize with the woman's frame of experience, it would increase overall tact and civility.

In a study released in 2013 by the *Max Planck Institute for Human and Cognitive Brain Sciences*, researchers performed an experiment that measured participants' sense of empathy. Participants operated in a series of tests in groups of two. In one trial, Subject A was shown a picture of maggots and simultaneously had slime placed on her hand, while Subject B was shown a picture of a puppy, as she had soft fur put in hand. Both subjects could see the stimuli that the other was exposed to during their own trial.

The subjects were then asked to gauge their own emotions and those of their partner. While both subjects were exposed to the same type of stimuli, they found it easy to gauge their partner's emotions. For example, if one subject was exposed to a stinkbug and the other exposed to a spider, the first subject was able to adequately perceive how seeing a spider would feel for her partner. However, empathy dropped drastically when one subject was receiving pleasant stimuli and the other was receiving unpleasant stimuli. The subject that felt good deemed their partner's negative experience to be less traumatic than it actually was.

The subject's self-centric preoccupation with their own feelings and circumstances made them less attuned to the other test subject's well-being. Likewise, men are often in a position where they are detached from how women feel as the recipient of coarse overtures and how such incidents may be constituted as a negative experience. Yet when empathy is employed in conjunction with God's precepts, men and women can have exchanges free from the encumbrances that arise when those principles are deviated from or ignored.

In our personal lives, governing our behavior is indispensable. Failing to uphold a degree of etiquette can result in unfavorable consequences in public, at home, or at work. How we carry ourselves with one another at our church gatherings is just as paramount. During fellowship, one would expect to have exchanges with others that exemplify the character of Christ. It is the onus of our own personal self-governance that we uphold decorum in our interactions with each other. The protocols of God's Word properly outline how we ought to behave. Paul, in advising Timothy on his conduct, laid out a course of action that we would do well to employ in our own dealings. He proposed that we "...treat younger men like brothers, older women like mothers and younger women like sisters, with absolute purity" (1 Timothy 5:1b-2, Complete Jewish Bible). It is when we esteem others with the same

personal value as we would that of family that the mental progression towards how we should view others and in turn, treat them, is more easily understood.

In Ephesians, Paul shares yet another example of how we ought to co-mingle. He further reinforces how we are to carry ourselves as we relate to the opposite sex. "Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God. Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God's people. Obscene stories, foolish talk and coarse jokes—these are not for you. Instead, let there be thankfulness to God" (Ephesians 5:1-4, New Living Translation). When we imitate God and practice His standard of love, then we become more inclined to be like Christ in our behavior.

Christ pointed out that one of the traits which would be indicative of His followers, both male and female, would be that of displaying love. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35, King James Version). The word "love" is translated from the Greek word *agape* [agápē]. Agape is the proactive action induced by unconditional concern for others. It is not a sentiment, as many would relate the word "love" to, as seen in popular culture.

Agape love is a behavior. It is not a feeling. Paul attempts to help clarify how this word *agape* can further be understood by way of action. "Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance" (1 Corinthians 13:4-7, New Living Translation). Agape love is the *behavior* that is to be demonstrated by those in the body of Christ with each other.

In its execution, agape love is also empathetic. This agape form of love is the love that men and women ought to be expressing to each other in the Body of Christ. As evidenced by the slights to the grave offenses between men and women in our current events, this kind of love has become so absent; it has grown cold. Christ predicted this trend in describing our contemporary relations. "And because iniquity shall abound, the love [agape] of many shall wax cold" (Matthew 24:12, King James Version). As this ascription becomes more and more applicable, it reveals a deterioration of morality in society and a corrosion of interpersonal relationships with one another.

Although agape love may be dwindling in our secular societies, it is important that agape love should be upheld, particularly in the discourses between men and women in God's church. The alleged objectionable behaviors of individuals of note which have recently been called into question in the media should not be imitated amongst ourselves in the Body of Christ. These actions have served as the impetus of an insurgency against a status quo of misconduct that has galvanized many in the United States. Although this movement is still in its infancy, the longevity of it is yet to be seen. There also remains a degree of cynicism regarding how effective this collective would be in discerning between what constitutes a brazen offense and a violation of manners. The ambiguity between right and wrong that seems to plague the world at large should not cloud the vision of those in God's church. The clarity of God's Word imparts to His followers the insight of what is proper and what is unethical. When we come together on any occasion in God's church, we should all enjoy a respite from the immoral atmosphere of the world. We should not conduct ourselves in such a way that recreates a microcosm of the flawed exchanges between men and women in secular society, here among us in our own church settings. Rather, we should all employ agape love as we fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Guiding Principles for Understanding the Scriptures

Many study the Bible, but sometimes stumble over difficult scriptures, leaving them puzzled and without correct understanding. They are then led to believe warped, deceptive doctrine that could “take them out.” Doctrinal dilemmas and suppositions supplant the plain Bible truth. But this need not be. You can understand God’s Word. Here are some guiding principles for understanding the Scriptures.

by Lloyd W. Cary



Lloyd W. Cary

Have you ever been confronted by a smug, liberal, Bible skeptic who berates you with “gotcha” questions hoping to catch you off guard? Many would like to destroy your faith and lead you into error or their “point of view.” During your private study, are you sometimes bothered by certain difficult scriptures you do not know

the answer to, and just accept the words and doctrines of men? The enemies of God and the Bible speak glibly, voluminously, and repeatedly of the so-called “discrepancies” in the Bible. They especially enjoy “putting down” the neophyte or new Christian. They enjoy putting doubts in the believers, thus destroying his new-found faith. If critics cannot find “errors” in the Bible, they are more than willing to invent them. They deliberately ignore the fact that virtually *all* “problem texts” have been answered repeatedly down through the ages, yet skeptics of God’s Word ignore these explanations and point to them again and again as though they had never been answered. Unanswered, these alleged “difficulties” have a way of piling up and nagging at us subconsciously, thus weakening our faith. That is Satan’s method of saying, “Yea, hath God said?” (Genesis 3:1, KJV throughout).

We need to systematically reprove what we believe (1 Thessalonians 5:21). Prove what you think you know. If we proved a doctrine in our Bible once—perhaps many years ago—we can prove it again and again. When we become spiritually “rusty” in God’s Word, we fall easy prey to the enemy.

Cautions About Study Bibles

Beware of most Study Bibles—Bibles that have an abundance of footnotes and references the author thinks *you* should think. A few cautions are in order.

- 1—Who, what, is *your final authority*? Who, what, are the sources?
- 2—What is your *purpose*—what do you want it to show you?
- 3—Realize *every author is biased!* He is showing his point of view—what *he* thinks *you* should think. Most Study Bibles are tricky and deceptive. Know where God’s Word stops—and man’s opinion begins.
- 4—Believe *everything* God says—even if you do not understand it at the time.
- 5—Question *everything* man wrote—no exceptions! (Romans 3:4!)
- 6—Read the introductions carefully—what are their biases? Realize even the many maps are biased.
- 7—Beware of the devil’s footnotes in your Study Bible! They are there.

Get Off the Spiritual Junk Food

If we wish to be healthy physically, we must get off the “junk food” that clogs up our system—foods that lack any real nutrition, and is polluted with additives and chemicals. If we wish to be healthy *spiritually*, we must get off the *spiritual junk food*—the ideas and traditions of *men*. Notice the next time you walk into nearly any “Christian” book store, you find the shelves cluttered with countless tomes of watered-down “make me feel good” books, shortcuts, Bible helps, commentaries, and ideas of *men*, but comparatively few Bibles. The flaps of the book jackets assure their prospective readers they will reveal the latest Bible prophecies or new “hidden” truths. Testimonials and recommendations are made by the latest popular “scholars” or preachers to entice you to buy them. The Study Bible business is *big* business! The modern Bibles and paraphrases they may have on the shelves are touted as being the newest, best, most accurate, closest to the original texts available, while they add, subtract, and change God’s Word (See Psalm 12:6–7; Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30: 5–6; Revelation 21:2) to suit their paradigms; and incidentally, fill their pockets with your hard earned cash. They will tell you to just follow your feelings.

They will tell you we must pronounce God’s name this way or that way, or else! They will tell you what God *really* meant and what God *should* have said while they wrest (2 Peter 3:16) the Scriptures with misrepresentation, innuendos, and just plain lies, all “in the name of” God. They will Pharisaically lie to you about who and what God is, about the trinity, the resurrection, the Sabbath and holy days, about what you should wear and what you should or should not eat. They will whitewash and justify their worldly holidays and tell you God’s law was done away and “hung on the cross.” There is hardly a single Bible doctrine they do not misrepresent. This is just some of the “spiritual junk food” they want you to swallow.

Just as we need pure, natural, unadulterated food for the health of our physical bodies, so we need pure, natural, unadulterated spiritual food in order to grow, change, and overcome in our spiritual lives.

We know there is a real devil. Jesus said so (Matthew 4:1; Luke 10:18). We are cautioned repeatedly, “Beware lest any man deceive you” (Matthew 24:4,5,11,24). Satan is called the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4). We are told Satan is presently deceiving the whole world (Revelation 12:9). We are told to beware, “Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices” (2 Corinthians 2:11). Paul wrote, “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ” (2 Corinthians 11:3). “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” (2 Corinthians 11:13–15).

If Satan is the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4), if he blinds and corrupts human minds, if he appears to be an angel of light, if he has the whole world deceived, if he has false ministers and apostles doing his bidding, isn’t it only logical that, when he can, he also has false, fake, counterfeit Bibles? Why would he *not*? Again, beware!

Although it may be tempting to pick up some spiritual “junk food” off the shelves “just to see if they have this or that point right,” we are polluting our minds with it, while we should be “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of *the word*, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:2). Error has a way of subconsciously lodging itself in our minds, just waiting for an opportunity to manifest itself when we least suspect it.

The remedy? Just “READ THE BOOK!”

What Sayeth the Scriptures?

Ironically, as we read God’s Word, questions arise. By far, the best place to unravel “difficult” scriptures is in the Bible itself. The Bible is its own best interpreter. Honest people accept the negative and positive truths to willingly change their beliefs to match the words of the Scriptures (2 Corinthians 4:1–2). Dishonest scholars change the words of the Bible to match their preconceived opinions and preferences (Jeremiah 42:1–20; Ezekiel 14:1–9; Romans 1:25; 2 Corinthians 2:17). For deeper understanding, be sure to request our free publications, *How to Study Your Bible* and *Doctrinal Dilemma*.)

Through the prophet Isaiah, God answered *why* He inspired the Bible in such a way that some would understand the scriptures—and some would not. “*Whom* shall he teach knowledge?” God asks, “and *whom* shall he make to understand doctrine?” The answer is, “Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breast [that is, humble spiritual babes]” (Isaiah 28:9). He adds, “For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little” (verse 10). He continues, “For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people” (verse 11). If you are being called of God, you cannot remain neutral to His Word.

The Bible gives us wise counsel: “The heart of the righteous *studieth* to answer...” (Proverbs 15:28). Second Timothy 2:15 echoes, “*Study* to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” Seven times Jesus answered His critics, “Have ye not *read*?” (Matthew 12:3, 5; 19:4; 22:31; Mark 12:10,26; Luke 6:3). He was saying, in effect, “It’s in the Book!” confounding the self-righteous Pharisees.

As students of God’s Word, we need to both *READ* and to *STUDY* the Scriptures. Reading and studying the Scriptures are two different things—similar to walking on two legs in addition to hopping along on one. *Reading* gives you the context, background, and story flow, while *studying* allows you to collate all the scriptures together on various subject or topics. The Bible was not merely written for our information, but for our *transformation*.

In Awe of God’s Word

The key to learning the words of truth and understanding sound doctrine is not found in higher learning, lexicons, listening to false preachers, or from personal experiences (Isaiah 29:9–14; Luke 10:21; 16:15). This is placing *man’s* ideas above God’s Word. The key to learning the Scriptures is to have an eager, humble attitude and a believing heart (John 7:15–17). David said, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart [memorized], that I might not sin against thee” (Psalm 119:11). It may come as a shock to many that *God’s Word is magnified above His name* (Psalm 138:2). That’s infinitely high! Should we not have the same awe and respect for God’s Word?

The Lord Jesus Christ opens the eyes of the honest and humble seekers of the truth and often *hides* His Truth in *plain sight*. God does not give all understanding of a doctrine upon a single ambiguous or out-of-context scripture. We must study and accumulate *all* the scriptures on a topic throughout His Word, “line upon line, here a little and there a little.” A faithful student diligently studies to understand pure doctrine (1 Timothy 5:17; 2 Timothy 2:15; Isaiah 28:9–10). The unconverted mind rejects the Word of God and rebels against the truth. God *blinds* their eyes to the truth (Isaiah 6:9–10; Matthew 15:14; 2 Thessalonians 2:9–12). Men of higher learning use their education to eschew the truth, and unlearned men use their lack of education to shun the truth. “And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil *hateth* the light, neither cometh to the light, *lest* his deeds should be reproved” (John 3:19–20).

The KEY to Bible Understanding

The *key* foundational scripture most overlook is found in Psalm 12:6–7: “THE WORDS of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep *them* [the words], O LORD, thou shalt preserve *them* [the words] from this generation for ever” (Psalm 12:6–7). This overrides all else. *Inspiration without preservation is worthless!* The liberal Alexandrian scholars of higher learning even “correct” this very verse and claim *they* know what God *really* meant or what God *should* have said. Honest students of the Bible accept the negative and positive truths to willingly *change their beliefs* to match the words of the scriptures (2 Corinthians 4:1–2). Dishonest scholars *change the words* of the Bible to match their preconceived opinions and references (Romans 1:21–25; 2 Corinthians 2:17). The apostle Paul taught, “*All* scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16). God warns in the beginning of the Bible (Deuteronomy 4:2), the middle (Proverbs 30:5–6), and the end (Revelation 21:18–19) of His safeguarded Book to never *add* to, *subtract* from, or *change* His Words. This is KEY to Bible understanding! “If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house [into your mind] neither bid him God speed” (2 John 10).

That being said, as you fulfill Christ’s command to study His Word, you will find that certain Bible verses are not as easy to understand as *others*. For example, the apostle Peter wrote of the epistles of Paul, under inspiration, “As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; *in which are some things hard to be understood*, which they that are unlearned and unstable *wrest* [wring, force], as they do also the *other* scriptures, unto their own destruction” (2 Peter 3:16). When an angel led Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch, Philip asked him, “Understandest thou what thou readest?” to which the eunuch answered, “How *can* I understand unless some man guide [explain it] to me?” (Acts 8:26–35).

God’s Word warns repeatedly against deceivers, especially in the last days (Matthew 24:4,11,24; Acts 20:29–31; Revelation 12:9). “If any man teach otherwise... from such withdraw thyself” (1 Timothy 6:3–5; Galatians 1:6–9).

Guiding Principles for Interpreting Scriptures

How, then, can we better understand the Bible? Here are some rock solid, time tested **guiding principles for interpreting Scriptures**.

1– First, **pray** for wisdom, knowledge, and understanding with a humble heart. “If any of you lack wisdom, let him *ask of God*, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him” (James 1:5). We speak to God through *prayer*; He speaks to us through the *Scriptures*. We must be renewed in the spirit day by day (2 Corinthians 4:16). Send for our free booklet, *How to Be More Efficient in Your Prayer Life*.

2– Realize the Scriptures *cannot* be broken! *Always* give the **Bible** the benefit of the doubt! There are *NO* real contradictions! (John 10:35; 2 Timothy 3:16; Psalm 12:6–7). “For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in *no* wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled” (Matthew 5:18). “For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven” (Psalm 119:89). “Heaven and earth shall pass away: but *my words* shall *not* pass away” (Luke 21:33).

3– Get **ALL** the Scriptures on a topic or doctrine and let the Bible interpret *itself*! (See 1 Corinthians 2:13.)

4– When the **plain** sense makes **good sense**, seek no *other* sense. God gave the gift of *language* so He could communicate with His creation. No animal can communicate like man. Some who have but a preliminary understanding of God’s Word excitedly leap onto every wind of doctrine. “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with *every wind of doctrine*, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Ephesians 4:14). God’s Word is our lifeline.

5– Interpret the DIFFICULT verses in light of the CLEAR verses. Tradition and *opinions* do not count—God’s Word *does*!

6– *Important!* Take the Bible **LITERALLY** wherever possible; if *symbolic, figurative, or typical* language is used, then look for **the literal truth** it tends to convey! (Isaiah 28:9–13).

7– Pay close attention to **CONTEXT**! You will find that many of your questions will be answered in the immediate and broad context of the passage you are studying. Always look here first, and you will experience the joy of creative discovery. A *text* without a *context* is only a *pretext*. For example, someone may quote, Matthew 27:5, “Judas hung himself”—a true statement. Again, he may quote Luke 10:37, “go and do likewise,” suggesting the hearer go and hang himself. But these two scriptures, although true, do not go together. They are out of context!

8– Submit all “**pre-understandings** to Scripture. A few examples are: previously held beliefs about heaven, hell, immortality of the soul, trinity, pagan holidays, Sunday observance, the law of God done away, and so forth. These reflect personal biases over what the Scriptures plainly say.

9– Be sure you understand the **correct genre**. There is a variety of literary genres. Examples: history, drama, epics [Job], wise sayings, figures of speech, apocalyptic writings, metaphors, hyperbole, comparisons, symbols, parables, allegories, and types. Take note of all the comparison words such as “like” and “as” meanings, contrasts, and resemblances. Distinguish between **promises** and **principles**.

10– Consult **history** and **culture**. Understand the *Jewish* mind sets on the military, business, weddings, burials, slavery, warfare, and religious practices.)

11– Distinguish between the **descriptive** and the **prescriptive**. Is the verse merely describing something that took place *in Bible times*, **or** is it describing something we as Christians should do *for all time*?

12– Go back and review the Correspondence Courses with an open Bible. *Prove* all things (1 Thessalonians 5:21)! Remember: If you cannot **explain** a doctrine of the Bible to someone else, you don’t know it well enough *yourself*! Ask to be placed on our free *Home Bible Study Course*. Look up each Bible reference in your own Bible and mark or underline significant scriptures. You may want to chain reference certain doctrines in your Bible so you can find them easily in the future.

Physical growth is attained though proper nutrition, exercise, and rest. Spiritual growth is similar to physical growth, and it is a continual process of the believer until death (John 8:31; Ephesians 4:11–16; Philippians 3:13–16; Titus 1:9).

The order of growth for a converted Christian is to hear the Gospel, believe the Gospel, do good works, repent and be baptized, and grow in grace by the teaching of the Word (Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 2:38; James 2:20,22,24,26; 2 Peter 3:18). Our ambition should be to become like Apollos who was *mighty* in the Scriptures (Acts 18:24,28).

If you will consistently keep these **principles** in mind as you read and study your Bible, you will be **amazed** how the scriptures open up and come alive to you as you grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

God be with you as you READ THE BOOK! *Amen*.

In loving memory...



Ian Boyne

Ian Boyne (1957–2018)

Funeral services for CGI elder and veteran journalist Ian Anthony Boyne were on Sunday, January 14, at the National Indoor Sports Center in Kingston, Jamaica. Ian, age 60, died on the morning of December 18, 2017.

Over 3,000 were in attendance, with the funeral televised to a potential audience of over two million. Mourners began arriving before the 8:30 AM viewing. The service began at 10:30 AM and consisted of five hours of tributes and stirring renditions. Three former Prime Ministers and the current Prime Minister, the Most Honorable Andrew Holness, were in attendance, as was the United Kingdom's Governor-General, the Most Honorable Sir Patrick Allen. Interment followed at Dovecott Memorial Gardens in St. Catherine, with over 150 present for the committal service.

Ian is survived by his wife, Margaret; daughter, Kelly-Ann Boyne; stepson, André Skeen; and stepdaughter, Brianna Grant.

In certain areas between the sports arena and the cemetery, hundreds of people lined the streets for the funeral procession. Without a doubt, Ian was, in the words of the UK's Governor-General Allen, quite the national icon. His legacy will remain long after his passing to inspire coming generations of Jamaicans. He was known as an "enrichment factor" for Jamaican journalism. He strove to maintain the highest standards and best quality, both in his writings and his investigative interviewing on television. Ian was, as Prime Minister Holness said, in a class by himself. "Ian is the only public servant that could criticize the government and would get away with it," the PM said, to laughter and applause.

Ian was quite the evangelist for Jesus Christ. He was results-driven over many decades in his secular career and in doing the Lord's work in Jamaica. He was well respected among many. Anyone of any notoriety or fame who visited the island was interviewed by Ian on his TV program *Profile*, which was one of two shows he did on a weekly basis, and was the longest running seasonal show on local TV. He was also heavily involved in forming opinions through his op-eds that he wrote on a weekly basis, and which were well received and embraced among political operatives, including the Prime Minister of Jamaica.

In spite of the heavy load of his secular career, Ian charged ahead with the Good-News message of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God, planting the seeds of truth and watering the crops of firstfruits for God's spiritual harvest. He relentlessly proclaimed the Word of Truth through public debates and evangelistic campaigns. In addition to this was his diligent effort, as a faithful shepherd, to feed the flock under his care. He endeavored to provide good, nourishing spiritual food for the people of God.

Ian Boyne was a gifted servant of God, a good steward, and both a student and teacher of God's Word. His sophistication in his expositions of theological and philosophical matters was exceptional. He was an able exegete of Scripture and a skilled apologist, a good workman who had no reason to be ashamed, rightly handling the Word of Truth (2 Timothy 2:15). His was surely one of the sharpest minds of the Church of God movement of modern times.

He will be sorely missed by many in and outside of the Church of God. May he rest in peace as he waits for that Day when the Lord descends from heaven, that Day when, for the people of God, death is swallowed up in victory. Ω

Posted on our Jamaica web site:

Church of God International, Jamaica
Pastor Ian Boyne has passed away
Monday, 18 December 2017 00:00

It is with deep sadness that we regret to inform you that Pastor Ian Boyne passed away on December 18, 2017. However, we do not mourn as those without hope. It was his hope to die in the faith and to be resurrected when Jesus Christ returned. Until then, Rest In Peace...



Ian Boyne, wife Margaret, children Kelly-Ann, Brianna, André

**"Wherefore comfort one another with these words."
(1 Thes. 4:18)**

**"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."
(Psa. 23:4)**

**"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"
(1 Cor. 15:51-55)** Ω



Cleone Nina Parr

(1917–2017)

Cleone Nina Parr, 100, passed away on Monday, November 27, 2017.

She was born on July 4, 1917, in Long Pine, Nebraska, to Howard James and Nina Bessie Day Simpson. She was an only child, her older sister having passed away before she was born.

Her family was happy and close-knit, and she remembers them fondly. She had lots of cousins and aunts and uncles, and they got together frequently to eat good food, play, and visit.

Cleone went to school in Ainsworth (Long Pine), Nebraska. She did not finish school, as she began helping in the fields on the family farm. However, she loved learning; every subject in school was her favorite. She wanted to be a teacher when she grew up.

She obtained her first “real” job at 15. She worked for a family in a neighboring town, taking care of their children, cooking meals for the family and the farm workers, and helping with their farm chores. She was able to buy a new dress for her mom and a nice hat for her dad. She loved them so much and was thrilled to be able to do something for them!

She met her first husband, Sterling Edward Allen, at a box lunch. They had fun dating and dancing. After they were married, they started a farm of their own. They were happy, but wanted a family. After several failed pregnancies, and after a particularly bad year of farming, they moved to Paul, Idaho, and started another farm there.

In 1943, they were blessed with their first son, David Edward Allen. Their second son was stillborn in 1946. As devastated as they were to lose their baby, they were overjoyed to be Dave’s parents. He was the light of their lives, and they enjoyed their family life on the farm. Unfortunately, Sterling contracted cancer and passed away in 1954.

Cleone finished the 1954 farm year on her own (earning the respect of the bank and farmers in the area) and then moved to Twin Falls to raise Dave and care for her mother.

She took Dave and some of his friends to a boat race in Burley, Idaho, where she met her second husband, Russell James Parr. He was there with his parents and asked if they could sit in front of her car. She obliged and offered him a seat next to her in the car. They began dating and were married six weeks later, on August 31, 1955.

The family moved to Pocatello, where Dave attended school and Russell was an award-winning truck driver for Garrett Freightlines. Cleone had several jobs, working hard to help her family and those around her. When Dave was attending Idaho State University, she obtained a job in the Housekeeping Department. She cherished the times that she and Dave could meet right at Idaho State for a lunch date.

After serving in the military and graduating from college, Dave met and married Claudie Willey. They had two children, Melanie and Brian. Russ and Cleone cared for their grandchildren while their parents were at work. They helped raise the grandchildren from the time they were babies until they were well into school, when Russ finally retired.

Russ and Cleone loved to be outdoors. They would go camping and fishing and loved to take road trips. When Russ would be returning home from a long week of driving, Cleone would pack

a picnic or pack their trailer and they would take off as soon as he got home!

Religion was woven into the fabric of their lives. Russ and Cleone belonged to the *Church of God International*. The Feast celebrations were a big part of their life. She hosted many Feast dinners, and they traveled to many others, some as far away as Canada. In addition to the Feasts, she would host several pastors as they came to town. They truly exemplified the attributes of Jesus Christ.



Cleone Nina Parr

Cleone had a couple of bouts with cancer and back surgery, and Russ had a major heart attack later in life, but they took care of each other and were able to enjoy many more years together.

Russ and Cleone’s hobbies were love and work! They were the perfect team; they worked hard and they worked together. Right up until the time he was 90 and she was 98, they kept their own house, giving each other a good morning as they made their beds! They grew a garden and took care of their yard, being particularly proud of their beautiful roses. They made bread and home-cooked meals every day. Russ would take Cleone to get her hair done on Friday afternoon and then had a permanent Friday date night at Sizzler.

She and Russ were heartbroken when their beloved Dave passed away on December 31, 2014. They were so proud of Dave and all that he accomplished. He was a kind and generous man, who always made sure his mom and dad were taken care of.

In 2015, Russ took ill and they were moved to an Assisted Living facility. They hated being away from their home, but made the best of their situation—together!

Russ passed away on February 29, 2016, leaving Cleone to continue alone. She missed Russ and remembered with pride all of his accomplishments. She said that there wasn’t a problem he couldn’t solve or a broken item he couldn’t fix, even if he had to make his own tool to fix it!

Cleone made the day just a little sunnier with her hugs and kisses, love, and advice. She enjoyed visiting, watching the squirrels play in the trees, and watching the birds come to her window to feed.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her husbands, and her son.

She is survived by her daughter-in-law, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren: Sean, Carson, Ethan, Addison, Isaac, and Ava.

She dearly loved family and expanded her family by taking others into it! As a result, she was loved by so many that it would be impossible to name them all. Thank you to all those who loved and cared for her.

There was a graveside service for Cleone on Friday, December 1, 2017, at Restlawn Memorial Gardens. In addition, there was a memorial service at Quail Ridge.

In loving memory...



Ron Elkins

Ron Layne Elkins

(January 29, 1950—
September 26, 2017)

Graueside services for Ronald Layne Elkins, 67, of Norman, Arkansas, were on Sunday, October 1, 2017, in the Liberty Cemetery, with Charles Groce officiating. Ron died Tuesday, September 26, 2017.

He was born on January 29, 1950 at De-Queen, the son of Rupert Richard Elkins and Gladys Lucille Pack Elkins. He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Clara Elkins; and his sister, Rosella Glascock.

He was a retired minister of the *Church of God International*, having served congregations in Texarkana and Little Rock, Arkansas, and Shreveport, Louisiana. He also served for several years on the church's Ministerial Council and joyously took on the task of coordinating the Feast of Tabernacles at the church's Wagoner, Oklahoma site. His service as Festival coordinator was marked by his cheerful disposition, wonderful sense of humor, big smile, and warm, welcoming spirit.

Ron was employed by Centerpoint Energy and retired after 38 years of service. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, woodworking, and collecting, especially antique radios. He had a great sense of humor and was generous and kind.

He is survived by his daughter and son-in-law, Charlotte and David Dowden of Norman; his son and daughter-in-law, Billy and Jerri Martz of Avery, Texas; five grandchildren, Billy Wayne Martz, Meridith Martz, Cody Booth, Nicholas Crisp, and Joshua Latham; eight great-grandchildren; his twin brother; and sister-in-law, Wayne and Brenda Elkins of Texarkana, Arkansas; his sisters and brother-in-law, Lola Herrington of Texarkana, Arkansas, Janice Foley of Washington, D.C., and Richie and Guy Stevens of Los Angeles, California; and several nieces and nephews.

Ron and his late wife Clara leave behind memories that will long be cherished by the many brethren whose lives they touched. As a minister of Jesus Christ, Ron was truly a servant-leader. He was never one to "lord it over" the faith of his brothers and sisters in Christ, but was one who always strove to be a "helper of their joy" (1 Corinthians 1:24).

He will be sorely missed.

Ω



Ron and Clara Elkins

Stanley Glenn Roberts, Sr.

(1926–2018)

Funeral services for Stanley Glenn Roberts, Sr., were Wednesday, January 10, 2018 in the chapel at Croley Funeral Home of Gladewater, Texas, with Charles Groce and Dave Havir officiating. Interment followed at Rosedale Cemetery in Gladewater, with Steve Roberts, Stanley Roberts, Jr., Dustin Roberts, Daniel Roberts, Phillip McCammon, and Jeremy Rich serving as pallbearers.



Stanley Roberts

Stanley was born at home in Liberty City, Texas on June 13, 1926 to the late Milam H. and Mary Emma Shrum Roberts. He passed away on January 6, 2018, in Tyler, Texas at the age of 91.

He is preceded in death by two sons, Marvin and Johnny Roberts; three brothers, Milam, Marvin, and John Henry Roberts. He is survived by a daughter, Karen Schuemack and husband Jay; two sons, Steve Roberts and wife Kristy, Stanley Roberts, Jr. and wife Judy; eight grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren, many nieces and nephews, family and friends.

Stan enlisted in the Navy in 1944. He was a Medical Corpsman serving with the 1st Marine Division in Tientsin, China and with the 5th Marines in Guam. He also served aboard the USS Lindewald LSD-6 in Arctic Service at Thule, Greenland.

During his time in the military, he attended optician school. Sometime after his honorable discharge, he worked as an optician, and traveled throughout Texas opening Texas State Optical stores. Stan was a carpenter, a landman, and an entrepreneur. He enjoyed gardening and grew beautiful fruits and vegetables to share with family and friends.

Stan was a long time member of the Church of God, and loved to research God's Word. He was an avid student of the Bible.

Stan was a wonderful father, father-in-law, papaw, grandpa, uncle, and friend.

Ω

Understanding the Resurrections

Most people on the planet do not know what happens at death. Most think a departed one is in heaven, hell, purgatory, or "some other place." They think death is only a change of location. They believe one does not *really* die, but that he or she only changes places.

The Bible is clear: When we die, we are dead. Without a resurrection, each of us will simply remain dead! (See Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10).

The patriarch Job asked the eternal question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" and answered, "all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till *my change* come" (Job 14:14, KJV).

The apostle Paul wrote under the inspiration of God, "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead" (1 Corinthians 15:12)?

Resurrections, Continued on next page



Barbara Marlowe
(July 23, 1931–September 24, 2017)



Barbara Marlowe

Barbara Mae Marlowe died on September 24, 2017 in a Longview, Texas hospital. She was 86 years old. A memorial service was held for her on October 21, Vance Stinson officiating.

Barbara was born July 23, 1931 to Al and Opal Lindsey in St. Louis, Missouri. She married Robert Marlowe on March 13, 1948. She was preceded in death by her parents; brother, Marc Lindsey; and husband, Robert, to whom she was married for 66 years.

Barbara is survived by her sister, Michelle Kelly (husband Wayne); three sons: Mike (wife Pat), Steve, Chris (wife Cindy); six grandchildren: Marc, Evan, Michael, Michelle, Ryan, and Matt; one great-grandchild, Anderson; and her dear friend and “sister,” Janice Marlowe Mills.

Barbara enjoyed golf at Northwood and Hot Springs Village, watching baseball and football, and playing cards with all her friends. She was a founding member of the *Church of God International’s* Shreveport-Bossier City congregation, which became her home church again after moving back to Louisiana following her husband’s death in 2013.

She had a gift of making everyone feel at ease around her. She was a positive person and rarely had anything negative to say. She loved her brothers and sisters in Christ and traveled often to be with them.

She will be greatly missed. She was a special person who cared more for others than herself. She loved life and lived it to the fullest.

She was a blessing to the lives of her family and friends. Ω

Resurrections, from previous page

The Bible refers to (1) the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the firstborn from the dead and the pioneer of our salvation; (2) the resurrection of the saints—called the “first resurrection”—at the return of Christ when the true believers shall become spirit-composed members of God’s family; (3) the resurrection back to physical life of all who have ever died without having understood God’s way, for their *first* opportunity for salvation; (4) the resurrection of the incorrigibly wicked—those who have consciously refused to repent and have rejected God’s way—to be consumed in a lake of fire, called the “second death,” Revelation 20:6,14.

What great rejoicing will attend the first resurrection! Study each resurrection, employ the tools of Christian growth, and make certain *you* attain the First Resurrection!

This information may be new and shocking to some of our readers. Prove all things (1 Thessalonians 5:21). We urge you to send for our free booklets, *Immortality—God’s Gift to The Saints*, *The 3 Days and 3 Nights*, and *Lazarus and the Rich Man—Where Are They?*

You can also ask for our free CD entitled, *Resurrection*. Be sure to browse our web site for related booklets and CDs. Also see our online article, *The Resurrection—Real Event or Historical Hoax?* at <http://cgi.org/new-page-78/?rq=resurrection>. Curious? Be sure to browse our updated web site at www.cgi.org for related information. Ω

Michael Sitarski
(1943–2018)

Memorial graveside services for John Michael Sitarski, 74, of Bernice, Louisiana (formerly of Junction City, Arkanas) were Saturday, February 3, 2018 at the Canaan Cemetery, Lockhart, Louisiana, with Vance Stinson officiating. Michael died Friday, January 26, 2018 at Bernice Nursing and Rehab Center in Bernice, Louisiana.

Michael was born August 1, 1943 in Raymondville, Texas to the union of Joseph Laurence Sitarski and Bertha Loretta Wilde Sitarski.

He was preceded in death by his parents and a brother, Henry Sitarski.

Survivors include his wife, Linda Sitarski; two brothers, John Patrick and Frank Sitarski; two sisters, Mary Elizabeth “Lily” Cooley and Kathrine Naddeo; two step-children, Kathy Carter and husband Harvey, and Warren Washam and wife Teresa.

Michael enjoyed the great outdoors and was interested in the weather. He wanted to be a weatherman; however, he realized that becoming a weatherman meant compromising his conviction regarding keeping holy the Sabbath day, so he decided to work in a different field. But his interest in the weather never waned. He continued studying it, and it’s been said that he could predict weather conditions more accurately than the professionals could.

But his heavenward gaze was not just to watch the clouds and predict the weather. He also had a keen interest in the stars and planets. He could name and explain all the constellations.

Michael and his brother had a fishing business and sold fish to the local restaurants. That’s what he was doing at the time he met Linda, whom he would marry. After he married, he started a lawn care and landscape business, and after moving to the San Antonio area he worked in the school system as grounds keeper and custodian until his retirement.

Michael was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force and a longtime member of the Church of God.

His wife Linda writes, “Michael had a beautiful tenor voice and sang in the choir, an occasional quartet, as well as special music for church. He loved singing and often sang to me as we worked around the house.

“He always had a smile on his face and never said an unkind word about anyone. I lived with him many years and never heard him say a curse word or complain about anything. He never argued or criticized.

“Michael never compromised his faith, and we served in the church as long as his health permitted. I can freely talk of the many times that he sang to me, talked to me, prayed with me, and picked out the prettiest rose or flower in the garden to give to his favorite girl. Rest my dear one until we meet again.” Ω


The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the Word of our God shall stand for ever. (Isaiah 40:8)

FEAST OF TABERNACLES

Wagoner, Oklahoma

The 2017 Feast of Tabernacles was once again held at the Sequoyah Lodge on beautiful Fort Gibson Lake in Wagoner, Oklahoma. We were welcomed with beautiful weather for eight days, and it was a time of renewing old friendships and creating new ones.

Wynn Skelton kicked off the first day's sermon with *Keeping a Feast unto the Lord* and *Just How Do We Worship God?*

On Sabbath afternoon, David Campbell gave a seminar on *Baptism*, and later on during the Feast, Wayne Turnbull and David Campbell baptized a new member into the body of Christ.

Jay Ledbetter from the *United Church of God* spoke on the fifth day on the *Good Samaritan* and what set the Samaritan apart from the others in Luke 10.

All of the sermons and Bible Studies were encouraging and served as a reminder for each of us to look forward to the future fulfillment of God's plan for mankind, and it also reminded us to keep our focus on Him. It goes without saying how much the Kingdom of God is needed now more than ever before, especially with everything that we see happening in the world.

The Feast wouldn't be a Feast without the brethren participating in the activities. There was something for everyone to do or participate in, which included a group walk by the lake, movie night, game night, picnic, and fun show—and of course no Feast would be a Feast without the raffle. Pizza was served outside on raffle night, which just happened to be one of the coldest evenings of the Feast. We learned how to serve more than 100 people in 15 minutes that night! Everyone was good natured about it, and it didn't seem to dampen the smiles and laughter.

On day seven, we had five children for the blessing of the little children, and today, more than ever, our children need God's blessings and protection.

Vance Stinson's sermon finished the Eighth Day with a look into the future, including the *Great White Throne Judgment* and *Hope of the New Heaven and New Earth*. With the Eighth Day ending, it was time to say our goodbyes and sing our signature closing song, *God Be With You Till We Meet Again*.

Many thanks go out to those who participated in special music and made it special for the rest of us; we look forward to more performances next year. It goes without fail that the Feast is made up of many brethren serving each other as true brothers and sisters do. You could feel their love and dedication to one another, and without their help, the Feast wouldn't be a success at all. We look forward to a great Feast next year in Harrison, Arkansas, and we hope to see you there! Ω

Submitted by Lanora Campbell



Special music at Wagoner Feast site



Baptism at Wagoner Feast site



Founding members of the Kawartha Lakes congregation, plus guests, pose after Sabbath services



Youth News

Not much new to report regarding our youth for this edition. Just remember **Sparks** is the program for our children; **Ignite** is the program for our teens, and **Infuse** is the program for our young adults. We will have information in the next edition on our retreats for this year and where **Infuse** will be for the Feast. Look for more information on our cgi.org website.

One bit of new news for our brethren outside Canada is to check out the CGI Canada (cgicanada.org) website. Look for the youth materials site there for a plethora of information focused for our youth. Look for the link on "Groups" and under there you will find "Youth Materials."

If you have any ideas for our youth, please email me at mhjames6043@yahoo.com.

Mike James

Ω

The Story of the Bible



Murray Palmatier

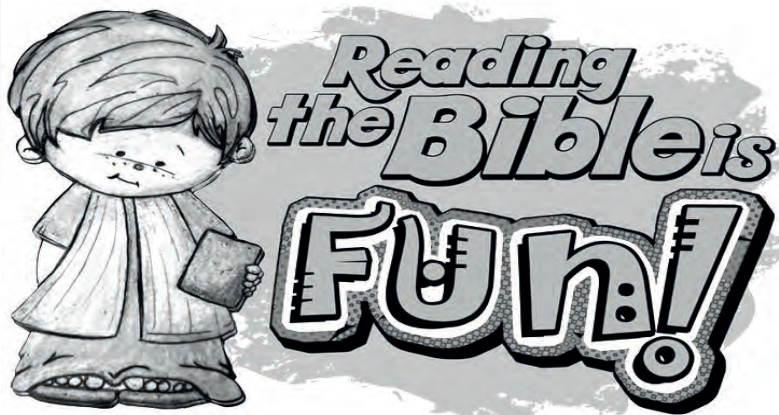
Introduction

Good evening folks, I promised that I would try and write an article for the IN each month that would fall under the Infuse / Ignite banner. The intent here is

to guide young people in both groups to the narrative of the Bible—one long story from Genesis to Revelation explaining our destiny. The goal is to encourage them to pick up a Bible and read it for the story that it is. Once they develop an interest in the story, they can dig deeper into it as a study tool.

As a young person growing in the Church, I was hooked once I realized the single narrative and the smooth story flow of the Bible.

Here is Installment #1. Feedback is welcome and requested. Ω
Murray



In The Beginning...

Written by 40 different people, hailing from three different continents, spanning a period of about 1600 years, the Holy Bible is a book that is most unique. Having been translated into 670 different languages and into several different versions of each dialect, you would think nearly everyone would have read it by now. Despite its status as the number one bestseller of all time, comparatively few have read it in full, and even fewer really understand it. It is, perhaps, the world's greatest dust collector!

One of the favorite sayings of Lloyd Cary, one of the editors of our publications, is “**Read the Book!**” For many, especially our young people, reading the Bible can be a daunting task. It is a such a thick book, compromising varying style—including historical, prophetic, poetic, and instructional. Often written in Old English, it can be very easy to become frustrated, bogged down in language, and put away. I would like to begin a series of articles, aimed at our *Infuse* and *Ignite* groups (Young Adult and Teens, respectively) to show that the Bible is one beautiful story about the destiny of Man—specially created by God to live forever as part of His family!

Let's first start with selecting the book that you will read. As we noted earlier, there is a confusing array of versions of the Bible. There are generally three types of translations—*word-for-word*, *thought-for-thought*, and *paraphrase*. For the purposes of getting started, you might prefer a more modern version (thought-for-thought or even a paraphrase) that will allow you to become comfortable with the characters, language and *story flow* of the text. As you become more mature in your studies, transitioning over to word-for-word versions will help guide you towards a truer study of biblical doctrine.

If you do an online search of *Bible Translation Comparison Charts*, you'll be able to search through the various translation choices.

Once you've made your selection, find a comfortable place to read and prepare to become engrossed in the story about your destiny! It begins where most stories do—in the beginning! We're going to hit the high points here to get you started and keep you going, but to get the full picture of this great story, you'll need to “read the book!”

The first character we are introduced to is God! As you make your way through the opening chapter, we come to see that “God” really is comprised (currently) of two beings. They had this great plan that began with making a place to live, called earth. Earth was to be the centerpiece of a seemingly endless array of planets, stars, and galaxies we know as the universe! Once the sun, moon, stars, and planets were made, God furnished earth with animals and vegetation to make it a nice place to live. Once everything was ready, God made man!

The *meaning of life* is a question that everyone grapples with. As you begin to read about your destiny, this is one of the very first questions that get answered. In Genesis 1:26, God tells us that the plan was to make a species of beings we know as mankind, or humanity, in the image and likeness of God! How cool is that! While all other living things are made unique according to their kind, man was made in the image and likeness of *God*!

With that destiny came responsibility. As Creator, God designed life to be lived by certain rules. These rules were drawn up to help us learn how to live in the happiest, most peaceful way, so that we could reach our destiny of living fully in God's image and likeness, forever! As part of His plan to populate this jewel called earth, God made for man a partner that man called woman. It was through this partnership that God wanted man to learn how to live, to make their own family, and look after His creation. As we learned to do these things, we would learn what it means to be part of the family of God.

It seems that nearly every story has a villain, and the Bible story is no different. We are quickly introduced to a dark character known as Satan, the Devil. He goes by many names, including the serpent, the adversary, the prince of the power of the air, the father of lies, and the god of this world, just to name a few. The sad part of his story, as you'll come to read later in Isaiah, is that he was initially made as one of God's most beautiful angels, named Lucifer. Angels were a type of being made of spirit that were designed to serve God and help man. But Lucifer wanted more, and broke away from the plan of God, taking many angels with him. He then developed his own plan that centered on preventing us from attaining our destiny. He got started right away, in the Garden of Eden with the first man and first woman, Adam and Eve.

We'll pick up the story here, next time.

Until then, read the Book!

Ω

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.

(Ecclesiastes 12:1)

Church News

EVANGELISM PROGRAM MOVING AHEAD IN 2018!

The Evangelism Department's Five-Year Plan enters its second year, as it takes on some new projects in 2018, and at the same time, continues to build on its achievements in 2017.

The Department, to its credit, operated more like a full-time one—thanks to a group of dedicated men and women who have spent long hours to get the tasks done. For the most part, we achieved nearly all the projects we set out to do, and even took on new areas that were not included in the original plan. This was done in keeping with the goal of the plan to reach as many people as possible with the Gospel; to restore growth and its mission as outlined in the *2015 Canada Strategic Roadmap*; to nurture God's people with the Word; to provide healthy, safe, and joyful congregations; to be effective in preaching God's Word; and to become financially viable.

The Internet, personal evangelism (word of mouth), and public campaigns were the areas identified and pursued in 2017. There was a heavy emphasis on Internet advertising and promotion, and to a lesser degree, public campaigns. For example, we reached 1.8 million Canadians during the year with advertisements and promotion on *Facebook* alone.

While we cannot determine who will respond, or how this will translate into growth now or in the future, the fact is our Internet audience is being exposed to our message—from live and recorded sermons and Bible Studies to printed material.

Our national website, *CGI Canada*, is already poised to be the engine that drives visitors to an awareness of the church's presence and what we have to offer. We continue to add new features to the website to complement what is already there. The potential of this site is unthinkable as far as information is concerned.

We had our campaigns as planned during the year with the exception of two additional ones—Ottawa in March, and Part Two of the Inter-Faith Dialogue with the Muslim community in November. The latter was live-streamed, with an audience of a little over 2,000 from several different countries.

There was a mix of sources sending visitors to our various congregations—Internet, campaign, and word of mouth. The evangelism programme will continue to place emphasis in this area of our outreach. While we don't hesitate to use the Internet offerings, paid and unpaid, we believe word of mouth is underutilized, and we must continue to encourage our members to do their part.

This will be done through seminars/workshops; ongoing reminders to make use of business cards; sharing FB postings; and passing on invitational letters from Tyler to friends and families.

Looking at 2018, we will be extending our activities to two new areas—Kawartha Lakes/Lindsay, Ontario, and Calgary, Alberta. We have tentatively set a campaign date for April 13 in Lindsay and April 28 in Calgary. We hope to start building a CGI presence in those areas, and will be looking at other provinces in the near future. We ran a three-week campaign in London, Ontario last November, and were encouraged by the outcome. As a result, we will be repeating the effort this November.

CGI Canada will also host its first *Super Sabbath Weekend* in Puslinch, near Guelph, Ontario this year. The weekend, dubbed "a mini-Feast," will feature several different activities, including a public outreach on the Saturday morning.

If you haven't done so already, please take a moment to fill out our survey to share with us your thoughts about this special weekend.

CGI Canada is also gearing for the launch of a new medium as we explore other means to fulfill the church's commission. As promised in the five-year plan, CGI will have a presence in Internet radio broadcasting. We plan to launch the *CGI Radio Network* during the Days of Unleavened Bread. The potential to reach people globally is immense, and we are looking forward to this added outreach.

2018 is shaping up to be an interesting year for the Evangelism Department. With the help and direction of the Almighty, we hope to have another successful year reaching God's people with the message of Jesus Christ and His coming Kingdom. Ω



Sadat Anwar

Adrian Davis

Interfaith Dialog—Part 2

In 2016, we began an interfaith dialog with the Muslim community. The question we explored was whether or not Allah is the same as the God of the Bible. As a result of the success of the event and the interest that was generated, we accepted an invitation from the Muslim community for a follow-up discussion.

On Wednesday December 6, at Sandman Hotel in Mississauga, Pastor Adrian Davis and Muslim Apologist, Sadat Anwar, engaged in a professionally moderated debate entitled, *Is Allah the God of the Bible? Part 2. Does God Permit Lying?*

Over 2,000 people viewed the event via our live Internet broadcasting streams. This included viewers from all across North America, as well as overseas connections from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Jamaica, UK, Trinidad and Tobago, the Netherlands, and more!

Post event, we continue to receive very encouraging feedback, including from a Christian minister (who was in attendance) who was quite intrigued by our position on the Godhead, compared to what is traditionally believed regarding the Trinity. Pastor Adrian has begun the process of engaging with him, teaching the Gospel of Truth.

Thank you to everyone who attended, watched online, and contributed to the event as volunteers.

We would like to sincerely thank our dear brother, Adrian Davis, who did an excellent job of defending the faith and preaching the Gospel!

If you did not get the opportunity to watch the debate, the video is available online via www.godofthebible.ca Ω

Submitted by Zion Hezekiah

THREE BAPTISMS IN TOLEDO, OHIO

On February 3rd, my husband, my son, and I were baptized by the Church of God International. We want to thank Wayne and Sandi Hendrix and Lloyd and Gail Cary for their services. We also were surprised that many of the people of the church made a special trip to our baptism, and want to thank them also. This is a great, friendly, and truthful church.

Our baptism and laying on of hands were wonderful experiences for all three of us. May we keep on learning and enjoying all the sermons and the Church of God.

Ken and Diane Krueger and Chad Versansky

Q Could you please send me a cassette, *Get Right Or Get Left* and the booklet “Was Moses The Law Giver?” I saw the ad on TV. Could you please send me a brochure about your ministry. God has called me to serve. I’m a part of God’s great commission. I’m asking for help. I need help with some information about different questions that I ask. **A friend told me that Jesus is not coming back again. She said once you accept Jesus in your heart, that is the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ. Is this true? I need to know. She said that she is a spiritualist. Have you ever heard about this religion?** Please pray for me, I have a 12 year old daughter. She behaves rudely. Satan is trying to take my child away from God. **Please give me some advice on what I must do so that she can behave herself as a child of God must.** Thank you for your understanding. Please pray for me so that I can get a job so that I can send a donation to Armor of God.”

S.B., Nassau, Bahamas

A Dear S.B., Thank you very much for your recent letter and for the opportunity to serve you. We are pleased to see your interest and enthusiasm for the Truth of God, which the *Armor of God* proclaims. The literature you requested has been forwarded to you.

Your letter raises two issues. Your first question asked if accepting Jesus into you heart is the Second Coming of Christ, and secondly, you asked how you can help your 12-year-old daughter behave as a child of God.

Let us address your first question first, “Is accepting Jesus in to my heart the Second Coming of Christ?” No, it is not. Belief, “accepting Jesus into your heart,” and His Second Coming are *two entirely different things*.

We must always beware of well meaning teachers who try to “spiritualize” away the plain, impossible-to-misunderstand scriptures in favor of their own private interpretations or denominational biases (2 John 10).

The belief that merely “accepting Jesus into your heart” *is* the Second Coming of Christ is a result of reading the Bible with “tunnel vision” and preconceived ideas which ignores the many, many plain scriptures telling us what it is. Certainly faith and belief *are* requirements, yet we are told, “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: **the devils also believe, and tremble**” (James 2:19), but they will not *repent* nor *obey* God.

The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ will take place *mightily, powerfully, bodily, visibly, publicly, and gloriously*, not secretly or “in my heart.” The fulfillment of this one-time event is called “the Day of the Lord” in over 30 prophecies. We are told in Revelation 1:7, “Behold, he cometh with clouds; **and every eye shall see him**, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.”

In 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17 we are told, “**For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout**, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be **caught up** together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” The same events are described in Matthew 24:30, 31 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:3. “And his feet shall stand **in that day** [the time of His return] upon the mount of Olives” (Zechariah 14:4). This is hardly a mere acceptance of Jesus in one’s heart! We are cautioned to, “**Watch** therefore: for ye know **not** what hour your Lord doth **come**” (Matthew 24:42).

I hope this helps clear up some of the confusion. You may wish to send for our free booklet, *Why Christ Must Return!* and *The Day of the Lord*, by Vance Stinson, to further your understanding in this matter.

Secondly, you also asked what you might do to help your daughter behave as a child of God.

These are, indeed, difficult times to raise children. The teen years involve bodily changes, awareness, and a whole new perspective from their formative years. There is a tendency to want to try new things, express their feelings, and be accepted by their peers. Yet there is hope. The Bible has much to say on child rearing.

For example, Proverbs 22:6 instructs us, “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Also see Ephesians 6:4. The parents must plant the seeds in their minds before they will grow.

“Correct thy son [or daughter], and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul” (Proverbs 29:17). To teach and lead our children in God’s ways, we must first know His ways ourselves. I would recommend that you send for our free articles, *Bending The Twig*, *How to Recapture our Youth*, and *Things to Do While Waiting For Jesus to Return*. These publications will give you additional information in this area.

Deuteronomy 6:6–7 goes further to say, “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And **thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.**” In other words, above all things strive to keep the lines of communication open, and in doing so, teach them God’s ways.



We must truly be as wise as serpents, and harmless as doves (Matthew 10:16).

Remember, too, that a Christian is known by his *good works* (Matthew 5:14–16)—not by “good arguments” or “constant preaching.” Our righteous, confident, happy lives—the way we live and the customs we keep—will influence others *far* more than our words. Teach her that when all is said and done, *being* a good example is better than *following* someone else’s bad example.

Thank you once again for writing, S.B. Please consider writing for the above mentioned materials. It is our pleasure to serve you. Be assured that our prayers are with you and yours.

God be with you. In Christ’s service,

Personal Correspondence Department

Ω

Q I have a a question about a sacred name group’s Holy Day calendar. Some of their Holy Days are in step with ours and some are not. How do we know which calendar is right?

A Thank you for your question concerning “sacred names” groups and the holy day calendar. You are correct: some years the calendar published by the names groups is in perfect harmony with ours, but some years it is not. The reason for this is that we use the Calculated Hebrew Calendar, but the names groups use a different calendar. Their calendar differs from the Calculated Hebrew Calendar on several points, including the following: 1) They believe that the new moon, which marks the first day of each month, cannot be during the conjunction, but must always be the first appearance of the crescent. 2) They check the barley crops in Jerusalem in determining which new moon begins the first month of the year. 3) They ignore postponements, intercalary years, and certain other features of the Hebrew Calendar. Consequently, some years their calendar and the Calculated Hebrew Calendar are in agreement; other years they differ.

Since the Bible does not supply us with the rules of the calendar, we believe the best we can do is use the calendar system handed down to us by the *same* people who preserved the Hebrew Scriptures. The fact that some of the components of the Hebrew Calendar are not mentioned in Scripture does not mean they were unknown in the time of Moses. The “sacred names” groups construct their own calendar from the little information Scripture supplies on this subject and from their own assumptions.

We recommend you request our free brochure, *Origins of Our Calendar*. You can also view it at: <http://cgi.org/the-origins-of-our-calendar/?rq=calendar>. Also see: <http://cgi.org/holy-days/?rq=calendar>.

Feel free to write again as the need arises. We are here to help you.

Personal Correspondence Department

Ω

Q “I want to ask where did the Sabbath begin? Please note that I asked where and not when since this may have a bearing on its keeping here in the Philippines.”

A If you are asking for an exact latitude and longitude location, the Bible does specify. It *does* say, “And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made” (Genesis 2:2–3). In verse eight, we read, “And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed” (Genesis 2:8).

Since the Garden of Eden was “Eastward in Eden” by the rivers Pison, Gihon, Hiddeke, and Euphrates (Genesis 2:10–14), we may therefore conclude that the Sabbath was first kept in the Garden of Eden. The Garden of Eden is apparently in the area of Mesopotamia (modern Iraq), since two of the four rivers in its vicinity are the well-known Tigris (Heddekel) and Euphrates Rivers (verse 14). I hope this helps answer your question.

Incidentally, we keep the Sabbath *as it comes to us* wherever we are, not according to any other location on the earth.

For further study on the Sabbath, we invite you to request our publication, *Sunday, Saturday—What Difference Does It Make?* [SAT], and our CDs, *Who Changed the Christian Sabbath?* [C0125], and *Seven Reasons Why We Keep the Sabbath* [C0407]. You may also wish to be placed on our mailing list for our quarterly newspaper, *The International News* [INT], which contains many timely, in-depth articles, Church news, and updates. In fact, the next issue will contain a well-documented article, *Who Changed the Passover To Easter?* which you will find literally astonishing! All our materials are absolutely free of charge as per Matthew 10:8.

Thanks again for writing. Whenever we may assist you further with your study of the Bible, we hope you will let us know. It is our good pleasure to serve you. May God be with as you follow His lead.

Personal Correspondence Department

Ω

Sentence Sermons

- There are many good traits about the atheist; he got them from Christianity.
 - If you want to convince others of the value of Christianity—live it!
 - Satan is perfectly willing to have a person confess Christianity, as long as he does not practice it.
 - Satan is never too busy to rock the cradle of a sleeping Christian.
 - The devil uses a vacant mind as a dumping ground.
 - An idle Christian is the raw material of which backsliders are made.
 - For every sin, Satan is ready to provide an excuse.
 - When Christians feel safe and comfortable, the church is in its greatest danger.
 - Christianity is a roll-up-your-sleeves religion.
 - Wise people change their minds—fools, never.
 - A real Christian is as horrified by his own sins as he is by his neighbor's.
 - A Christian has not lost his power to sin, but the desire to sin.
 - The Christian life is like an airplane—when you stop, you drop!
 - Nowadays we have too many semonettes by preacherettes for Christianettes.
 - A Christian is a living sermon, whether or not he preaches a word.
 - The devil can quote Scripture for his purposes.
 - Men do not reject the Bible because it contradicts itself, but because it contradicts them.
 - The Bible finds us where we are, and, with our permission, will take us where we ought to go.
- Some people are so introverted they can't even lead a silent prayer.
 - Your absence from church is a vote to close its doors.
 - Church attendance is determined more by desire than by distance.
 - The Golden Rule is what we want everybody else to practice.
 - Conscience is not the vice of God; it is the gift of God.
 - Too many who used to fear God now fear their fellow man.
 - A Bible in the hand is worth two in the bookcase.
 - The sword of the Spirit never becomes dull from use.
 - Truth is not determined on how many believe it, but on God's Word!
 - People do not remember what you say—they remember how you make them feel.
 - Compromising Christians do not like non-compromising Christians.
 - Be careful of your thoughts—they may becomes words at any moment!
 - If you are the same person at 50 as you were at 20, you've wasted 30 years of your life!
 - God wants spiritual fruit, not religious nuts.
 - Confessing your sins is no substitute for forsaking them.
 - Confess your sins, not your neighbor's.
 - If the church were perfect, you could not belong.
 - It is a terrible responsibility to own a Bible.
 - Man is responsible to God for becoming what God has made possible for him to become.

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