

APRIL 1975

GN

The Good News

HOW
LIBERATED
CAN YOU GET?

GARBAGE IN
GARBAGE OUT

GOOD NEWS
STAFFERS ON
MIDEAST TOUR

CAPERNAUM

GN

The Good News

Vol. XXIV No. 4

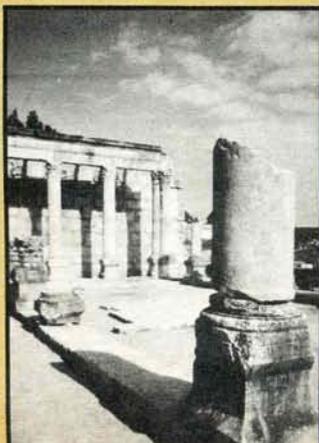
April 1975

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ABOUT OUR COVER

Partially restored remains of the synagogue at Capernaum. This structure is believed to be built on the original site of the synagogue in which Jesus preached. For an account of a recent trip to the Mideast made by several GN staffers, see page 16.

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SEVEN PROOFS OF GOD'S CHURCH

I'M NOT leaving the Church," explained one in violent disagreement — "only leaving the 'organization'! I'll *always* remain solidly in God's Church, but I must repudiate the *organization!*"

But is organization — even of God's own Church — *evil*?

Can one withdraw from any active participation in the "organization" that is God's true Church — which is performing the *Work* of God by the power of His Spirit, fulfilling the *Great Commission* Jesus Christ gave His true disciples — and yet, somehow, "be in" the Church?

Let's see what the Bible clearly says, not using our own human reasoning, but searching the Scriptures to learn what the Great Almighty God, and His Son, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, say about it.

Millions reason they are somehow in God's true "Church" no matter what denomination, sect, cult, political organization, social club, or business affiliation they maintain. Millions like to believe that "most" all churches have "mostly good points," but, naturally, have "some points on which they might disagree." But "does this really matter, after all?" some reason. "Surely, since they believe in *Christ*, and in His 'atoning work,' they will get to heaven anyway, won't they?"

What Is the "Church"?

Because of the false teaching, resulting from a completely misunderstood statement of Jesus Christ concerning the Kingdom of God, literally millions assume the "church" is a completely disjointed, loosely *disconnected*, ethereal, vague, nebulous, imaginary "something" that is "within" you!

Many assume that, collectively, the *true* Church (all those they assume are going to "heaven") might include "members" of literally doz-

PROOF

6

GOD'S TRUE CHURCH IS ORGANIZED!

by Garner Ted Armstrong

Why "organization"? Isn't there something inherently evil in being "organized"? What is the Church? Why a "church"? Is the Church which Jesus built only a loosely connected, disorganized, autonomous group of local "churches" — or is it, according to the Bible, an organization?

ens of "churches" of this world; denominations of all sorts. Whether liberal-minded Catholics actually believe any Protestants will "go to heaven" without ever becoming a Catholic is a moot point; but, it seems, many a professing Protestant Christian is willing to concede that millions of other Protestants (and perhaps even a few Catholics),

though they disagree on many major points and belong to vastly different organizations, will eventually enter the "Beatific vision."

But is all this reasoning true?

And, even if millions might "think" it is — does that make it so? Is the true Church of God, the Church Jesus said He would build, just an "imaginary" body of "believers" who have no connection with each other, or any specifically *organized* group? May one "be in" the true Church of God, *bearing fruit*, fulfilling Christ's commands, carrying out His commission, *without* being a living, active member of an organization?

Let's see!

"I will build my church," Jesus said (Matt. 16:18). The Greek word for "church" in this passage is *ekklesia* — which can mean "called-out ones," or "specially chosen ones," or "body of believers"! It

is a word which connotes "group," "body," "congregation" — a group of *people!* Through transmission of the Bible text into other languages, and especially resulting from the commonly misunderstood usage of the English word "church," the true meaning of what Jesus so plainly said has been lost from sight!

Today, a "church" is a "building," as often as it is a "group." The "Methodist Church" could be either a *building* on the corner, or the group of people who are called "Methodist" as an organization!

Jesus didn't imply He would build a building when He said, "I will build my *ekklesia*." He meant exactly what He said: He would construct, knit solidly together, consecrate, organize and commission *His group!*

Jesus — The Living Head

That passage of Matthew's 16th chapter is only understood by careful comparison with many other

scriptures, which make it clear that the "Rock" (Greek, *Petra*) to which Jesus referred was Himself, and the "pebble" (Greek, *petros*) was Peter. Jesus is plainly called "that Rock" (I Cor. 10:4) which followed the Israelites in the wilderness, and the Rock of our salvation (Deut. 32; Psalm 18:2, 31, 46; Psalm 31:2, 3).

Paul says Christ, not any human being, is the living Head of His Church (Eph. 1:20-23; 4:15). "And he is *before* all things, and *by him* all things consist. And he is the *head of the body, the church*: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:17, 18). *He*, not any man, is called the *Head of the Body* (the Church) and the "chief corner stone" (Col. 2:10, 17; Eph. 2:20).

David said: "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner" (Ps. 118:22). Peter referred to this scripture, saying: "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a *chief corner stone*, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the *head of the corner*..." (I Pet. 2:6-8).

Christ is called, at once, the "head," the "head of the corner," and the "chief corner stone," as well as the "capstone."

"... Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation..." (Isa. 28:16). *Never* did God the Father or Jesus Christ intend turning leadership of the Church over to men! Jesus Christ said, "Lo, I am with you always" in commissioning His disciples!

He, Christ, is the living, active, *Head* of His Church, just as He has *always* been!

An Organized Body

It is not an analogy of *men* to refer to Christ's group of "called out

ones," or His *ekklesia* (Church), as a *body*! Jesus said: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch *in me* that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that *beareth fruit*, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth *more* fruit . . . Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch *cannot* bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine [an integral part of the body!]; no more can ye, *except ye abide in me*" (John 15:1-4).

Jesus used the obvious analogy of a growing, producing *vine* with roots firmly implanted in rich soil, the flow of life-giving sap through the main vine (Christ) to the major branches on to the smaller branches, and finally producing fruit! He said: "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth *in me*, and I in him, the same bringeth forth *much fruit*: for *without me* ye can do *nothing*. If a man abide *not* in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and *is withered* [he has been *cut off* from the main trunk, and therefore from the life-giving *flow* that can come only from remaining a part of a tightly knit, integral body, together, as one living organism]; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (verses 5-6).

Jesus Christ of Nazareth makes it crystal clear that He is the living Head of His Church, His group of human beings who are called by His name, in whom is the very Spirit of God (Rom. 8:9). Each individual member is a *part* of a living, vital organism, having no life *separate* from, or *apart* from, that organism!

Though one might "reason around" in his own mind that by withdrawing from what he may contemptuously call "the organization" (God's Church!) he is, in fact, "remaining *in the church*," he is only *deceiving* himself — playing with meaningless words — and directly contradicting these powerful words of Jesus Christ Himself!

Jesus Christ *organized* His true Church! He said: "Ye have not chosen me, but *I have chosen you*, and ordained you, that ye should go and

bring forth fruit..." (John 15:16). But unless one remains a part of that spiritual body, firmly attached to the main vine, he *cannot* "bear fruit."

Appearing to His own disciples after His resurrection, Jesus said: "*All power* is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach *all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: 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 [the consummation of the age]" (Matt. 28:18-20).

Following the suicide of Judas (Matt. 27:5), Jesus inspired the apostles to select another man, Matthias (one of two men selected after lengthy discussion among the remaining eleven leaders, and the one finally chosen by lot), because He was determined to begin with the perfect *governmental number*, and a number representing *organized beginnings* — twelve! There were twelve tribes in Israel, and Jesus Himself described twelve future thrones (Matt. 19:28) upon which His own apostles will sit, judging the twelve tribes of Israel!

A Great Commission

Jesus showed His group, His body of believers, *His Church*, would be a human, physical group of men and women — flesh and blood human beings — with a great *Work* to do!

"... And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the *uttermost part of the earth*" (Acts 1:8).

Matthew's Gospel records Jesus' prophecy that His Great Commission to His true disciples would be fulfilled: "And this gospel of the kingdom *shall be preached* in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and *then* shall the end come" (Matt. 24:14). Jesus, appearing again to His disciples following His resurrection, said: "Peace be unto you: as my Father *hath sent me*, even so [in

like fashion] *send I you*" (John 20:21).

Paul was inspired to write: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Rom. 10:13-15.)

Jesus said: "Even so *send I you*," and made it perfectly clear that unless those who are *sent* (ordained) remain *in the body*, and firmly attached to the Branch (see Isa. 11:1), they are utterly cut off, can bear no fruit, and are *not* the chosen servants of Jesus Christ, who remains the living, active Head of His Church!

Jesus said: "As my Father hath *sent me*" — showing Christ came to perform a *Work* on this earth! He said: "My meat [my daily activity; my livelihood, my "occupation"] is to *do* the will of him that *sent* me, and to *finish his work*" (John 4:34).

Christ said His preaching of the gospel (which He repeatedly called the "work" or "my work") was only possible because He, Christ, stayed firmly *joined* to the Father! "... My Father worketh hitherto, and *I work*" (John 5:17). And in verses 36, 37: "But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath *sent* me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me."

Christ said: "I must work the works of him that *sent* me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man *can* work" (John 9:4); and, "... the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me If I do not the *works* of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, *believe the works*: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (John 10:25, 37, 38).

Jesus Sent to Preach the Gospel

What were those works to which Jesus continually referred?

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to *preach the gospel to the poor*; he hath *sent* me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Jesus read from Isaiah, standing in the synagogue of Nazareth. Then He announced: "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:18-21).

Jesus said He was *sent* from the Father, and He sent *His disciples* in the same manner, for the same purpose: to preach the gospel! "Then he called his *twelve* disciples together, and gave them *power* and *authority* over all demons [Greek], and to cure diseases. *And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God*, and to heal the sick" (Luke 9:1-2).

"But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, *preach*, saying, *The kingdom of heaven is at hand*" (Matt. 10:6, 7). He showed, after sending "other seventy also," that the harvest was plenteous, but the laborers few — saying: "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send

forth labourers into his harvest. Go your ways: behold, I *send* you forth as lambs among wolves Go not from house to house heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, *The kingdom of God* is come nigh unto you" (Luke 10:1-9).

When John the Baptist was in prison, about to be beheaded, he sent a few of his disciples to Jesus. They asked: "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Matt. 11:3-5).

Gospel of the Kingdom

Continually, Jesus emphasized the preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom of God as a witness to all nations! He said: "And the gospel must first be published among all nations" (Mark 13:10).

Mark's account of Jesus' commission to His disciples reads: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned [Greek, condemned]" (Mark 16:15, 16).

Personal Counsel

Many hundreds have written asking if we have representatives in their areas to counsel with them personally and to answer their questions.

The answer is yes, we do.

The Worldwide Church of God stations personal representatives (ordained ministers) in most communities in the United States and British Commonwealth, and in many other areas of the world. These men of God can visit you, *if invited*, directly in your own home.

So if you do have questions

or require private counseling for whatever reason, please feel free to write us and request a private appointment. Worldwide mailing addresses are on the inside front cover.

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Remember, this service is absolutely *free* and without personal obligation.

So, as Jesus was sent to preach the gospel, He also sent His disciples to do the same!

Christ did the *Work* of God: He called and trained His disciples, putting them through the maturing experiences they would need later. He rebuked and exhorted them, finally giving them of God's Holy Spirit, *ordaining* them into His own Church as His apostles, and sent them out into the world to fulfill the commission He gave them! That Great Commission is still being carried out today!

Organization Is Necessary

It would be impossible to perform God's Work, either then or now, without the organization Christ Himself ordained. "Organization" is not a "nasty" word! It stems from "organism," meaning a living, vital collection of cellular tissue; a plant, or living creature; a part of God's creation having life and purpose and *being*.

Jesus Christ established government in His Church — insisting He would at all times retain ultimate authority! He *never* intended making any *human* being the Head of the Church!

But He did place the apostles in charge *under* the living Christ!

Throughout the book of Acts, you see examples of the government of God in action! At the Jerusalem conference, for example, came the first major *test* of the type of *government* Christ had established within His own organization.

"Certain men," who are unidentified (men with *no* official status within the Church who were *unordained*, and who were mainly affected by their past religious teachings — that of the Pharisees), "taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved" (Acts 15:1).

Apparently, Paul and Barnabas could not change their opinions.

It became necessary to go to *higher authority* to resolve the difficulty. Even though Paul was an or-

daind apostle (as was Barnabas), these "men" who were *unauthorized* to teach anyone — who were *unordained* — refused to believe them. Because of the effect it was having on the brethren, several of the leaders decided to "go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question" (verse 2).

Government Upheld

Read the whole chapter. *Think* about it. The advocates of circumcision would surely have seemed to have every possible scripture on their side, wouldn't they?

Remember, not one scrap of the New Testament had even been *written* yet! There were no "New Testament" books of the Bible to which the apostles, or the dissenters, could turn. And almost everything they could read from the Old Covenant might strongly indicate circumcision was required!

Perhaps, however, one of the apostles hit upon Jeremiah 4:4, which says: "Circumcise yourselves to the Eternal, and take away the foreskins of *your heart*, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem." But the major point which bore the most weight was *experience*! Notice how Paul and Barnabas reasoned that God had given the Gentiles His Spirit, that He had *obviously* not withheld salvation from them just because of their "un-circumcised" condition! Then Peter substantiated their words by showing that God had "put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (verse 9).

James then rendered a final decision (verses 13 through 21). He said: "Wherefore my *sentence* is [decision, choice, policy], that we trouble *not* them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood."

Later, it was said that the apostles "... went through the cities, [and] they delivered them *decrees* for to keep, that were *ordained* of the

apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem" (Acts 16:4).

A Verbal Decision

This *decision* was rendered *orally*! It was not based on any direct quotation of scripture you can find in the 15th chapter of Acts! Not once did any of those who spoke quote any "chapter and verse," but rather told of the experiences of practical day-to-day conduct of the *Work*, and of the *fact* that God had obviously given of His Spirit to un-circumcised Gentiles!

Now, of course, since Luke kept record of these facts, and sent them to his friend Theophilus (Acts 1:1), we can read the account of this verbal decision! But the verbal decision was not based on something previously written, but on the *facts* of what God had *done*!

Notice the organization here! First, the dissident "teachers" began upsetting the brethren. Paul and Barnabas tried to dissuade them and convince them of their error. They refused to believe. Paul and Barnabas and other ministers decided to take the matter to headquarters (at Jerusalem, then) to *higher* authority. They did so. A decision was finally rendered, after *all* sides had been heard!

But did this *stop* the false teaching that all must be circumcised in order to be saved? Did it end the controversy over circumcision? No — not at all — it only *began* it. From that time on, Paul's life in Christ's ministry among the Gentiles was to be plagued by continual persecutions from former or still active Pharisees who urgently insisted circumcision was required! They didn't *believe* in the official *authority* of God's headquarters apostles and ministry, as did most of the Church.

Next time, we shall see the many examples of God's government in action in His Church: government necessary to preach the gospel and do the Work of God, as well as to settle doctrinal and procedural matters, and to *protect* the flock and conduct all matters of the Church. □



HOW LIBERATED CAN YOU GET?

Why have thousands of comfortable matrons recently turned into rabid "women's libbers"? What makes wives who seemingly have everything go on the warpath against male chauvinism? Should you take sides in the battle of the sexes — and if you're a wife, just how liberated should you be?

by Carole Ritter

WHY are many wives suddenly becoming uppity? What turned them against diapers and dishpans? Do they really have any valid gripes, or are they just rebelling because it's the thing to do these days?

Maybe you already have some pretty strong ideas on this subject. You might even be a "libber" yourself. You approve of equal pay for equal work; you think every person has a right to develop to his or her full potential; you're tired of phony

chivalry and subtle sexist putdowns; maybe you even threw away your girdle and your makeup.

Or maybe you're not a libber at all. You don't really see why women can't be happy doing what they've always done. Why upset the status quo? Doesn't the Bible say women were put on earth to serve men, anyhow?

Didn't the apostle Paul put women in their place? After all, he said: "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (I Tim. 2:12). And, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak..." (I Cor. 14:34).

He hammered his point home in Ephesians 5:22: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." That seems to be coming on pretty strong in favor of male chauvinism, right?

But did God create women to be meek, humble, mousey little things who say "yes, sir" whenever someone pulls their string? Did He give

man an insipid pot-scrubbing automaton who stays pregnant nine months of the year? Or did He have something better in mind?

What is a wife's true role in God's scheme of things? If her husband has "authority" over her, is there anything she can do on her own? How much initiative should she have? Can she ever make her own decisions, or is this strictly a male prerogative? Just how does a wife fit into the family unit?

God Is a Family

God is a family — and there is a parallel between God's family relationship and ours. God the Father and Christ are both gods — both exist on the same plane. But God the Father is "first among equals." He is "in authority" over Christ. But Genesis 1:26 shows that they both work as a team — and God the Father has delegated much authority to Christ. In fact, He had Christ do the actual creating of the universe (see Hebrews 1:2 and John 1:1-3), and is going to have Him



Joe Clayton — GN

“WOMEN ON THE MARCH” — placards show grievances of women, as they parade during “show of force” in Los Angeles.

rule it forever (Heb. 1:2, 8).

God made man in His image (Gen. 1:26). Our family life is intended to be a type of the God-plane family relationship. A man and his wife are equals, just as God and Christ are equal. Both husband and wife are “heirs *together* of the grace of life” (I Peter 3:7).

But someone has to be in charge. God has ordained that the husband be in authority. Following the example of the God family, they should work together as a coequal team. Marriage isn’t a master-slave arrangement with the man giving all the orders and the woman meekly kowtowing. In fact, if a man wants to do what God does, he’ll treat his wife like an intelligent partner. He’ll ask for her advice — and take it if it’s good. And he’ll want to share as much authority with his partner as their situation allows.

Delegation Prevents Frustration

It’s important for a husband to learn to delegate authority to his wife. If his “heart doth safely trust” in her (Prov. 31:11), he’ll be able to leave all the household decisions for her to decide — and keep his mind free to do his own job. If he dictates

every minor decision to her, not only is he burdening himself with extra work, he’s probably stifling her growth as a person and a Christian.

Women have to learn to make decisions, too. It’s part of building good character. They need the opportunity to develop the initiative necessary to “work out [their] own salvation” themselves (Phil. 2:12).

A wife shouldn’t need to pester her husband about what kind of socks to buy for the kids, or what brand of soapsuds to use, or whether to wash her hair on Monday or Friday. She is her husband’s vice-president in charge of household affairs, and should be given all the authority she needs to do her job effectively.

That’s how a husband-wife team should operate, and how a wife needs to carry out her role. But just what *does* her role encompass? How far does her household authority extend? Just how much *can* she do?

We know women shouldn’t preach (I Tim. 2:12; I Cor. 14:34). But how come? First of all, God wants women (as a general rule) to take their place as “keepers at home” (Titus 2:5). So at marriage a woman is ordained to a “minis-

try” of caring for her family.

Secondly, God wants to teach both men and women His pattern of government (see I Cor. 14:35; Gen. 3:16; Eph. 5:22-33).

Women Can Teach

All right, we’ve determined that women shouldn’t get up and pound the pulpit. They aren’t to be preachers. But God does command them to be *teachers* (Titus 2:3-4). Younger women are committed to teach and train their children — especially during their preschool years.

But what happens when the last baby leaves the nest? At this point a woman might still have half of her life ahead of her — is she supposed to sit home and crochet doilies during her declining years? Titus 2:3-4 shows that older women should be “teachers of good things; that they may teach the young women” how to be good wives and mothers. Who could be better qualified to pass on that sort of information than an experienced expert in the field?

But how does all this translate

into a practical application today? People's talents differ. One woman might be an excellent teacher in a formal classroom situation, while another is good at passing on helpful advice — and someone else might do her best by just setting a good example, doing some kind of volunteer work or running her own business.

Only you can determine where your own interests and talents lie. And once you do, it's up to you to develop them.

There are examples in the Bible of righteous women who used their talents to the full. Deborah had a humble attitude and thought of herself as a "mother in Israel" (Judges 5:7). Yet she ruled the country and led an army to battle. In the New Testament, Lydia (a "seller of purple" — Acts 16:14) ran her own textile business. Phebe (Rom. 16:1-2) was serving the church full time as a deaconess. She was probably the one who delivered Paul's letter from Corinth to Rome.

Some women don't realize how wide their role really can be. They've heard that a woman "shouldn't preach," is "under authority," is a "weaker vessel" so many times they think they can't do anything really worthwhile except scrub floors, wash dishes and change diapers — and even if they could, they probably really shouldn't.

Fake Femininity Found Wanting

Their negative self-concept has been perpetuated by well-meaning, scripture-quoting ladies like Helen Andelin, author of *Fascinating Womanhood* (Pacific Press, 1963). Although this book contains some helpful "husband-psychology" hints, it advocates the traditional dichotomy between what's considered man's and woman's work. Mrs. Andelin tells her fellow females, "Don't try to excel him in anything which requires masculine ability" (p. 218).

That's logical, if "masculine abil-

ity" means more muscle. A woman can't excel most men in that category unless she's pretty unusual. Even Billie Jean King picked an *old* man to clobber. But Mrs. Andelin says: "We see women building fences, hauling sand, repairing automobiles, painting, mowing the lawn, repairing heavy equipment, fixing the roof, doing carpentry, and many other masculine tasks" (p. 107). "You must become the fragile dependent creature that nature intended you to be" (p. 109).

This concept of woman as a sheltered hothouse plant doesn't stack up with what's said in Proverbs 31: "She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms" (verse 17). Our great grandmothers used to do "heavy" work that some might consider unladylike today. A farm

Marriage isn't a master-slave arrangement with the man giving all the orders and the woman meekly kowtowing. In fact, if a man wants to do what God does, he'll treat his wife like an intelligent partner. He'll ask for her advice — and take it if it's good.

woman lifted loads and worked hours that would exhaust a modern sedentary man.

The millennium hasn't arrived yet, and many women today find themselves outside an ideal family situation. They are forced to earn their own living. There's nothing wrong with that — Ruth and Lydia both did it. And they were righteous women.

Of course, not every woman needs or would enjoy a full-time job. But what if she wants to repair her car? It wouldn't hurt to know what goes on under the hood if she's interested. And what's the matter with mowing the lawn or gardening? Or even light carpentry? These household jobs can be included in a woman's realm. She probably needs the exercise. In fact, the whole fam-

ily can benefit by participating in these activities together.

A Liberated Woman

The Proverbs 31 woman had children and a husband, but she didn't use them as an excuse to vegetate. She knew the ins and outs of real estate well enough to invest in a piece of land — and she used her own earnings, not her husband's money. Apparently she was producing goods on consignment for a local store. She planted a vineyard, or else supervised the work. (Was this a "masculine" job?) She made clothes for her family. She found time to do volunteer work helping the needy. And she took time to keep up her own appearance — her clothing was "silk and purple."

She didn't stagnate inside the house all day. She went out to buy quality food from different sources. (If she were a modern woman, she'd be able to drive a car so her husband wouldn't have to chauffeur her "afar" to pick up her household needs.) She got up early and put in long hours, but at the end of a busy day she found time to study God's Word. This is how she could "open her mouth with wisdom" and kindness.

Although she kept busy, this extraordinary person put her husband first. He didn't have to waste his energy worrying about the situation at home. He knew his wife was a steady, capable, dedicated, happy person who supported him in whatever he did. With her backing him and believing in him, *he* reached *his* full potential for leadership and service. He was a pillar of the community, a well-known civic leader.

Can a woman like this be considered liberated today? Will she receive the respect and recognition due her? Just listen: "Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her . . . Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Eternal, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates" (verses 28-31). □

DEEP IN the bowels of the forty-story office building, a white-coated individual stared intently at the endless line of coded characters before him. On the face of the control panel behind him, numerous rows of small lights rhythmically blinked their reassuring message.

The operator paused for a moment and then quickly struck a key on the typewriter at his right. Instantly the computer printer erupted into frenzied action.

Momentarily distracted by the barrage of staccato noises surging from the printer, the operator failed to notice the arrival of the programming supervisor in the bright but windowless computer room.

"Hey, Bill," the supervisor shouted over the clattering din, "how's that inventory listing going?"

"It's coming off the printer right now," replied the operator, now somewhat relieved that he could witness the visible fruits of his recent labors.

As the last sheets of the listing tumbled to the bottom of the printer, the noise level in the room subsided to its normal monotonous hum. The operator quickly tore off the listing and handed it to the supervisor.

After a brief examination, the supervisor exploded. He hurled the listing into the nearest trash receptacle and stalked out of the computer room.

The operator, taken aback but not completely abashed, caught up with the supervisor in the next room.

"What's wrong with the listing?" he gingerly asked.

"It's nothing but *garbage*," the supervisor grouched. "Whoever programmed this thing ought to have his head examined."

"You mean it's our old problem: 'Garbage in — garbage out?'" the operator queried.

"Exactly," replied the supervisor as he went looking for a certain programmer.

As the little sketch above illustrates, garbage in/garbage out is a well-known fact of life in the world of data processing. But it has an even more vital role to play in the functioning of another highly sophisticated piece of computing equipment — the human mind.

Like the computer, our minds can either be rightly used or abused depending on the kind of information and thoughts we feed it. And the way we think inwardly invariably affects the outward man. As the

Manufacturer of the human computer put it in Proverbs 23:7: "For as he [a man] thinketh in his heart, so is he."

And Matthew 15:17-19: "Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies . . ."

If garbage is on the inside, eventually it will show up on the outside — in our behavior, mannerisms and personality. For instance, a person who inwardly feels hostile to others will often indulge in gossiping, faultfinding and open criticism.

Or take the individual who dotes on dime novels, movie magazines and afternoon TV matinees. He may find it much easier to daydream his life away and increasingly difficult to sustain any kind of deep, introspective or creative thought processes. Such a person will not only think in trivial terms, but speak that way as well.

On the other hand, a person can go to the other extreme by becoming super introspective and critically

GARBAGE IN...

by George Ritter

self-sensitive. He or she becomes all wrapped up with old number one — the big “I.” Usually others find the company of such a person extremely dull and boring because of his superego fixation.

And then there’s the man who inwardly trembles over what *others* may think of him. His man-pleasing instincts are so strong that he can easily become anything from a mild-mannered Joe Pablum to a martinet-type “yes-man” who unthinkingly executes the boss’s orders.

Often a man who has the right mental approach can turn failure in a particular area in life into outward success. In this regard, James Allen, the author of the book *As a Man Thinketh*, wrote: “A man only begins to be a man when he ceases to whine and revile, and commences to search for the hidden justice which regulates his life. And as he adapts his mind to that regulating factor, he ceases to accuse others as the cause of his condition, and builds himself up in strong and noble thoughts; ceases to kick against circumstances, but begins to use them as aids to his more rapid progress, and as a means of discovering the hidden powers and possibilities within himself.”

What a man thinks inwardly also has a great deal to do with his outward health. While many leading medical authorities are coming to better appreciate this principle, the Creator of the human apparatus understood it from the beginning. Again, God says in Proverbs 14:30: “A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones.” And Proverbs 17:22: “A merry heart doeth good like a medi-

The way we think inwardly invariably affects the outward man. As the Manufacturer of the human computer put it: “For as he [a man] thinketh in his heart, so is he.”

cine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.”

But an even more important aspect of the garbage-in/garbage-out principle is the way it can affect others. Again notice what Christ said about this in Matthew 12:35: “A good man out of the good treasure of the *heart* bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.”

One of the “things” referred to in

the above passage would certainly include our patterns of speaking. And yet, as the apostle James shows, the tongue is one of the most difficult areas of our life to bring under control. “For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body” (James 3:2).

A person can control what comes out of his mouth if he can control what goes into his mind. As Christ stated in Matthew 12:34: “For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”

We can get the garbage out of our lives if we don’t allow it to get into our minds. As Christians we can do this if we follow the instructions of the apostle Paul in II Corinthians 10:5 by “casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”

And in Philippians 4:8: “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, *think on these things.*” □

...GARBAGE OUT

THE PATH TO TRUE GREATNESS

by Richard Plache and David Ord

All of us are dedicated to service.

If there's one thing we never tire of, it's serving. We just love to serve — ourselves, that is! We like others to serve us too.

We are born with this tremendous desire for service. From the day we enter the world, we want to be waited upon and served. If allowed to do so, children would reduce their parents to servile slaves.

The world evaluates greatness by the degree of service a person receives. The more important one is, the greater the number of servants, butlers, maids and secretaries.

Human nature aspires to be great. It wants to be served.

What Is "Greatness"?

People look upon service as the way to become great. Then, once you are great, you can then be served. Human beings will often do just about anything in the process of working their way up the ladder to greatness. But once great, look out!

The greatest human being who ever lived — Jesus Christ, to whom belongs "all power... in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18) — brought an entirely new concept of greatness to this earth.

The disciples wanted to become great. "And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest" (Luke 22:24). Their concept of greatness was that of the world's great, and Christ began to explain that this isn't a true criterion of greatness.

He told them: "I am among you as he that serveth" (verse 27).

When He returns to this earth, Christ will serve those who are born into His Kingdom at the wedding

feast. "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them" (Luke 12:37).

Christ is the greatest because He is the greatest *servant* of all. True greatness is measured by the amount of *servicing* that you do, and that serving never stops. Christ served when He came as a human being, and He will still be serving after He returns as King of kings and Lord of lords. Service is not merely a way to become great, it is *being* great.

Why Serve?

Do you realize that human beings sometimes serve so that they can get? Yes, even when we serve, we sometimes serve selfishly. Generally, our service is motivated by one of three desires.

Some people just enjoy serving. It brings them pleasure, so they do it. They probably had the good fortune of having been brought up in a family where the parents have set the right example and properly trained them in this aspect. It's not wrong to enjoy serving, but we should realize that it could be motivated by selfish pleasure.

Then there are those who serve as an exercise in self-righteousness. They involve themselves in charities, or other forms of service, because it makes them feel good. They're made to feel they are "pleasing God."

Another big reason that people serve is simply to get a position of prestige — to impress others. Too many of us have the attitude of Baruch — we are seeking great things for ourselves (Jer. 45:5).

What is the right motive for serving? Simply stated, it is *outgoing concern for others*.

Paul wrote of Timothy: "For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For *all seek their own*, not the things which are Jesus Christ's" (Phil. 2:20-21). Here was a man who served genuinely. He served not because it was his job, but because he cared deeply for people.

Paul himself had this same attitude of selfless service. If it would have done any good, he would rather have sacrificed his own salvation than have others fail to enter God's Kingdom (Rom. 9:1-3). He had a love of people that was beyond the natural human capacity for love.

An entire chapter of the Bible is devoted to showing that we can go to any lengths of service, yet if it isn't from a right motivation — if it is not based on a deep love and a real outgoing selfless concern — it is all worthless (I Cor. 13).

Do you realize that a person can sacrifice, serve with all his being, and even lay down his life in martyrdom — being burned at the stake (verse 3) — and still profit nothing if he or she is not doing it from a right motivation?

Ask yourself: Are you really serving to help the other person, or just to impress yourself and others?

What Service Is

In the account of the life of Jesus Christ, we have a graphic example of what real service is.

As the disciples gathered on that last evening before His death, we are told that "Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the

Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them *unto the end*" (John 13:1).

Christ knew what was going to happen to him only hours later. He understood it in vivid, minute detail. He knew the disciples were going to deny Him, that they would forsake Him and turn coward under pressure. He could almost feel the grisly, gruesome, grueling torture that lay immediately ahead of Him — a terrifying nightmare which He would face *alone*.

But where was His concern? Was His mind on self-pity? Christ and the disciples were together for the Passover in an upper room. It was customary to have feet washed by a servant at the door before entering into a home. All of the disciples had probably recognized the fact that there had been no one at the door to wash their feet when they came in. Someone had slipped up. But only Christ thought to do something about it! He saw a need, and He rose from the table and began washing a lot of dirty feet.

What He did wasn't to fulfill any prophecy. It wasn't a "put-on." It was a genuine act of service as an *example* for us. So great was His love, even at such a time, that He was aware of even the physical comforts of His disciples.

Christ was God. Yet He was utterly *selfless*, ready to give His all in the most horrifying execution rabid human minds, inspired by the fiendish mind of Satan himself, could devise. He had known for thousands of years what a wild mob of hate-filled human beings — people He Himself had made — would do to Him. Yet He chose to let them do it because of His total selflessness and concern for others.

What is true service? It's love. An outgoing concern, without any selfish overtones or motives, for other people. And it moves you to *give* yourself in serving your fellowman, not for what you can get but for what you can do to give happiness to people.

But humans don't have that kind of love. When the chips are down, humanly we are all like those who were with Paul in Rome when his trial took place. "At my first answer no man stood with me," he recounted, "but all men forsook me..." (II Tim. 4:16).

Today, even the carnal willingness of humans to serve — for whatever selfish motives — is fast disappearing. People are out to get while the getting is good. Prophecy said of our time that "the love of many shall *wax cold*" (Matt. 24:12).

In this increasingly selfish age, we need to go to God in fervent prayer seeking *His* love. This selfless love comes through His Spirit active in our minds (Rom. 5:5). This Spirit, likened to water (John 7:37-39), must *flow* into us from God and out from us in giving and serving. The icier the world we live in, the more active we must be in serving — for only *running* water will not freeze.

There are seven vital qualities of effective service. Let's begin to use them in our everyday lives.

1) Service Begins Small

Humans usually want to start off with a big splash to impress themselves and others.

But God's Word reveals the principle of the grain of mustard seed. It has small beginnings, developing into something big (Matt. 13:31-32).

Service is no exception to this biblical principle. We often *despise* the

little opportunities we have to serve, yet God says: "For who hath despised the day of *small things*?" (Zech. 4:10.) What begins small can become great if it is rightly rooted and well formed in its development.

Christ magnified this principle when He said that the person who is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much (Luke 16:10). If we prove faithful in small openings for service, God will give us larger areas of responsibility. But if we are careless in the small things, we will probably also be careless in the large things. If our *attitude* is wrong in small tasks of service, it will also be wrong in the big ones.

God starts a man off at the bottom. It isn't just a matter of can a man do the job, but what will the job do to the man?

God shows us this principle with those He uses directly in His Work. A man ordained as a minister must not be "a novice, lest being *lifted up with pride* he fall into the condemnation of the devil" (I Tim. 3:6). Even the greatest servants of God were proved first. Moses, who was called to serve in a really great way, was tempered and humbled for forty years in Midian before God used him.

But how can *you* learn to serve in little ways? Begin at home and in the place where you work. Do you wipe out sinks so that they are left clean? Turn out unneeded lights? Pick up pieces of paper that are left littering the floor? Perhaps such "minor details" are too unimportant for you. But they involve the kind of character that will carry over into the *big* things in life.

Anyone can serve in *little* ways. Begin to *seek out* such opportunities for service.

2) Where Service Begins

Throughout the Bible we find that God gives opportunities to serve in physical capacities before He gives spiritual responsibilities. Service begins with physical duties.

Christ Himself showed that physical service is important: "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward" (Mark 9:41). Small physical services are rewarded by God, and most anyone can render them. We have many dozens of opportunities to serve in this way daily.

Epaphroditus, commended for his tremendous service in God's Work, helped Paul in physical ways. Paul called him his "brother, and companion in labour... and he that ministered to my wants" (Phil. 2:25).

Because others had not provided the financial support for God's Work, Epaphroditus had done all he could to make up the difference. Paul told the Philippians that "for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me" (verse 30).

Many write asking how they can help in this worldwide Work. God has not called most to serve in a spiritual capacity right now, but the example of Epaphroditus shows how many *can* serve in a physical way if they so desire by *giving of their own earnings* to support the Work. In the future, we shall serve directly in the spiritual phase of God's Work if we have first learned to serve in the physical (Rev. 2:26; 5:10).

Even some of the greatest servants of God began serving first in physical ways. Elisha is an outstanding example of a man God used mightily. Yet he became a *servant* to Elijah before God used him directly (I Kings 19:21). Unless we too are willing to help people physically first, we will never be able to help them spiritually.

3) Behind the Scenes

Humanly, we want to be out in the limelight so that others can *see* how much we serve. That's why Christ said: "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them..." (Matt. 6:1). It's so easy, so typical of us as humans to just mention in passing the things we have done in serving.

When you serve, don't let others know. Do it undercover and behind the scenes if it can be done that way. Be eager and willing to do the type of job that no one notices when it *is* done, but *everyone* notices when it *is not* done. After all, the fewer the people who know what you are doing to serve, the easier it is for you to keep your human vanity in check.

An outstanding example of behind-the-scenes service is that of Epaphras, who labored fervently in prayer for God's people (Col. 4:12). Prayer is one of the most vital ways we can serve in God's Work. Yet how many of us are spending so much as a half hour on our knees for this Work of God each day? If you *really* want to serve, here's a behind-the-scenes place to begin.

4) Don't Respect Persons

We enjoy serving people we *like* to serve. Important people. People to whom we are close. People we know will return the service.

Real service is helping those who cannot do anything for us.

James 1:27 tells us that the real test of our genuineness is our willingness to "visit the fatherless and widows *in their affliction*." Humanly we want to avoid unpleasant situations. If there is a death or a tragedy in a family, we tend to stay away. It's awkward — we don't know what to say. So we just don't make the effort to comfort and help in any way that might be needed.

Christ taught this same principle when He said: "... When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they *cannot recompense thee*..." (Luke

14:13-14). Will most of us be able to stand before Him and say that we really lived by this verse?

Service is *people* oriented. It is what one human being renders to another. And unless we are serving the ordinary people we come into contact with every day, we are kidding ourselves that we are serving. It is the services we render in the *normal course of daily life* that count.

How often do we invite the poor, the widows, or the fatherless in for dinner? All of us are delighted to entertain someone who can promote us on the job — but what about the new junior in the company who needs an awful lot of help in getting on his feet? What about the elderly person who lives nearby and has *no one* who cares about her?

It's easier to show concern for nice-looking, clean, neat people than it is for ugly, dirty, maimed or poor people. But Jesus said: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of *the least* of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25:40). We will score far more points with God if we serve without respect of persons — if we keep our eyes open for ways to serve those who especially *need* our help, love and concern (James 2:1-9).

5) Sacrifice

Opportunities to serve seem to come at the most *inconvenient* times. When opportunity knocks, we are usually either not at home or else halfway out the door! We are "too busy" or "unable" to help the person in need *right then*.

But aren't there many times when we could *alter* our plans? Couldn't we often sacrifice our own pleasures and give that time to someone else? It is when we are able to help someone *now* — right when help is needed — that God is most pleased.

Jesus Christ set the supreme example of sacrifice. Even though He was God, He "made himself of *no reputation*, and took upon him the form of a servant" (Phil. 2:7). He gave up *everything*, literally emptying Himself of His own desires in

order to serve! It was with this example in mind that the apostle Paul commanded: "Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others *better than yourselves*. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but *also to the interests of others*" (Phil. 2:3-4, RSV).

We could give someone a lift by simply going a little out of our way, but we just don't want to take the trouble. We could stand and let an older person, or a lady, take a seat. We could help others in so many ways if only we would just sacrifice a little. But so often we don't. Why? Because we simply don't rate others as important as ourselves.

Serving involves sacrificing time. Begin to consider the other person's needs more important than your own. Be willing to give up what you had planned to do with your time. Sacrifice is a major key to effective serving.

6) Above and Beyond

There are three kinds of people in our world today. There are those who don't serve at all, those who serve only when they have to — when they feel it is their duty — and those who go *above and beyond* duty in serving.

Paul talked about a group of people who "gave according to their means . . . and beyond their means, of their own free will, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints" (II Cor. 8:3-4, RSV).

Christ expressed this principle of going above and beyond what is required when He said: "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do" (Luke 17:10). If we do only what is required, where is the room for God to reward us for service?

On the job, do we work by the clock? Do we arrive right on starting time, and quit when the buzzer sounds? Or do we put in a little

extra work for good measure? Do you have a "that'll be all right" standard on the job, or are you striving to *excel*? Do you try to produce the very best product you can?

If you're a housewife, do you endeavor to prepare the most appetizing and appealing meals for your family? Or has the "TV dinner" become the norm in your home? How much are you really concerned for your family's health?

All of us need to do *more* than is required. We need to follow the ancient proverb: "*Whatsoever* thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Eccl. 9:10).

7) Service Doesn't Stop

When someone doesn't respond to service, it is a natural human tendency to write him off. We quickly give up. But God's Word instructs: "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9).

"Be not overcome of evil," Paul wrote, "but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21). Love persists. It keeps coming back. It keeps working to gain a brother. Even when it is rebuffed, it keeps trying. It is the ultimate weapon that will break down all barriers.

Our reward in God's Kingdom is going to be based on how we have served. Right now, your good works might not be getting very far. But if you keep them up — if you serve *more and more* as this age grows colder — they "cannot escape notice for ever" (I Tim. 5:25, Moffatt).

A day of reckoning is coming. Those who are looking out for their own selves first, instead of for the interests of God's Work and of others, will lose what they have clung on to so dearly (Matt. 10:39). But those who are sacrificing to serve wherever they can are storing up a great reward in God's family.

Use these seven keys to serve more effectively *now*, and God will give you eternal life and a position of greatness so that you can continue serving throughout all eternity. □

How your Good News subscription has been paid

Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached [and published — Mark 13:10] in all the world for a witness unto all nations" (Matt. 24:14) at this time, just before the end of this age. A price must be paid for this magazine, the Correspondence Course, booklets and other literature.

But how? Christ forbids us to sell it to those who receive it: "Freely ye have received, freely give," said Jesus to His disciples whom He was sending to proclaim His gospel. "It is more blessed to give," He said, "than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

God's way is the way of love — and that is the way of giving. God expects every child of His to give freewill offerings and to tithe, as His means of paying the costs of carrying the gospel to others.

We, therefore, simply trust the Living Christ to stir the minds and hearts of His followers to give generously, thus paying the cost of putting this precious gospel truth in the hands of others.

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THE GOSPEL TO THE WORLD

Whirlwind Activity Winds up the Year



Mike Hendrickson — GN

For Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong the closing months of 1974 were quite busy — and profitable. Old friends were revisited and new friends and contacts were established in a series of meetings in the Middle East and the Far East.

After observing the Feast of Tabernacles with the Church membership in the United States and Canada at their local festival sites, Mr. Armstrong returned to Pasadena for a few days of work and rest. Then he departed for Japan where he hosted a dinner for their Imperial Highnesses, Prince and Princesses Mikasa. Prince Mikasa personally thanked Mr. Armstrong for his efforts on behalf of the Prince's forthcoming visit to Egypt (which took place at the end of January). He also plans to visit Ambassador College later this year.

From Japan, Mr. Armstrong flew to Egypt after stops in Manila, the Philippines, and Bangkok, Thai-

land. In Cairo, Mr. Armstrong spoke to a distinguished group of government officials and educators (on October 30). Over 100 people attended, including four ministers of the government. He spoke on the cause of world problems and contrasted the two ways of living: "I call one way the way of *get*; the other the way of *give*. Now human nature doesn't like to give. Human nature wants to get. And this whole world is based on the get principle . . . There was a great Teacher who once said it is more blessed to give than to receive. And I don't think very many people believe that . . . But I have been putting that way to practice for over 40 years and I find it does succeed, and it is better."

The next stop was Tel Aviv, Israel, where Mr. Armstrong was to be honored by a testimonial dinner on November 6 hosted by the Minister of Tourism, Moshe Kol. Be-



Warren Watson — GN

cause of illness, he was unable to attend, so his adviser Mr. Stanley Rader went in his stead. Mr. Kol noted in his remarks to the 110 or so leaders and foreign dignitaries present that "Mr. Armstrong is traveling for humanitarian purposes, for educational purposes, and for the purpose of building bridges between people of different regions — and he is quite successful."

Two and a half weeks later, Mr. Armstrong returned to the Philippines for another personal appearance speaking engagement. This was a follow-up to his successful campaign in May. On November 22 he flew to the island province of Iloilo where he received an enthusiastic welcome by the citizenry. He spoke for about 20 minutes before



Jerry Ortiguero — GN

some 300 leading people of the community, appeared on a radio interview program, and then drove to the University to receive another honorary degree.

The next day, Saturday, he observed the Sabbath with some 650 Filipino brethren and that evening spoke to an overflow crowd of 1,800 in Quezon City about the gospel. Two television stations taped his speech for later airing throughout much of the country.

On December 4, Mr. Armstrong was in Japan and had the opportunity to be the first visitor from abroad to be received by Japan's new prime minister, Takeo Miki. In the course of their conversation, the prime minister thanked him for all of his assistance and efforts on behalf of the Japanese government.

After the latest round of whirlwind meetings, Mr. Armstrong returned to Pasadena for a few weeks to catch his breath and catch up on



various matters. He remained long enough to attend a recital by the world-famous pianist Arthur Rubinstein in Ambassador Auditorium on January 15. The occasion was a benefit for the International Cultural Center for Youth in Jerusalem, which seeks to foster education for international understanding among youth of all denominations.

Mr. Rubinstein walked on stage to a standing ovation and did not disappoint the standing-room-only audience. Albert Goldberg of the *Los Angeles Times* wrote: "The master was in rare mood, a mood of Olympian insights and penetrating eloquence. If he had intended this for a last will and testament, it could hardly have been more to his liking or more secure insurance for such

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Mr. Abdul Lader Hatem introduces Mr. Armstrong at the testimonial dinner in Cairo. Maestro Arthur Rubinstein, world-famous concert pianist, performs at benefit concert in the Ambassador Auditorium. Mr. Armstrong speaks before 1800 in second personal appearance in Manila on November 23. Mr. Armstrong meets Prime Minister Takeo Miki on December 4 — the first foreigner to be received by the new Japanese leader.

immortality as any performer is allowed."

The next day the respite was over. Mr. Armstrong was back in the air heading for more appointments, more speaking engagements, more opportunities to proclaim the gospel of Christ to the leaders, and the masses, of the world. □

GN STAFFERS ON MID-EAST



After ten grueling days of smoke-filled airports, security searches and checks, thundering jet engines, passport stampings and numerous time changes, a weary but much enlightened group of three GN staff members recently returned to home base in Pasadena.

Dr. Charles Dorothy of the Ambassador College Faculty, Lawson Briggs, an associate editor on the GN staff, and Brian Knowles, managing editor, toured Israel, Athens and parts of Egypt in a whirlwind fact-finding mission in the area of the world which is destined to make tomorrow's headlines.

The tour group was led by Dr. Jack Finegan, a biblical scholar, archaeologist and author of *Light From the Ancient Past*, *The Archaeology of the New Testament* and *The Archaeology of World Religions*. As the tour progressed, Dr. Finegan gave a number of lectures bringing important insights on the biblical relationships of the archaeology sites we visited.

The journey proper began after the El Al jet landed at Tel Aviv. From there our group motored to nearby Netanya where we checked into a hotel and got to bed around 12:30 a.m. It was up again at 6:15 and on the bus by eight o'clock. Netanya is a "boom town" founded in the 1930s. It is the regional capital



Photos by Brian Knowles — GN

Partly restored Roman amphitheater (left) at Caesarea where Herod Agrippa made his infamous speech. It has here that the angel struck Herod down for vaingloriously allowing the people to address him as a god (Acts 12:18-23). The amphitheater is occasionally used for entertainment events today. Above: Dr. Charles Dorothy of the Ambassador College Faculty pointing to a replica of a stone pillar located at Caesarea mentioning the name of Pontius Pilate in a Latin inscription. The original stone is located elsewhere. Right (this page): Beautiful Mount Hermon from the Sea of Galilee. Mt. Hermon's snow-covered summit provides the source for the waters of the Jordan River and the Sea of Galilee. David alluded to the "dew of Hermon" (Psalm 133:3) which waters the surrounding mountain area.

of the plain of Sharon and has a population of around 75,000.

Caesarea

From Netanya our group motored to the ancient town of Caesarea and visited the Roman amphitheater where Herod Agrippa made his infamous speech (Acts 12:18-23). The Jewish historian Flavius Josephus wrote an interesting parallel account of this event and stated plainly that

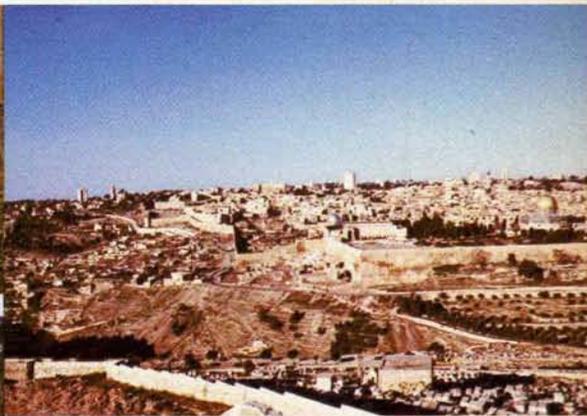
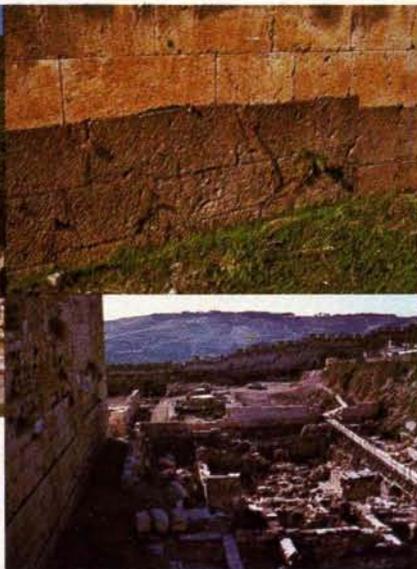
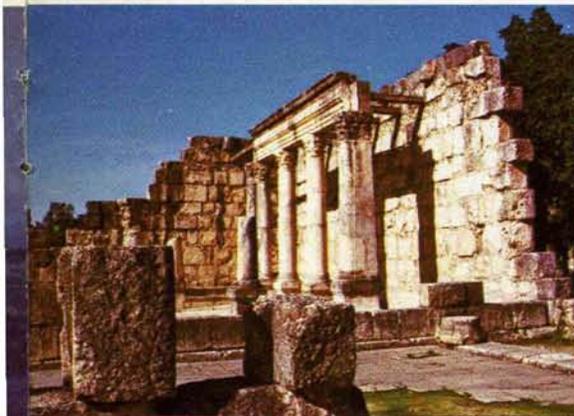


the speech was delivered "in the theatre" at Caesarea:

"Now, when Agrippa had reigned three years over all Judea, he came to the city Caesarea . . . there he exhibited shows in honour of Caesar . . . On the second day of which shows he put on a garment wholly of silver, and of a contexture truly wonderful, and came into the theatre early in the morning; at which time the silver of his garment being illuminated by the fresh reflection of the sun's rays upon it, shone out after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent as to spread a horror over those that looked intently upon him: and presently his flatterers cried out, one from one place, and another from another, (though not for his good,) that he was a god. . . . Upon this the king did neither rebuke them, nor reject their impious flattery. . . . A severe pain also arose in his belly, and began in a most violent manner. . . . his pain was become violent. . . . when he had been quite worn out by the pain in his belly, for five days, he departed this life, being in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and the seventh year of his reign. . . ." (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, book XIX, chapter VIII, section 2).

It was a strange feeling to stand on the stage of the very theater, at approximately the same time of the

TOUR



day (early in the morning), in which God's angel had smitten Herod Agrippa for his colossal vanity and presumptuousness!

In addition to the remains of a large Roman aqueduct, we also viewed a replica of a small column or pillar found at Caesarea which had inscribed upon it the only archaeological record of the name of Pontius Pilate. (Pilate was mentioned by Josephus and Tacitus, but no monument or inscription had ever been found carrying his name until this one was found.) The inscription is in Latin. (See accompanying photo.)

Megiddo

A second high spot on the trip was the site of biblical Megiddo. Megiddo is located a number of miles inland from the port of Haifa. Anciently, Megiddo was one of three important fortified cities which guarded the key mountain passes of the Mount Carmel area.

Megiddo guarded the best pass between the coastal plain to the valley of Esdraelon and on northward to Galilee and Damascus. It was at Megiddo that King Josiah of Judah was slain attempting to block the passage of Pharaoh Necho of Egypt northward to fight the Babylonians. Read this interesting account which shows God does work at times

Ruins of a Jewish synagogue at Capernaum (left, this page). Center top: Basalt foundation of the Capernaum synagogue. The darker stones of the lower part of the foundation may well be the base of the original first-century synagogue in which Jesus preached during His Galilean ministry (Mark 1:21). The superstructure of the existing synagogue is believed to have been constructed in the third or fourth century. Center bottom: The "Big Dig" located at the southwest corner of the Temple wall in Jerusalem. This picture shows the latest development of the archaeological site which is being excavated jointly by Hebrew University and Ambassador College. Right: Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. The Temple wall and the mosques of Al Aqsa and Omar may be seen in the middle ground.

through unconverted people (II Kings 23 and II Chron. 35).

It was also at this same pass that General Allenby's forces surprised the Turkish armies in 1918.

The Arabic name for the site of Megiddo is *Tell el-Mutesellim*. It was first excavated by a German named Dr. G. Schumacher in 1903-1905. It was found that Megiddo was situated on a high mound or hill (tell) and was fortified by a wall

some 13 feet thick! Later, this wall was doubled in thickness. (If you wish to read further on the development of the various stages of Megiddo, be sure to check Kathleen Kenyon's *Archaeology in the Holy Land*.)

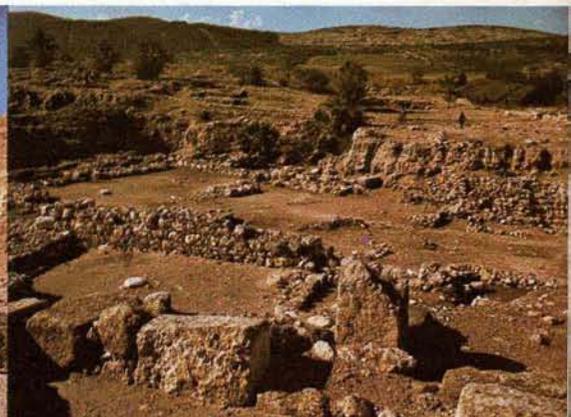
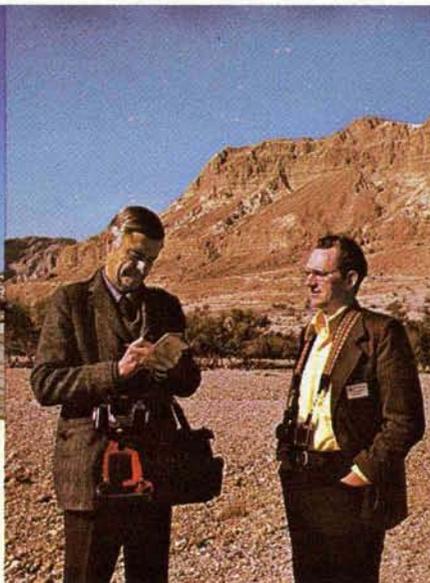
After a pleasant lunch at Haifa, on the coast, we went up to the Mount Carmel area and took a number of pictures from that outstanding vantage point.

Nazareth

Later, we visited the city of Nazareth, Jesus' home for many years. The population of Nazareth today is mainly Arab, of which about 20,000 are Christians. At Nazareth we visited the largest Roman Catholic Church in the Middle East, the Church of the Annunciation. This impressive cathedral was built upon the alleged site of "Mary's cave." A second Catholic Church, a little higher up the same hill, is said to be constructed over the site of Joseph's carpentry shop. As we emerged from these magnificent structures, we encountered Arab beggars in the street immediately adjacent.

Sea of Galilee

Certainly among the most inspiring aspects of the entire tour was a cruise on the beautiful Sea of Galilee. From our vantage point in the small craft we could see many sites



of biblical significance, including the magnificent, snowcapped Mount Hermon in the distance. The unusually clear day and crystalline beauty was interrupted by just one grim reminder of modern times: Israeli Phantom patrol jets piercing the sky.

The lake cruise ended at the site of the ruins of Capernaum. Here we walked in a synagogue where Jesus is traditionally believed to have taught. Actually, the main structure of the synagogue is from a later period, but the foundation may well be that of the original first-century structure. Certainly the site itself seems to be authentic.

After brief visits to Tiberias (John 6:23) and Cana (John 2:1; 4:46), we returned past Nazareth to the area of Samaria by way of the Valley of Jezreel. We were unable to get more than a glimpse from a distance of the tell of ancient Samaria. Near Nablus we visited the site of and drank water from Jacob's well (John 4), above which towers the 3000-foot summit of Mt. Gerizim. Dr. Finegan felt this site was authentic.

Jericho

One of the most exciting and educational areas was the site of old Jericho. Actually, there are three Jerichos: Old Testament Jericho, New Testament Jericho and modern Jericho! The site of old Jericho has been partially excavated by British

The Dome of the Rock (Mosque of Omar) and the scale model which stands beside it (left photo). The model represents the appearance of the mosque before it was restored in recent times. The original mosque, of which the model is a replica, was constructed in the seventh century A.D. Above: Archaeologist Dr. Jack Finegan and Lawson Briggs, associate editor of Good News, compare notes near the Dead Sea. Mountains of Engedi are in the background. The Engedi area is where David and his men hid from King Saul (1 Sam. 24:1). Right (this page): The site of ancient (Old Testament) Jericho excavated most recently by British archaeologist Kathleen Kenyon. Archaeologists generally regard the mound of old Jericho as one of the oldest cities in the world of which we now have an existing record.

archaeologist Kathleen Kenyon in recent years, and by others earlier.

It was interesting to note on either side of the tell of old Jericho the abandoned refugee villages left over from the 1967 war. Chances are they will again see use! Everyone in the Holy Land seemed to take for granted that there will be war again soon, probably this year.

After Jericho we headed south to Qumran where the famous Dead

Sea Scrolls were found in the late 1940s. As we drove along the shore of the Dead Sea, we came to understand why it's dead! The chemical stench was an affront to the nostrils — actually, the Dead Sea is about one third chemicals.

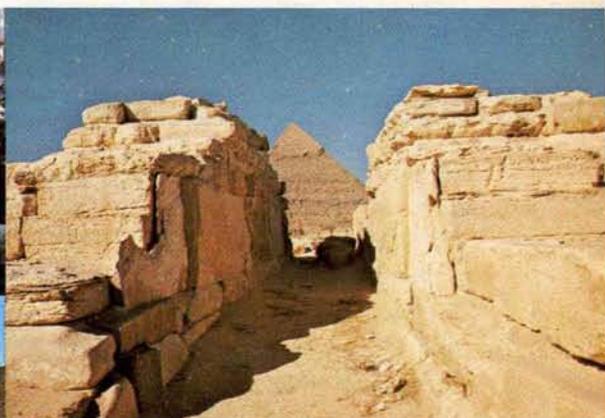
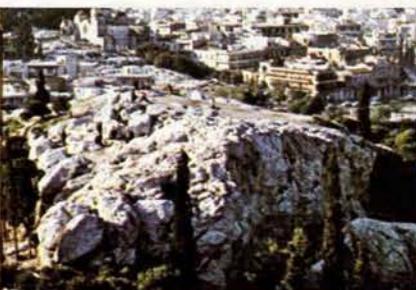
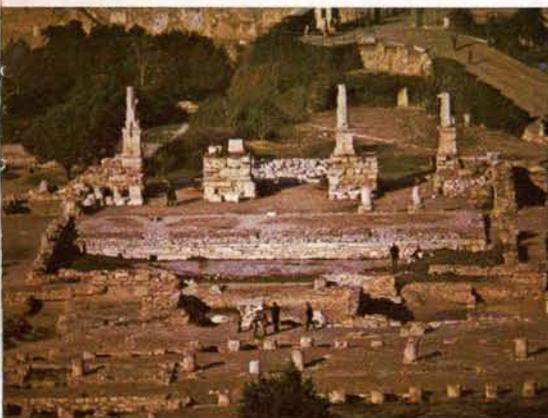
The State of Israel has erected a multimillion-dollar chemical extracting plant at one end of the Sea to extract these valuable chemicals for industrial use. Close behind and not to be outdone, the Jordanians are hurrying to open similar chemical extraction facilities. Later in the day we saw from the heights the series of dams behind which the increasingly desiccated brine was pumped into ever smaller pools.

After driving near the Cliffs of Engedi (where David hid from Saul), we arrived at the inspiring site of Masada. Masada is a symbol to modern Israelis, a symbol of courage and resolve. It is the fortress where the Zealots held out for years against the Romans.

About A.D. 73 the Roman engineers built a stupendous ramp against the 300-foot sheer cliffs of the mountain and captured the fortress. A future article in the GN will outline the significance of this important location.

Jerusalem and Athens

The group spent some four nights in the city of Jerusalem. We toured



the Temple grounds and many important archaeological sites in the Old City. Perhaps you would be surprised to know that we had to visit two separate sites for the crucifixion and two for the burial — Gordon's Calvary and garden tomb and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (where another "Calvary" is shown).

After leaving Israel we headed for Athens, Greece, where the apostle Paul confronted the Areopagites of Mars' Hill. We then toured this modern city of over two million — it was only a village of about 10,000 people when it became the capital of a Greece mainly independent of the Turks in the 19th century — visiting the Acropolis and seeing the agora (market place) where Paul spoke daily to passersby about the gospel (Acts 17:17).

Marble is very much available in Greece and is used in much of the major construction. The city literally sparkles in the sun as it fills every flat space and stretches across the gently rolling hills into the distance.

The Greeks have a statue to Harry Truman in the city of Athens.

Egypt

The final leg of the journey was to the teeming city of Cairo. Cairo is a city of over seven million relatively poor Arabs. The unemployment rate is upwards of 15-20% in Egypt, and the streets were filled with

The agora or market place in Athens (left, this page) where the apostle Paul spoke to passersby (Acts 17:17). Center Top: Mars' Hill in Athens. This is the place of the Areopagites of the seventeenth chapter of Acts where Paul disputed with the philosophers of his day about the "unknown God." Center bottom: Looking directly up the massive stone face of the pyramid of Khefron. This engineering marvel is the second largest of the three famous pyramids. The pyramid of Cheops (Khufu) is actually the largest. It is approximately the same height, but ascends at a much shallower angle, giving it greater overall mass. Right: The pyramid of Khefron from the tomb of Tutankhamen in Egypt. This tomb yielded some of the greatest treasures from the early dynasties of ancient Egypt.

people wandering aimlessly along, looking for a handout or for something to do. As we returned to the airport to depart, we saw small children huddled around dung fires by the road in a pre-dawn effort to keep warm.

Bus drivers seem able to negotiate the crowded streets on the strength of their horn alone. It was a wild ride to the airport from our hotel located near the pyramids — nar-

rowly missing autos and pedestrians!

While in Egypt the group visited the so-called Second Pyramid — the tomb of Chephren. We also visited the Cairo Museum which was built by the French in 1900. It features fabulous treasures from pyramids and tombs of the early dynasties of Egypt, including the incredible wealth of Tutankhamen, whose tomb — a rare exception — had been successfully hidden from the grave robbers.

After a long series of flights from Cairo to Athens to Rome to New York to San Francisco to Burbank, two of the group arrived home, bone weary but much enlightened by the events of the previous ten days. Dr. Dorothy remained behind another day to visit the sites of ancient Tyre and Sidon, as well as the city of Beirut, Lebanon.

Archaeologists have, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and the first half of the twentieth, accomplished a great deal in bringing the ancient past to light. Many new discoveries will undoubtedly be made that will further confirm the efficacy of the biblical record.

Future issues of *The Good News* will carry articles pertaining to some of the important archaeological discoveries of the Near East as well as the critical prophecies which are destined to be fulfilled in that vital area of the world.

— Brian Knowles

MAY A CHRISTIAN BREAK THE LETTER OF GOD'S LAW?

What is the difference between the "spirit" and the "letter" of the law? God wants you to keep His commandments. Satan wishes you to break them. How does the devil deceive the world — and some Christians — into breaking God's law?

by Raymond F. McNair

Some think you only need to keep the "spirit" of God's law. Others believe you must always obey the strict "letter." Both views are incorrect.

Does God want you to keep the "spirit" or the "letter" of His commandments? Or does He want you to keep *both* the "spirit" and the "letter" of His law?

Some believe the keeping of God's Ten Commandments is *unnecessary* for salvation. Many professing Christians believe they should keep *nine* of the commandments, the exception being the Sabbath command.

Still others profess to believe in "the Ten," but break the first and second commandments by reverencing idols, break the fourth commandment by substituting a counterfeit sabbath, or break other of "the Ten" by their actual belief and practices.

A Deceived World

Your Bible reveals that Satan has deceived the "whole world."

And the founder of Christianity warned: "Take heed that no man deceive you" (Matt. 24:4). Furthermore, He foretold that "many false

prophets shall rise, and shall *deceive many*" (verse 11).

Paul also sounded the alarm: "But," said he, "evil men and *seducers* shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (II Tim. 3:13).

The apostle John, even in his day, had to warn of "many antichrists" (I John 2:18). He therefore admonished: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1).

Peter also foretold great apostasy: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies . . ." (II Peter 2:1).

Would they be successful in leading multitudes into error? "And *many* shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of" (verse 2).

False teachers, with cunning deceptions, would become so diabolically effective, said Christ, that "if it were possible, they shall *deceive the very elect*" (Matt. 24:24).

Already, some of the "very elect" have listened to "false teachers" and have been caught off balance.

The Ten Commandments

Is obedience to the Ten Commandments necessary for salvation?

What did Jesus say?

When a young man asked Him what he must do to receive eternal life, He told him to "keep the commandments" (Matt. 19:16, 17; cf., Mark 10:17-19).

Christ mentioned five of the Ten Commandments (Matt. 19:18, 19), and then quoted one of the two

"great" commandments (see Matt. 22:36-40): "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matt. 19:19). Of course, the other five commandments were just as binding as the five which Christ specifically enumerated.

Furthermore, Jesus knew some would falsely teach that He came to "do away with" the commandments of God. He said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill" (Matt. 5:17).

Then He warned: "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these *least commandments*, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (verse 19).

Which of the commandments do you look upon as being the "least"? Is it the *fourth* commandment? The second? The third?

Christ did not do away with the law of God — rather He magnified it and made it glorious: "He [Christ] will *magnify the law*, and make it honourable" (Isa. 42:21).

But how did He *magnify* the law of God? Notice how Christ enlarged the sixth commandment: "Ye have heard," said Christ, "that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not *kill* . . . But I say unto you, That whosoever is *angry* with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment . . ." (Matt. 5:21, 22). "Whosoever *hateth* his brother," said John, "is a murderer . . ." (I John 3:15).

Here is how Christ magnified the seventh commandment: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit *adul-*

tery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already *in his heart*" (verses 27, 28).

Now what "law" or "laws" was it that Christ came to *magnify*? Did He come to enlarge or magnify the "ceremonial," "sacrificial" or "ritualistic" laws — as found in the law of Moses? Or did He come to magnify the "spiritual" law — commonly called the "moral" law — the Ten Commandments (Rom. 7:14)?

The Law of Moses

It is true that the entire "law of Moses" as given in the Old Testament is *not* totally applicable to Christians today. But this doesn't mean that all of the laws contained in the books which Moses wrote are meaningless today. Christ made the two great commandments of Leviticus 19:18 and Deuteronomy 6:5 just as binding on New Testament Christians as they were for those under the law of Moses: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and [you shall love] thy neighbour as thyself" (Luke 10:27).

God's law is upheld all the way from Genesis to Revelation. "Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, *my commandments*, my statutes, and my laws" (Gen. 26:5). Abraham mixed his *faith* (his belief) with *works* — with active obedience: "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" (James 2:21, 22.)

And yet there are those who think

Christians only need "faith" or "belief" — with no works. God's Word says we need to have both faith and works mixed together (James 2:14-22). So don't ever let anyone tell you there are "no works" for the Christian!

The New Testament reveals that it is not necessary for a believer to observe the entire "law of Moses." But this does not mean that none of Moses' commands are binding on the Christian!

A council of the New Testament Church (A.D. 49) concluded (among other things) that it was no longer necessary to keep the whole law of Moses. At that time certain men were teaching that Christians must be "circumcised after the manner of Moses" in order to be "saved" (Acts 15:1).

They taught that the "law of Moses" in its entirety must be kept: "But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which *believed*, saying, That it was needful to *circumcise them*, and to command them to keep the [entire] law of Moses" (verse 5).

The apostles, under divine inspiration, decided it was no longer necessary to practice circumcision, which was part of the Mosaic law.

They then wrote letters to all the churches explaining this matter: "Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have *troubled you* with words, *subverting your souls*, saying, Ye must be *circumcised*, and *keep the law* [of Moses — verse 5]: to whom we gave no such commandment" (verse 24). The Gentile converts were informed what they should do to please God (verses 28, 29).

The question of obedience to

God's Ten Commandments was not even brought up at this council. Rather, they disputed about keeping the law of Moses with all its washings, rituals, carnal ordinances, sacrifices, etc.

Later, Paul explained that "gifts and sacrifices" could not make the practitioner "perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in *meats* and *drinks*, and divers *washings*, and *carnal ordinances*, imposed on them until the time of reformation" (Heb. 9:9, 10).

Jesus taught men to worship God from the heart: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in *spirit* and in *truth*" (John 4:24).

Meaning of "the Law"

Many people get confused concerning the meaning of the word "law." The Hebrew word for law is *torah*, and the Greek word is *nomos*.

The word "law" (*torah* or *nomos*) is very broad and can mean many different things. It can refer to the Word of God, to the Five Books of Moses, to the Ten Commandments; or it can refer to sacrificial, ceremonial, ritualistic or carnal "law(s)" — all depending on its context.

When Christ said He did not come to "destroy the law," He was referring to the eternal "spiritual" (or moral) law of God — not to the ceremonial, sacrificial, ritualistic or carnal laws contained in the "law of Moses."

Likewise, when Paul spoke of the "law" he sometimes referred to the Ten Commandments, and at other times he plainly pointed to the "lesser" laws contained in the law of Moses.

Notice how Paul refers to the Ten

Commandments in the context of Romans 7:1-25. Paul commented: "I had not known *sin*, but by *the law*: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (verse 7).

"The law" here mentioned clearly refers to the Ten Commandments. Of this law, Paul says: "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (verse 12).

Furthermore, he plainly says: "For we know that the law is *spiritual* . . ." (verse 14).

Yes, the Ten Commandment law is "spiritual" and it is "holy," "just," and "good."

Paul is not talking here about the ritualistic, ceremonial, sacrificial or carnal laws contained in the law of Moses. Rather, he clearly means the Ten Commandments (verse 7).

The "lesser laws" contained in the law of Moses were a "yoke" — but not the Ten Commandments. Rather, they are called the "perfect law of liberty" (James 1:25). James also refers to the second great commandment as a "royal law" (James 2:8).

Clearly, in chapters one and two, James is referring to the "spiritual" law of God as contained in the two great commands, and further amplified in the Ten Commandments.

Did James think *any* of the Ten Commandments were "done away"? "For whosoever shall keep the *whole law*, and yet *offend* [transgress] in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:10). The Ten Commandments are like a chain having ten links. If one link (or one point) is broken, the whole is broken.

How many *points* are there in this law of which James spoke?

He mentions the commands against adultery and killing (verse 11). Then he says that this "law of liberty" is the law by which we will be judged (verse 12).

The Fourth Commandment

The Bible clearly enjoins God's people to keep the Ten Commandments.

Many "Christians" at least profess to keep nine of the ten, but the fourth commandment is the one that causes many to stumble. This in spite of the fact that Jesus Christ and His apostles kept God's Sabbath. Christ plainly said: "The sabbath was made for man" (Mark 2:27).

Jesus customarily kept the Sabbath — though not according to the hidebound traditions of the Pharisees (Luke 4:16; 6:6; 13:10-17; 14:1-6). We know the apostles also kept the Sabbath. And, of all people, Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, kept the Sabbath (see Acts 13:14, 42, 43; 17:2; 18:4).

Was the Sabbath changed from the *seventh* to the *first day* of the week, as some claim? Both Scripture and secular history prove that the

The Bible makes it amply clear that we are now to "worship God in spirit and in truth," but this does not mean we are to ignore the literal commandment — flagrantly violating the letter of the law.

early New Testament Christians kept the Sabbath. Sunday observance came into popular usage by Christian-professing groups centuries after Christ and His apostles died. The Emperor Constantine finally made "Sunday" the official day of worship in A.D. 321-323. (Write for our free booklets *Which Day Is the Sabbath of the New Testament?* and *Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?*)

Other Christian-professing teachers attempt to spiritualize away the fourth commandment. They claim to keep the Sabbath every day of the week. Notice how this is explained by one proponent of this false doctrine: "Let us now turn our attention to the seventh-day weekly sabbath. The sabbath is a beautiful institution But through Christ,

the physical sabbath has been superseded by a perpetual one which Christ has given for us to keep. We are now experiencing, in a spiritual way, God's sabbath every day of our lives."

Now this teacher does not offer scriptural *proof* that God made all seven days holy. He does not have any biblical authority for his unscriptural assertions. He just makes dogmatic human pronouncements — with no scriptural validity whatsoever.

Furthermore, this anti-Sabbath teacher writes: "The Christian has every day as a spiritual rest or sabbath-keeping, and there is no need to return to the one-day-a-week physical sabbath which Israel was required to observe under Moses."

But this teacher has to explain away a lot of scriptures: God says the Sabbath is the "seventh day." He affirms it was made for "man" — not just for the Jewish people. God shows that this day was given as a day of physical rest and relaxation, as well as a day of spiritual rejuvenation through worship of one's Creator.

Those who teach against keeping God's Sabbath must ignore the examples of Christ and Paul. They vainly assume you can "keep" the other six days "holy" when God has *not* made them holy. Remember, you can't keep water hot or cold until it is first made either hot or cold. Likewise, you can't "keep holy" that which has not first been made holy — and *man* doesn't have the power to make anything holy! Only God can make something (including *time*) holy!

Only Keep the "Spirit" of the Law?

Some have concluded that we need only keep the *spirit* of the law but not the *letter*.

What about it? Should a Christian observe God's law according to the "letter," the "spirit," or both?

The Bible makes it amply clear that we are now to "worship God in spirit and in truth," but this does not

mean we are to ignore the *literal* commandment — flagrantly violating the *letter* of the law.

Christ taught that we must not only *not murder*, but learn to keep the “spirit” of this commandment — we must not “hate” — must not murder in our minds and hearts.

Not only must we not commit adultery, but we must learn to keep this commandment according to its *intent* — we must not even “lust” in our hearts. When we lust after a woman, we thereby commit spiritual adultery. And when we “hate” someone in our hearts, we thereby commit spiritual murder (I John 3:15).

In order to keep the commandments in our minds and hearts (according to the true intent and purpose behind the law), we must also keep the law in the letter. Can we commit literal adultery or murder and yet obey the spiritual intent of these commandments? Of course not.

And the same applies to the fourth commandment. Truly, we should keep the Sabbath in the spirit — not “doing our own thing” on that day. We are to cease from our physical labors — just as God did after His six-day creation (Gen. 2:1-3; Heb. 4:4).

In other words, we must learn to keep the Sabbath in the *spirit*, according to God’s original intent, but we must also keep the *literal* seventh day. We cannot keep the Sabbath in our hearts, and at the same time do our normal work or business, pursue worldly pleasures or other activities not in keeping with the spirit or intent of that holy day.

Of course, there might be times when one would have to “break” the “no-work” letter of the Sabbath in order to “keep” the “spirit” or intent of that day. Examples would include emergencies or saving human life on that day — even if it meant doing hard work.

Saved by Grace

No amount of good works or commandment keeping, no kind of

legal observance (whether the Ten Commandments or the ceremonial, sacrificial or ritualistic laws) can possibly *justify* us. Keeping any law cannot forgive us for the *past sins* (the violations of the spiritual law of God) which we have committed.

This is where the sacrifice of Christ comes in. Christ’s substitutionary death was sufficient to pay the penalty for all the sins which mankind has ever committed or will commit. Therefore it is truly “by *grace* [that] ye are saved” (Eph. 2:5).

Grace means something which is freely given. It is by God’s free gift of forgiveness that our guilty past is wiped clean. It is by His free gift of the Holy Spirit that we receive the strength and power to live a godly life in the future.

The apostle John wrote: “And hereby do we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him” (I John 2:3, 4).

So it is by His *grace* (His free *gift*) that we are saved — not by our own works. But many other scriptures show that we must obey God — we must have good works: “For by *grace* are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the *gift* of God: Not of *works*, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *good works*, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:8, 9).

A Commandment-Keeping Church

Though no amount of commandment keeping will save anyone, nonetheless God commands obedience. We are told to keep His commandments.

Jesus Christ inspired His servant

John to write: “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him” (I John 2:3, 4).

But the Christian is to go beyond what is commanded — going beyond “duty” (Luke 17:10). “And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight” (I John 3:22).

Furthermore, this same apostle was inspired to reveal that God’s true Church would be a commandment-keeping Church (Rev. 12:17; 14:12).

Is commandment keeping important? Does God intend that we keep His Ten Commandments — all ten?

Will we be blessed if we keep His commandments — or will we, as some would have you believe, be under a terrible *curse*? What does God say? “*Blessed* are they that do his *commandments*, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Rev. 22:14).

Notice that this verse does not say “Blessed are those who keep *some* of his commandments.”

When Jesus told the rich young man to “keep the commandments,” He clearly referred to the spiritual (or commonly called “moral”) law of God (Matt. 19:16-19).

Will we repent of sin — repent of breaking God’s spiritual law? God commands us to repent — to quit *sinning* — to quit breaking His law (I John 3:4).

David, a man after God’s own heart, was inspired to say: “O how love I thy *law*! It is my meditation all the day” (Ps. 119:97).

And Isaiah also knew that obedience to the law of God is the only way to peace, happiness, prosperity and eternal life: “O that thou hadst hearkened to *my commandments*! then had *thy peace* been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea” (Isa. 48:18). □

QUESTION: "What did Jesus mean by saying, 'Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come'? (John 2:4.) Also, since it was His mother He was talking to, why didn't He address her as 'mother'? Does this conflict with the commandment: 'Honor thy father and mother'?"

Nelson H.,
Vauxhall, New Jersey

ANSWER: Jesus once made a similar statement in reply to a request from His brethren. "Jesus said to them, 'My time has not yet come, but your time is always here'" (John 7:6, RSV used throughout this section unless otherwise indicated). A like expression is repeated in verse 30: "So they sought to arrest him; but no one laid hands on him, because his hour had not yet come." Finally, just before His crucifixion, Jesus said to His disciples: "*The hour has come* for the Son of man to be glorified" (John 12:23; cf., verse 27; 13:1; 17:1).

Says *The New Bible Commentary: Revised*: "The reference to the *hour* of Jesus is another characteristic of this [John's] Gospel . . . It reveals an awareness of approaching crisis and climax, not only in the mind of the Evangelist [John], but also in the mind of Jesus" (p. 934).

To understand John 2:4, let's consider a similar conversation when Jesus was but twelve years old. His family had gone to Jerusalem to observe the Passover. Unbeknownst to His parents, who were returning home after the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Jesus had remained at Jerusalem (in the Temple). They thought Him to be traveling with friends or relatives — showing that

they relied on His dependability and good judgment. Finally, when Joseph and Mary could not find Him among their group, they returned to Jerusalem. When they found Him, notice the wording in the conversation:

"And when they saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously.' And he said to them, 'How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' [must be about my Father's business', KJV]" (Luke 2:48-49). Jesus undoubtedly gave special emphasis to some of the words. "Didn't you know, mother — you who have always taught me about God — that I must be about His business?"

It had been about twelve years since His supernatural conception, and Jesus may have been gently reminding His human guardians that He understood that His real parentage was of God and that He had a special commission to fulfill on this earth as the very Son of God. That goal seemed to be uppermost in His mind even as a young boy of twelve.

But notice the conclusion to the account: "And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and *was obedient to them . . .*" (verse 51). So Jesus continued to respect and obey His parents while maturing physically and preparing for His divine mission.

In John 2:4, Jesus again apparently alluded to His coming crucifixion and resurrection to glory when He replied to a request from His mother for a pressing social need. The expression appears to be another gentle reminder to her of His most important calling. Of

course, Jesus did honor the wishes of His mother on this occasion (verses 5-10).

At this wedding feast, the occasion of Christ's first miracle, Jesus was about thirty years old (a fully mature adult even by Levitical standards, cf., Luke 3:23; Numbers 4:3, 35, 39, 47). In addressing His mother as "woman," He was not disparaging her in any sense. It was "no term of disrespect in the language of that day" (*Critical and Experimental Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 357).

"The fact that our Lord on the cross (John 19:26) addressed his mother by the same term *woman . . .* shows that the word is as respectful as the term lady, and scarcely less affectionate than the term mother. See Matthew 15:28; Luke 13:12; John 4:21; 20:13" (*Whedon's Commentary on the Gospels*, p. 242).

Now notice the circumstances of His last glimpse of Mary before His horrible death: "When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, 'Woman, behold your son!' Then he said to the disciple, 'Behold your mother!' And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home" (John 19:26-27).

This is the perfect example of Jesus. Never was He guilty of breaking the fifth commandment. Christ observed it in its fullest spiritual intent (Matt. 5:17-19; Isa. 42:21), and taught others to do the same (Mark 7:9-13).

Q: "Please let me know what you meant when you said Jesus was a stonemason when the Bible says he was a carpenter."

John B.,
St. Petersburg, Florida

A: In our specialized societies, carpenters are thought of as those who

Q&A

work with sawn and hewn lumber, and primarily work at pounding nails into boards.

However, during the days of Jesus Christ, "carpentry" included much more than just the fabrication of wooden dwellings. Most of the homes were a combination of stone, mud and clay, with hewn beams and lumber.

The city where Jesus spent much of His early ministry was Capernaum. At that time Capernaum was a beaming, modern, beautifully sculptured Grecian-type city. It was filled with multilevel homes which had large central gardens, mosaic walks, fountains, and even indoor bathrooms and steam baths.

The homes of the wealthier class were marvels of architecture. A "carpenter" (of that time) would have had to know a certain amount of mathematics, engineering principles (working with block and tackle, levers, and knowing how to construct arches and cantilever overhanging balconies), and especially would have to be skillful in finishing work, such as interior surfaces and mosaic hallways. He would also have had to possess a working knowledge of plumbing.

During Christ's time, and in the first two or three centuries thereafter, home plumbing included indoor water which was delivered via a system of pipes that could be cut off by valves just as in any modern home today.

Now notice one scriptural reference: "Is not this the carpenter's son?" (Matt. 13:55.) *The New Bible Commentary: Revised* tells us: "The Greek (*tekton*) could mean a mason" (p. 834).

Q: "On a recent World Tomorrow broadcast, Mr. Armstrong pointed out that no man has ever ascended

into heaven, using John 3:13 as his passage to back that up. But how about II Corinthians 12:2 where Paul talks about a man who ascended into heaven? If no man has ascended into heaven, then what is Paul talking about in the Corinthian passage? Please answer in *The Good News* magazine."

David R.,

E. Lansing, Michigan

A: Mr. Ted Armstrong naturally excepted Jesus when he said that no man had ever ascended into heaven. Read John 3:13 again: "No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man." *The New English Bible* makes it even clearer: "No one ever went up into heaven *except* the one [Jesus] who came down from heaven, the Son of Man whose home is [now presently] in heaven."

John 3:13 plainly tells us that Jesus both ascended into heaven and descended from heaven — but no one else has done either. Remember that John wrote his Gospel many, many years after Jesus' ascension to heaven.

One axiomatic biblical principle should be heeded in connection with understanding II Corinthians 12:1-7. One always comprehends vague, unclear, enigmatic verses in the light of all the plain scriptures on the same subject. John 3:13 and other scriptures are clear! But this particular section of Paul's second canonical letter to the Corinthians is ambiguous as to bodily location.

Paul wrote: "I must boast; there is nothing to be gained by it, but I will go on to *visions* and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ [a Christian] who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven — whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows"

(verses 1-2). Like the apostle John in the book of Revelation, this Christian (probably Paul himself) saw these things *in vision* ("out of the body").

Notice John's experience: "Immediately I knew myself to be inspired by the Spirit, and *in my vision* I saw that a throne had been set up in heaven..." (Rev. 4:2, Phillips). John saw the future events in the book of Revelation in his mind's eye (in vision).

No man, in the flesh, can look upon the glorified presence of God; neither could he breathe in the third heaven. Our astronauts have to take elaborate environmental paraphernalia with them on a journey to the moon. No such space age marvels existed in John's or Paul's day.

Q: "Will you please explain in your question and answer column Jeremiah 4:23-25?"

Mrs. J.H.C.,

Clinton, South Carolina

A: Jeremiah 4:23-25 states: "I looked on the earth, and lo, it was waste and void; and to the heavens, and they had no light. I looked on the mountains, and lo, they were quaking, and all the hills moved to and fro. I looked, and lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the air had fled."

A popular view of this scripture applies it to a coming thousand-year period, during which the entire earth will supposedly be desolate (Rev. 20). But if you will study the book of Jeremiah from the beginning (and in its historical context), you will discern its true meaning. The prophet warns Judah that Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon is coming "to make *your* land a waste [not the whole earth]; your cities [in Judah] will be ruins without inhabitant" (verse 7). □

A MESSAGE TO THE CHURCHES

Somewhere in the latter half of the first century of the Christian era, the apostle John was given a set of warnings to be delivered to seven local church congregations of that day. That message is as timely and meaningful today as it was when originally given.

by Brian Knowles

The book of Revelation is one of the most incomprehensible books in the Bible — and one of the most fascinating! Scholars have long debated the meaning of the fantastic science-fiction-like visions given to the apostle John.

The book itself has both historical and prophetic significance. Revelation 1:19 confirms this point: "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter." Some things pertained to that day and age particularly, and others were concerned with the near and distant future from John's time. Some events in the prophecy were to occur "shortly" (Rev. 1:1), and other events were set in the distant future.

The message as a whole was addressed to seven specific congregations which existed along the Roman mail route in Asia Minor at that time. "... What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus... Smyrna... Pergamos... Thyatira... Sardis... Philadelphia... Laodicea" (Rev. 1:11).

These were literal congregations which, in some cases, had been addressed by Paul and others in earlier epistles (for example, Ephesians). Each congregation had its own

unique spiritual problems — and each had its good points. As Jesus Christ looked down on these congregations, He was moved to give John a message for each of them.

We have thought, in the past, that these churches may not only be historical congregations, but also types of seven successive church eras existing throughout the period from Christ's resurrection until the time of His return. This may well be true.

The purpose of this article, however, is not to discuss the prophetic possibilities of these passages. It is to show that there is a powerful message for today's Church of God in these letters to the seven churches! Therefore, for the purposes of this article we will focus our attention on the *historical* aspects of the message.

Each of the seven church congregations was given a *warning*. Those warnings may be applied to the Church of God as a whole today. Speaking to all Churches of God in all ages, the prophecy says: "*Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein...*" (Rev. 1:3).

You and I can read that entire prophecy today. We can heed and keep the things which are written there — and we can receive a blessing for so doing!

Ephesus — First Love Lost

The church at Ephesus (Rev. 2:1-7) was one of the leading congregations in Asia Minor. The apostle Paul had earlier used that city as a base of operations for his evangelistic efforts throughout the entire region. They had been given a great deal of knowledge and insight into God's will for Christians. They had started off with a burst of spiritual

zeal and then had begun to fizzle out. They had lost much of their initial zeal and fire for the Word of God and the way of life they had embarked upon.

Therefore God warned them: "... *Thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works...*" (Rev. 2:4-5).

Here is a vital warning for today's Christian! Many Christians start out with a burst of zeal when they are discovered by Christ. The new knowledge of God and His way is often heady wine to the tyro. He often preaches to his friends and relatives with evangelistic fervor. (And frequently alienates them in so doing!) He loves his Saviour, Jesus Christ, with his whole being.

But after a while the "novelty" wears off. His adoration of Jesus Christ begins to wane. Everything becomes "old hat." He knows it all. The flame of initial excitement flickers and diminishes.

Examine your own Christian life. Did you begin with great zeal for the truth of God only to find yourself drifting into spiritual lethargy as the years pass? This spiritual drift can be fatal. The church at Ephesus was commanded to repent.

Will you?

Smyrna — "Faithful Unto Death"

The town of Smyrna was the site of another congregation of the Church of God (Rev. 2:8-11). Christ commended them for their works (who says Christians are not supposed to have works?). He prophesied of a time of intense persecution for them. Satan, he said, would actually deliver many of them into prison. They were told to "be thou faithful unto death."

Are you a "fair-weather Christian"? Does your Christianity remain intact only so long as the going is easy? Do you falter in a time of adversity? God says: "If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small" (Prov. 24:10). Are you *committed* to Christ and His Church? Or will you endure only so long as the going is comparatively easy?

The apostle Paul encouraged the congregation at Rome to allow *nothing* to separate them from the love of Christ.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter . . . I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:35-39).

The time may well come in your lifetime and mine when true Christians will again be martyred for their beliefs. Those who will persecute us will actually become convinced that they are doing God a service in persecuting the Church of God! (Compare Matthew 10:21-23, 28; 24:9-10; John 16:2.)

God's warning to the congregation at Smyrna was "be thou faithful unto death"! And it's also a message that comes ringing down with ominous import and significance for today's Christian!

Pergamos — Idoltrous Doctrines

The congregation at Pergamos (Rev. 2:12-17) was guilty of several

fundamental errors in God's sight.

"But I have *a few* things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, *which thing I hate*" (verses 14-15).

The church at Pergamos had a liberal attitude toward idoltrous practices similar to those long ago condemned in the Word of God (compare Numbers 25:1 and 31:16). God *hates* idolatry and all of its associated accoutrements! Most of the pagan, idoltrous religions were associated with rank, hedonistic sexual promiscuity. Temple prostitutes were frequently involved.

Many of today's so-called Christian practices — such as the observance of Christmas and Easter, with the accompanying "kissing under the mistletoe," hot-cross buns, "Ish-tar" bunnies, sunrise services, etc., have their origins in paganism. The same is true of Valentine's day, Halloween, and other special days.

God seeks those who worship Him in spirit and in *truth* (John 4:24). He does not accept the "Christianization" of pagan practices in His worship. He thunders: "Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen . . . For the customs of the people are vain . . ." (Jer. 10:2-3). (Be sure to write for our free booklets *The Plain Truth About Christmas*, *The Plain Truth About Easter and Pagan Holidays — or God's Holy Days — Which?*)

Thyatira — Idolatry and Adultery

The Thyatirans (Rev. 2:18-29) were apparently allowing similar

idoltrous practices to creep into their worship of God. They were influenced by a self-proclaimed "prophetess" named Jezebel. Like the Jezebel of old, she was an idoltrous person who seduced the leaders of God's Church in that congregation to permit evil practices within the Church.

The term "fornication" in verse 20 probably applies to such practices as temple prostitution and sexual promiscuity in connection with idol worship. The church was permitting this harlot of a woman to actually influence the leaders of the congregation!

While such practices are not commonplace in the Western world today (i.e., temple prostitution and gross idol worship), we certainly do have our "sophisticated" versions of such things.

Anything or *anyone* allowed to come before God in the Christian's life becomes an idol! We are called to worship God — not angels, men, or objects of wood and stone. God has never sanctioned bowing down before carvings of "saints" or members of the divine family. In fact, the second great commandment specifically forbids it (Ex. 20:4-5). The last thing the apostle John wrote in the first of his three epistles was: "Little children, *keep yourselves from idols*. Amen" (I John 5:21).

Sardis — Spiritual Senility

The congregation at Sardis (Rev. 3:1-6) was indeed a part of the Church of God. ". . . Thou hast a *name* that thou livest, *and art dead*."

Here was a weak congregation. One by one they were letting the basic tenets of their faith slip through their fingers. There were a few zealous ones in that church—a tiny minority who were still zealous

of God's way. "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments..." (verse 4). But the majority of the congregation was dying on the vine. Spiritual senility was setting in. They had one foot in the grave.

God warned them to "Be watchful [vigilant], and *strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die...*" (verse 2).

The Church of God today must take serious heed of these words. We too must constantly strengthen and reaffirm the basic tenets of our belief. We must continually renew our relationship with God and maintain zeal and enthusiasm for God's way of life.

As Paul wrote to the Galatian congregation: "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, *if we faint not*" (Gal. 6:9). He told the Thessalonians the same thing (II Thess. 3:13).

God's people today must never tire of doing the Work of preaching Christ's gospel. We cannot let down in our efforts to overcome our own personal character flaws. We must always maintain a spiritual "high" in our relationship with God and with His Church. There is no place for "spiritual senility" in this dynamic age of dramatic happenings. The Church of God must march on with ever increasing zeal and drive toward the ultimate goal of the glorious Kingdom of the living God!

Philadelphia — Hang On to Your Crown!

Jesus told the disciples: "In my Father's house are many mansions... I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go... I will come again..." (John 14:2-3). God is even now preparing positions of rulership in His Kingdom for those who have been called in this age. Each born-again son and daughter of God will be granted a *crown* of rulership in the coming Kingdom of God.

God's only warning to the Philadelphia congregation was "... hold

that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. 3:11).

Perhaps God had a particular *collective* responsibility in mind for that congregation. But the warning was also to the members in particular. Each member of God's Church has a position of rulership awaiting him in the Kingdom. If he does not realize and claim that reward, *it must be given to someone else!*

God warns all Christians to hang on to their individual crowns. Don't let go of the things which God has given you. Don't flake out. Don't give up on God and His way of life — ever! No matter what happens — *never let go!* Claim *your* personal crown of life for yourself. Don't allow it to be given to anyone else because you failed to remain faithful!

Laodicean Lukewarmness

The church congregation at Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-22) was lukewarm and self-satisfied. They thought of themselves as "having it made." "... Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (verse 17).

The Laodiceans were blind to their own spiritual condition. They did not realize how far down the road they had gone into lukewarmness and spiritual lethargy. They measured their spiritual state or condition by their material wealth, which is a false criterion.

They were counseled to refine their character — to "buy of me gold tried in the fire..." (verse 18). They were admonished to seek the *true* riches which come only from God (see Luke 16:11).

A spirit of complacency — of self-satisfaction — is dangerous to any Christian. There will never come a time in this life when the Christian can sit back on his laurels and say with smug self-approval, "I've got it made." Never!

Even the mighty apostle Paul himself said: "... I count not myself to have apprehended..." (Phil. 3:13). Paul didn't think he had it in

the bag. He pressed *toward* the ultimate goal of his calling. He was never content to coast on into the Kingdom. Every day was a battle against sin, temptation, the devil, and the influence of an evil society.

Paul fought, wrestled and waged war against the spiritually wicked influences by which he was surrounded in his day. He was a titanic example of zeal. He fought the "good fight." He ran his race with the intention of winning. And he *won!*

But you and I are still struggling in this physical life. We still have the Kingdom ahead of us. We have not yet been apprehended. We must never let down and allow ourselves to become self-satisfied and complacent. We owe it to ourselves to heed the warning given to the church at Laodicea.

Summary

It is evident that the warnings given to all seven of the church congregations located in Asia Minor in the first century have powerful and significant meaning for today's Church of God. Today's Christian must attain to the "faith once delivered." He must strive to gain a clearer understanding of that faith. He must keep himself free from false doctrine, idolatry, sexual uncleanness, impurity in any form, and be wary of the influence of false teachers.

God's people today must avoid the pitfalls of spiritual senility — of laziness and self-satisfaction. We must remain zealous and enthusiastic about the faith we have been given. We must let no one else claim the crown which God has reserved for each one of us!

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches"! □

COMING SOON!

Tens of thousands die daily of starvation while millions live with the ever present specter of famine and shortage. Is that all there is for them? What is their ultimate destiny? Why were they born in the first place? Read "In the Image of God" coming next month in the May issue.

Seven Proofs of God's Church

Your articles about the proofs of God's Church in *The Good News* are very interesting and reassuring. I am currently a member of God's Church in Washington and these articles seem to be hitting home. I am convicted deeply that I'm in the Church of God, and I am 100% in back of the ministry. I've been recently baptized — that was so encouraging. Anyway, although I am sure of God's Church, I wish to gain more background and knowledge on the subject. I have read some booklets, but now if I read them they will have even a deeper meaning.

Linda L.,
Bellevue, Washington

Cartoon in GN?

I was shocked to see that we have resorted to degrading our *Good News* by a drawing in it on page 32 by Brian Knowles — [the caption was:] "I hear they're a non-prophet organization." If you have to resort to filling the Lord's book or magazine with trash like that, then you can forget about my support. To me you are making a mockery of those that wear the cloth. I hope that space next month is filled with an apology to the good people who have supported you.

Claude P.,
Cassopolis, Michigan

• *Is God devoid of humor?*

One Man's Blood

I enjoyed reading the article "One Man's Blood" (on page 13 in the December 1974 *Good News*), plus a question and answer on page 23 concerning the blood of Jesus Christ. An article like this certainly proves the truth concerning the doctrine of the blood of Christ and its importance for a sinner's redemption.

Miss Mary H.,
Truro, Nova Scotia

Is God a Trinity?

In a recent issue of *The Good News*, you stated that I John 5:7 was inserted by early copyists. You also stated that "there are no really clear scriptural references to substantiate Trinitarianism in general or I John 5:7 in particular." I would respectfully request that you review the first chapter of Genesis and notice verse 26 in which God said, "Let us make man in our own image, after our own likeness." If you will research the origin of the English word "God" from the original manuscript, I believe the meaning of the word (*Elohim*, if I'm not mistaken) is plural in that language.

Charles C.,
Silver Springs, Florida

• *The Hebrew word for "God" used in Genesis 1:1 and 26 is "Elohim." "Elohim" is plural in form like our English words "family," "group," "church," "crowd," etc. These terms are often regarded as singular and take a singular verb form, but they all contain more than one member. That number is not limited to three.*

At present, the Godhead is dual — God the Father and Christ the Son. However, it is fully open to other members who meet the qualifications. The apostle Paul stated that Jesus Christ was "the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). You need our two free booklets "Why Were You Born?" and "Is God a Trinity?" They will explain all of these concepts in detail.

Co-Worker Letter

Having read your letter dated 4th December and sympathizing that even God's Work has been affected by inflation among other problems, there still remains the knowledge that God's plans will succeed. It will be very difficult to gauge exactly when your task has been fulfilled according to His will, so do have faith, as always in the past, that He will assist and guide you as brilliantly as in the past.

Enclosed herewith please find a donation, which even to me seems inadequate in terms of your need, but feel assured that with responses from others, He will enable you to stretch your budget to meet His requirements.

M. H.,
Felixton, South Africa

Made To Feel Welcome

I am waiting for the pastor of the Worldwide Church of God from Youngstown,

Mr. Eugene Noel, to return, so I can talk to him about being baptized. I know I am truly ready to join God's family. I have attended Church in Youngstown and I love it. The people are just wonderful. I thought I'd feel out of place but I didn't, not for a minute. So many people came right up and introduced themselves, I really felt welcome. I can't wait to become a member so that I can make someone feel the same way.

Mrs. Karen B.,
Deerfield, Ohio

I made my first visit to the Worldwide Church of God at London this past Sabbath day. To say the least, I was overwhelmed by the genuine warmth and friendliness of each member. The hymns were truly beautiful. The minister, Mr. Melvin Dahlgren, reminds me of Garner Ted Armstrong in that he holds the attention of his listeners and delivers the message in such a clear, authoritative way that it left no doubt in my mind that I was listening to the truth from a true minister of God.

Mrs. Lois L.,
Kenvir, Kentucky

• *Would you like a private appointment with a minister of the Worldwide Church of God? Full details are available in the personal counsel box on page 3.*

Public Bible Lectures

Many hundreds write us each year asking about our views of today's prophesied crises as well as our answers to biblical questions. In a further effort to provide more direct help for such people, and to help provide meaning in this confused and troubled time, the Worldwide Church of God is sponsoring public Bible lectures in hundreds of cities across the United States.

The lectures will be small in size to enable more direct participation by those who are interested. Question-and-answer sessions will follow each lecture to enable those with specific questions the opportunity to receive greater help.

In the coming months each of our American readers will receive letters of invitation to the lecture nearest them. We sincerely hope that you will take the

opportunity to attend. We're sure that you will find the meetings both stimulating and interesting.

Each lecture will be conducted by an ordained minister of the Worldwide Church of God. Attendance at the lectures will not bring you under obligation in any way. Admission is totally free and without charge. We simply want to share with you our knowledge of what the Bible says about today's world conditions and how it affects your personal future.

If you wish more personal counsel or information concerning the Worldwide Church of God, you may obtain the telephone number of the minister nearest you by calling this toll-free number in the continental United States: 800-423-4444. Readers in California, Alaska and Hawaii should call 213-577-5225 collect.

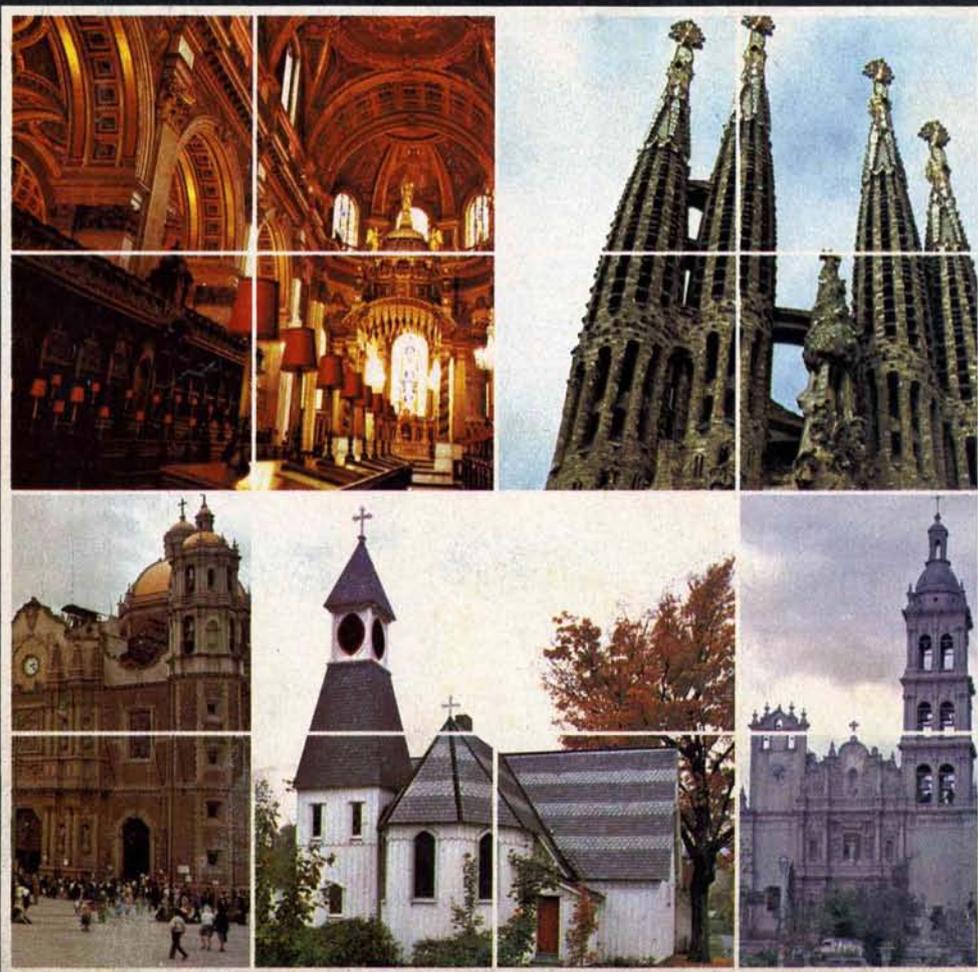
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How do you recognize the true church?

Does it matter which church you attend — or whether you attend at all?

Religion is once again on the upswing. Bizarre sects are proliferating, and the traditional organizations are experiencing renewed interest. But are any of these religions making any difference in today's world?

Does religion really matter? It only matters if there is an all-powerful God who has something to say about it.

Jesus Christ said, "I will build my church," and again, "I will never leave you or forsake you." Christ gave certain signs by which His church could be identified. He said He would do a great work through His church — in *our* age, today! Where is that church now?

Write for the free booklet, *Where Is God's True Church Today?* We think you'll find it most enlightening.

To request your copy, write to: *The Good News, Pasadena, California 91123.* Or, if you live outside the U.S., see inside front cover for nearest address.

