

Church of God News

Positive News of the Churches of God

March 2004, No. 13

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Article...

A Visit to the Seventh-day Adventist Church

In early December 2003, I decided to attend our local Seventh-day Adventist Church. It had been quite a few years since I visited these Sabbath-keepers in our community. I knew the elder from my previous visit, but there was a new pastor from Chicago.

One of the positive things you will find in Seventh-day Adventist, Seventh Day Baptist, and Church of God, Seventh Day, congregations is the Sabbath school. I have consistently found the question and answer format Sabbath-school lessons interesting. A group of people discussing a specific Bible topic is almost sure to be educational. On the particular Sabbath I attended, the topic was the end of the Book of Jonah. It was a good study.

My background in the Worldwide Church of God did not expose me to Sabbath Schools. Notwithstanding that in his early ministry, Herbert W. Armstrong wrote Sabbath School lessons, and conducted the same, in his mid to later years, he eschewed Sabbath Schools. That was a real loss to the membership. Some erroneously claim that Sabbath Schools are copied from Sunday Schools, and that therefore, we should avoid them. That is NOT true. For proof that Sabbath Schools preceded the Sunday School movement started by

Raikes, see our book, *Six Papers on the History of the Church of God*, \$14 plus postage, from Giving & Sharing. Even if Sabbatarians borrowed the concept from Protestants (which they didn't), if it is a good idea, a good tool, we should use it!

When it came time for the main worship service, I was quite surprised. There was a regular "Children's Church" lesson given by a woman. The children came to the front, and she gave the lesson. It was about the history of the candy cane, and how this Christmas candy was purposely designed to represent Christ. The pastor then rose to give the main message. He remarked that half of his sermon topic was already given, as he himself had intended to tell the story of the Christmas candy cane. So, his normal fifteen-minute sermon was cut in half: he told what he thought was the origin of the Christmas tree. He said the Christmas tree came from the Paradise Tree of Medieval times. Before the sermon was completed, there was a late-comer to services. An old gentleman walked to the front seat, and the pastor paused to embrace him. This local Church member had to return home because he suffered a heart attack during his job back East. He had been seasonally employed as a department store Santa Claus. As the pastor's brief message drew to a close, he told how the Paradise Tree represented the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and that now, our Christmas trees came from that. I thought, "What a good reason not to have a Christmas tree, for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was the tree God forbade Adam and Eve to touch, and he claims we should have one in our house!"

After a pleasant chat afterwards, I left for home, somewhat stunned by the whole episode. You see, around 1984, a leading SDA evangelist, who at that time was traveling around the nation giving Revelation seminars for the public, had said on our doorstep that the SDA Church did not observe Christmas! It was a lie at that time, as our SDA friends (leaders in their local Church) observed Christmas with all the trimmings, as did the

others. And in 2003, it was painfully obvious that the SDAs were observing and promoting the observance of Christmas.

Many years ago, a very elderly SDA man in his 90s, made a special trip from Montana to visit us. We had a good Sabbath Bible study in our home. He remarked how in the early 1900s, SDAs did not observe Christmas, but that, to his chagrin, they had swallowed the whole thing, plus Easter.

What I observed at our local SDA Church this past December was a group of sincere, nice people, who are part of an organization that has departed greatly from its former beliefs. Over the past 3,000 years, this has happened many times to God's people. How the mighty spiritual warriors have fallen! There is little or no remembrance of their former beliefs. During the Bible Study, one man remarked how the SDA Church formerly taught that the Roman Catholic Church was the whore of Babylon. He implied that today's "enlightened" SDAs would teach no such thing. I was attending with the purpose to observe, not to dispute, but this man's statement almost made me lose my composure. Their decline has been a long process, and I kept thinking: "What can God do to shake them up and repent?"

If I were to attend a Southern Baptist worship service on Sunday, or a Lutheran Church Missouri Synod congregation, or conservative Presbyterian, I would more than likely receive a sermon that is Biblically-based, rather than a fanciful eight-minute lecture about the Christmas tree at the local SDA Church.

The SDA Church worldwide now numbers over 13 million. Did it change anything in order to grow that big? You will find some conservative SDAs who are not in favor of the many doctrinal changes in their Church. On the opposite side, you will find several thousand SDAs in California who openly promote the homosexual lifestyle. Doctrinally, they cover a wide spectrum. Dr. Sidney Davis, a Seventh-day Adventist, and past President of the Bible Sabbath Association, says there is an abundance of women pastors and elders in his Church.

There are many things that I can tolerate. Some people think I am too tolerant. But I could not tolerate being a member of a Church which has so diametrically departed from its former beliefs, and especially one that tolerates advocacy of homosexuality

Church of God News

"For the edifying of the body of Christ,"

Ephesians 4:12.

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among its membership. I have counseled Sabbatarians struggling with the sin of homosexuality. The power of the Almighty can overcome whatever sinful inclination we may have. But, I will not fellowship with any Sabbath-keeper who says that homosexual acts are not sin.

There ought to be a difference between Sabbath-keepers and the rest of the world. But, the divorce rate among Sabbatarians is about the same as the general public. We have met the enemy, and it is us!

Readers of this article may say, “Our group will never do what the SDAs have done!” Don’t be too sure. The lesson of history is against you. Unless God has left Himself a remnant, but for the grace of God, there go you and I. Jesus summarized the sorry state of affairs of the Church when He said, “Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find [the] faith on the earth?” **Luke 18:8.**

— by Richard C. Nickels

From the Editor...

What is it that makes one want to stray from the path, to wander from the well-worn, tried and true trail? Is it man’s sense of adventure? Could it be his constant quest for greener grass? Could it be an overwhelming desire to satisfy his lusts?

The picture of the children on page twelve caught my attention and prompted these questions. Here someone has gone through the effort to clear the way from boulders, scrub brush, and overhanging limbs. They have graded the path to make it smooth and safe; and yet there is something too inviting about the unknown, a powerful magnetic attraction, a challenge. It is a seemingly uncontrollable desire to explore.

Solomon wrote of that desire based largely on his experiences. **Ecclesiastes 2:17** says, “Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit.”

I recall the story of the Donner party, where those poor pioneers on their way to California were trapped in a snowstorm and many died. Some turned to cannibalism to stay alive. All because they strayed from the accepted route and listened to a man they met on the trail, who had a shortcut. Satan has a lot of shortcuts and sidetracks. They may look really attractive and inviting. And this reminds me of the teachings of the Pharisees who developed many shortcuts. Like trying to obtain salvation by “keeping the law”; and they added new laws, and dreamed up more regulations and new doctrines.

Methinks that what really gets us into quicksand is not looking ahead and not looking back. Let me explain. Primarily, we must look before we leap. Few consider the unintended consequences, and find themselves mired in mud. Secondly, we may forget the

way back or, more specifically, to mark well the return if we should stray too far. Wasn’t there a story of a boy and girl who took a hike and marked the return path by dropping bread crumbs; but the birds came and ate the bread crumbs, and they became lost?

Again, Solomon gives wise advice that relates to both dangers. **Ecclesiastes 8:2-5**, “I counsel thee to keep the King’s commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God. Be not hasty to go out of His sight: stand not in an evil thing; for He doeth whatsoever pleaseth Him. Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou? Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man’s heart discerneth both time and judgment.”

Straying from the right and good path is not just kid stuff, at least not exclusively. My hope is that even we big kids can find things of value that will help us to find the way. “And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left,” **Isaiah 30:21**. This is why the *Church of God News* has been placing more emphasis on the *Establishing the Children* section. In addition, you may occasionally find an article outside that section that may relate.

Jeremiah puts it in a perfect directive, “But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you,” **Jeremiah 7:23**.

— by Steven J. Kieler

Gem...

Being right in a matter, matters not. If being right hurts your brother, ethics demand that you defer.

— by author unknown

Inspiration...

Commencement Address University of Texas at Tyler 12-13-03

You are now obviously graduating from college. A researcher here at UT Tyler tells me that, on attaining a bachelor’s degree, you have become more highly educated than 75% of the people in the United States. One of the greatest freedoms in this country is the free-

dom to make so many choices. You were accepted to UT Tyler, but you chose to attend here. You chose to study here. You chose your course of study. You chose how hard you would study. Now, you will choose where and how you live.

Life is not easy. There are great successes and heartbreaking failures. They are all part of life. For example, in my sophomore and junior years in college, I had been dating a beautiful, intelligent girl. We had a great deal in common. We had even talked of the possibility of marrying after college. However, before my senior year, she ended things and broke my heart. I had not even gotten completely over it by the time I started law school a year later. But during law school, I met a girl named Kathy, who later became my wife. We have three wonderful daughters. Kathy was the one I was supposed to marry, and though I suffered great heartbreak, I thank God that my girlfriend in college dropped me.

When I was the Young Texan nominee from Mt. Pleasant High School, I wondered how outstanding the Young Texan for the whole entire state must be. At Texas A&M, I found out. His name was Steve Eberhard from New Braunfels. He became a true friend who helped me get elected as Sophomore Class President and I was going to help him get elected as Student Body President two years later. By the end of our junior year, however, he was so popular that he did not need my help.

He was a great athlete; a good-looking guy who was very selfless and had a brilliant intellect. He was, I believe, the best and brightest in my class of three to four thousand students. We sometimes discussed and argued the great questions and mysteries of life into the wee hours of the morning. I believed in him to the point that I was going to stop whatever I was doing and someday help him get elected to be President of the United States. This country needed him and would surely be the better if he were elected president.

After A&M, he went to Harvard Law School. I went to Baylor Law School. He only owed ninety days of active duty in the Army. I owed four years. But as I was finishing my Army commitment, an Aggie friend called to say that this great specimen of a human being had a heart defect no one knew about and Steve's heart had just stopped. He was dead.

This wasn't just anybody; it was my friend Steve!! He was dead! He was gone.

Steve Eberhard's father died within a few years after Steve, some say of a broken heart from losing such a magnificent son. His mother was found to have a brain tumor about ten years or so later. Each year when some of our classmates would gather for a dove hunt in South Texas, I would pass through Steve's hometown of New Braunfels and would pick up some flowers and go by to see his mother. Her last few years of life were spent in a nursing home. On one occasion, I had pushed her wheel chair out into a sun-room where we visited. When we were having a real belly laugh about some of the things Steve used to do and say, Mrs. Eberhard's hearty laughter suddenly turned into sobbing and she cried, "Why did God have to take Steve away?"

As I shared her broken heart and begged God for an answer myself, what came out of my mouth was this, "Oh, Mrs. Eberhard. God did not take Steve. God gave Steve to us as a gift. Even though we did not get to keep our gift as long as we wanted, we should thank God for every single day that we had him."

My friends, around you at this very minute are gifts from God, your classmates, your friends, your family, and even people who annoy you. You are surrounded by gifts and you should thank God for them and thank Him now while they are still here. If you have anyone attending this graduation, be grateful for them. If you do not, you should be thankful for those who helped make this day possible though they could not be here. Whether family, a loved one, or someone who gave you a job or a loan or otherwise made college possible, thank them and thank God.

If you have never lost a loved one, if you have never had true, gut-wrenching heartache, like losing a job or having some difficult personal dilemma, my dear friends, you will! I promise you, you will experience these things. When you do, you can spend your life moping around, depressed and worthless, burying your gifts, your talents, and your education; or you can thank God for yet another learning experience, dust yourself off, and move forward all the more valuable to humanity because you have grown in wisdom and experience. It will be your choice. That is what life is, one choice after another. You cannot always choose the effects of your choices, but you can choose how you respond to those effects.

This is a commencement, as you know. It is not an end. It is a beginning! It is the commencing of the rest of your now educated and degreed life! My friends, choose wisely. And even if you do not, be thankful for the learning experience and move on. You have heard the expression, "you live and learn." As a judge, I saw far too many people who only lived; they simply would not learn. I would submit to you that one of this world's greatest tragedies is when you just live.

I have lived, been broken-hearted, seen lives devastated in terrible ways, glimpsed tragedies and visual images no one should have to carry. So please heed this closing advice: (1) live and learn, (2) learn and be grateful, (3) be grateful and praise, and (4) praise and love. Those are your best choices. Choose wisely, and congratulations on your choices to this point. May God continue to bless you, and others through you.

— by Honorable Louie Gohmert
former district judge and chief justice

Of Interest...

A World Perspective

If we could shrink the earth's population to a village of precisely 100 people, with all the existing human ratios remaining the same, it would look something like the following.

There would be:

57 Asians

21 Europeans

14 from the Western Hemisphere

8 Africans

52 would be female

48 would be male

70 would be nonwhite

30 would be white

70 would be non-Christian

30 would be Christian

6 people would possess 59% of the entire world's wealth, and all 6 would be from the United States

80 would live in substandard housing

70 would be unable to read

50 would suffer from malnutrition

1 would be near death

1 would be near birth

1 (yes, only 1) would have a college education

1 would own a computer

Ponder the following:

If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more blessed than the million who will not survive this week

If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation, you are ahead of 500 million people in the world.

If you can attend a Church meeting without fear of harassment, arrest, torture, or death, you are more blessed than three billion people in the world.

If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75% of this world!

If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish, you are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy.

If your parents are still alive and still married, you are very rare, even more rare in the United States and Canada.

If you can read this message, you are more blessed than over two billion people in the world that cannot read at all. Count your blessings.

— by author unknown

Article...

Satan is No Fairy Tale

Recently, there was an article in our local newspaper giving the results of a study by Purdue University. According to the study, fairy tales send a strong message to children about the importance of having a beautiful appearance. "Cinderella," "Sleeping Beauty," and "Snow White" are perfect examples of this teaching. The examination of 168 Brothers Grimm fairy tales, beauty and ugliness were presented in ninety-four percent of these stories as good and evil. In "Cinderella," beauty in women was referred to one hundred and fourteen times.

"I think the message that's given to girls is that beauty is one of the most important traits for females in our society. You can be many other things, but you're very much expected to be beautiful and to spend the time that is necessary to achieve that," said Grauerholtz, associate professor of sociology

at Purdue. Boys get the same message, which is that the important thing about girls is what they look like. They are not made to think it is so important for them to be handsome, although the princes in the stories were.

The quest for society's ideal beauty can be dangerous when it leads to eating disorders and plastic surgery.

Now let's think of this in terms of Satan's appearance. The world usually thinks of him as an ugly red being with a tail and pitchfork. Therefore, you always can avoid him because you can see him coming. If you see him in the distance, you can turn and go the other way, right? Well, we all know it's not that easy. He was one of God's most beautiful creations. "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light," **II Corinthians 11:14**. Satan is the great deceiver. We are brought up learning that he is ugly; when in reality he presents himself to us as nothing to be afraid of, as beautiful. If we question him, he will say: "All the better to see you," "All the better hear you," "All the better to help you lose your eternal salvation." So remember, he is not ugly on the outside, but it will be ugly for you if you don't see him for what he is, and end up hearing, "I never knew you."

— by Suzanne Kieler
sскиeler@dodgenet.com

Hmmm...

The word "bug," as in "don't bug me," has nothing to do with insects. "Bug," to annoy or upset, is actually Black English slang, which was acquired from the West African word *bagu*, meaning "to annoy."

Poem...

Freedom is Not Free

I watched the flag pass by one day,
It fluttered in the breeze.
A young man in uniform saluted it,
And then he stood at ease.

I looked at him in uniform,
So young, so tall, so proud,
With hair cut square and eyes alert,
He'd stand out in the crowd.

I thought how many men like him
Had fallen through the years?
How many died on foreign soil?
How many mothers' tears?

How many pilots' planes shot down?

How many died at sea?
How many foxholes were soldiers' graves?
No, freedom isn't free.

I heard the sound of taps one night,
When everything was still.
I listened to the bugle play
And felt a sudden chill.

I wondered just how many times
That taps had meant "Amen"
When a flag had draped a coffin
Of a brother or a friend.

I thought of all the children,
Of mothers and the wives,
Of fathers, sons, and husbands
With interrupted lives.

I thought about the graveyard
At the bottom of the sea,
Of unmarked graves in Arlington.
No, freedom isn't free.



Poem
excerpted
from a
story about
Hip who
now lives
in Carroll,
Iowa.

WWII, 1942 photo
Harold J. (Hip) Kienapfel
Second Lieutenant, 85th Infantry Division
Reconnaissance Troup

Church News...

ICG Report

We've had a record response to the booklet offers over the past two months from ads in a number of different newspapers, and an ad on the local community cable station. Our TV ad read: "The Church of God Halifax is giving away the booklet by Garner Ted Arm-

strong, "When I Die, What Happens Next?" Your free copy is available at:

Churchofgodhalifax@hotmail.com."

"We've sent out twenty-six copies of the booklet, "Christmas — The Untold Story," and forty-seven copies of the booklet, "When I Die, What Happens Next?"

After four years, we will have to cancel the telecast on ASN (the Atlantic Satellite Network) at the end of February. However, we plan to air the program on a new local FM radio station here in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The GTAEA mailing list in Atlantic Canada went from twenty-five in 1998, to over four hundred in 2003 due primarily to the telecast and newspaper ads.

Weekly Sabbath services are held at the Bluenose Motel in Halifax with video sermons from various ministers in the ICG. George Trent is the Superintendent of the Ministry in the ICG.

We continue to print GTA's booklets from the Web site — placing them in folders we have purchased, giving them a very professional look. We are also working on a local Church Web site.

Chris Cumming was here on Pentecost weekend in 2003, and Tom Griffith was here to speak on the Feast of Trumpets. The tentative plan is to have a Feast site here this fall. Our hope is to have an ICG minister spend the Feast here with us, as well as people from other provinces. Hopefully, we will have a large attendance this year.

Garner Ted Armstrong was an exceptionally gifted writer and speaker. He has left us a rich legacy — a veritable treasure house of valuable information. The Church of God Halifax will continue to freely distribute GTA's well-written booklets and inspiring sermon tapes to those who request them. Many thousands around the world were converted and their lives changed after hearing him. Let us all "...earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," **Jude 3**.

— by Alex Nicholson

Of Interest...

Britain and England do not refer to the same place. England is one of the three countries that share the island of Great Britain. Great Britain (or just Britain) is the largest of the British Isles (and includes England, Scotland, and Wales). The British Isles

include Great Britain, Ireland, the Isle of Man, and the Channel Islands.

Health...

Beef Gelatin Capsules

The following companies owned by the Nutraceutical Corporation use beef gelatin in their vitamin capsules: Solaray, Kal, Nature's Life, Premier One, Natural Max, Thompson, Sunny Green, Ultimate Nutrition, Action Labs, Trout Lake Farm, and Achpet. If you would like to check for yourself, the phone number is 1-800-683-9640.

Greetings from India

I am enclosing photos of David Baker who visited our area for two days. It was wonderful to have him here. The other photo is of my son Benhur introducing him.



M. R. Hubert at the Cancer Center



Visiting children with cancer

— by M. R. Hubert, 5 Buddha Street
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History...

Genesis of the Church of God

The Church of God started out as a small group of apostles and disciples. They were personally taught by Jesus Christ. He trained them for positions of leadership, preparing for the growing Church yet to come. During this training period, He sent out the twelve apostles with power to work miracles. Later He also sent out the seventy disciples, in similar training. Yet the Church was not in organized existence at that time — those three and a half years of the ministry carried on by Jesus Christ in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria.

The annual Holyday of Pentecost launched a new era of the Church of God. Jerusalem was the place where the Church started. This was one of the major cities of the Roman Empire of that age. The population in Jerusalem regularly exceeded one million during the annual Holydays, when the influx of pilgrims from the countryside was added to the regular city dwellers. The temple, with its vast surrounding courtyard, was the center of assembly for the pilgrims and the residents.

When the Church was started, the initial growth was spectacular, to be counted in thousands. The new members came from the devout pilgrims in the city, and from the residents. They were introduced to the truth, and discovered that much of it was yet to be learned. The old traditions and rituals established by men were to be replaced by the knowledge derived from the study of the Holy Scriptures. Herein the new members faced the task of becoming acquainted with the contents of thirty-nine books written out on twenty-two scrolls.

At an accelerated pace of one scroll a week, some five months would be required

for the new members to complete the book scrolls. The book scrolls were both expensive and rare. Each scroll was laboriously copied by the hand of a scribe hopefully from the trustworthy copies made from the originals guarded in the temple itself.

There was no question of going home from Jerusalem for the eager new members after Pentecost. With the Church founded near mid-June of 31 A.D., there would be only four months until the autumn Holydays that included the Festival of Tabernacles around mid-October. This was the time that was both available and urgently needed for education. Jerusalem was the place where the teachers were located and the scrolls available.

The Church members from Jerusalem and the vicinity solved the problem of instantly opening the equivalent of a Bible Study College with enrollment of about five-thousand members. The temple grounds were borrowed for educational assemblies, when the authorities did not mind. Private homes within walking distance were converted into dormitories, some as far away as the nearby city of Bethlehem. Land parcels, owned by the local members, were sold, and the income was spent to buy food for the students. Additional provisions came from the few farms, olive orchards, and vineyards owned by the members. Houses in the outlying countryside not suitable for assembly were sold.

This cooperative effort among the members of the fledgling Church was rewarded. When the autumn Holydays came, the new members had three to four months of intensive study behind them.

When the Festival of Tabernacles and the following Last Great Day were over, thousands of Christians were ready to graduate from the improvised but effective Scripture school of Jerusalem. These students bade farewell to their instructors, hosts, and their many new friends. They departed from Jerusalem, and dispersed to their homes in a dozen different countries.

The departing students carried with them the new knowledge of truth from the Scriptures. They took home the notes and memories, and bore the thirst for additional study in search of greater understanding. A miracle had been accomplished, to spread widely the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures over the Earth.

— by Victor Kachur
Columbus, Ohio

Hmmm...

Man's way leads to a hopeless end. God's way leads to an endless hope.

Article...**I Said I'm Sorry**

Joe made a mistake — a big one. He knew it. And now, everyone was going to know about it — thanks to the police.

"Excuse me, sir," said the police officer who came to our door, "but do you know a little boy with blond hair, about six years-old or so, who is wearing blue shorts and a blue and red striped shirt?"

I glanced at blond-haired Joe, who was six years-old at the time and who was wearing blue shorts and a blue and red striped shirt as he sat watching "He-Man" on TV. He took one look at the policeman and bust into tears. "I didn't mean to do it!" he said. "Don't let them take me to jail!"

Obviously, something had happened that I needed to know about. I turned to the officer for an explanation. "Your son was throwing rocks at cars," he said. "He hit one and did some damage."

I looked at Joe. His chin quivered. He looked at me with tear-filled eyes and nodded. I didn't know whether to hug him or spank him. So I again turned to the officer and said, "What should we do?"

"Under the circumstances, the owner of the car isn't inclined to press charges," he said. "But he would appreciate an apology, and he thinks you ought to help him get his car fixed."

That was only fair, I agreed. The officer gave me the car owner's address, and after a message to Joe about not throwing rocks at cars, he left. I picked up the lecture where the policeman left off. Now, it should be noted that I am a notorious lecturer. My lectures are so long, my children don't measure them in terms of minutes, they measure them in terms of shoe sizes. ("My feet grew two sizes during that lecture.") I am prone to flights of fancy that defy description and logic. I have been known to cover Egyptian architecture, the life span of various marsupials, Wilt Chamberlain's impact on basketball, and the wit and wisdom of the Monkees during a lecture on taking out the trash.

So we had pretty much covered the dangers of rock-throwing and respect for the property of others — not to mention Peruvian

horticulture and the sociological implications of "Gilligan's Island" — by the time we got to the car owner's house. I had been hoping to see a beat-up truck in the driveway. Unfortunately, it was a beautiful red Camero with a glaring scratch on one door.

"Do we have to do this?" Joe asked as we stood at the car owner's door."

"Yep," I said. See? I can be brief.

"But what should I say?"

"Tell him you're sorry."

Which is just what Joe did. His apology was short, nervous, and sincere. The car owner told Joe that he forgave him, that he understood that kids make mistakes, but that it was really important not to throw rocks at cars anymore. Then he talked to me about getting his car fixed.

It was that last part that Joe didn't understand. "If he forgives me," he asked as we made our way home, "why do we still have to pay for it?"

"Because his car is still damaged, and the damage is still our fault," I explained. "You saying 'I'm sorry' and him saying 'I forgive you' doesn't change that."

"I'm not sure Joe understood completely. It's a difficult concept to grasp, even for those who are older and more experienced. Recently our nation has been engaged in a painful discussion about what it means to be sorry, and what it means to forgive. Some of us seem to forget that forgiveness and accountability are not mutually exclusive, and that being sorry — and being forgiven — doesn't free us from the consequences of the choices we make. We can be sorry, forgiven, and accountable — even if our mistake is big, and everyone knows about it.



— by Joseph Walker
with permission
© Creators Syndicate

Article...**The Two-Penny Solution**

What has a stopped clock got to do with Bible scholars?

Our mantle clock is ancient, almost as old as me. Not long ago its chimes were silenced, and its hands stopped at 1:24. Oh well, it told the right time twice a day.

A repair shop advertises, “We repair what your husband fixed.” They got that motto from me. I didn’t write it; I’m the husband who inspired it. When I told Betty I’d take the clock apart she asked, “What’ll you do with the parts left over?”

Undaunted, I tackled the job. Simple. Four screws held everything in place. Remove them and I’d have the mechanism in my hand. No sweat. One screw, two screws, three screws, four. Uh oh! Progress stopped as dead as the clock. Oh, yeah, I’d forgotten to remove the hands. Turn the clock around, remove a miniscule thumbscrew, and the hands should slip off. Sure, but where’d the thumb-screw go? It’s old and tarnished, and would be impossible to find in our gray colored carpet.

“Nothing’s impossible.” My father’s words came back to me, and sure enough, the impossible became possible. As chance would have it, Nikki, our cat, saw it fall and decided it was a plaything. While he pawed at it, I was able to retrieve the wayward piece, and drop it into a small bowl my wife provided. Safe at last.

OK, where was I? Oh, yeah! Take off the hands. Well, the minute hand at least. It came off easily, and was soon in the bowl with the four screws and the thumbscrew. But the hour hand was less cooperative. I turned it counter-clockwise, thinking it was threaded into place. No luck. Clockwise then. Some things have left-hand threads. Still no success.

My simple, five-minute job was turning into a day-long event. And my assistant, Nikki, was now on the table playing with everything in the bowl.

“When all else fails, try something different.” Dad’s words again. Hey! The remaining hand wasn’t threaded into place. All that was needed was to pull — gently, of course — then thunk! Clang-a-clang-a-clang! Oh no! The guts of the clock, with no support, fell out of place, striking the chimes as they went.

“Well,” said I to myself, “the rest should be easy. Blow out the accumulated dust and cat hair, and put it back together.” But there was no dust; no cat hair. Hmmm. Must be a broken sprocket. Yet, close inspection with a magnifying glass showed no sign of damage or wear.

Now I might be the inept husband in the repair shop’s motto, but I’m not stupid. There’s no way I would tackle the wheels and

gears inside the frame. Nikki might not find the next part I dropped. So slip the guts back into place, replace the four screws, push the hour hand onto its spindle, drop the minute hand over it, and replace the thumbscrew. Eureka!

But all was not so great. The clock did start to work, until at 3:22 it struck eleven. But, hey! That’s easy to fix. Remove the hands, replace them to eleven o’clock and re-install the thumbscrew.

Done! But now the clock stopped working again. I tapped the pendulum to get it swinging, and the familiar tick-tock said the clock was working again. Yet five minutes later there was no more tick-tock. As the villain in the old *Dudley Do Right* movies would exclaim, “Curses. Foiled again!”

Then the light dawned. The clock has to be balanced. One penny under the left front foot, and another under the back, and tap the pendulum again. Tick-tock, tick-tock, day and night — with the chimes properly counting the hours.

That’s life, isn’t it? We often overlook the obvious, and take the long route to solve our problems. Bible scholars are like that. They’ll write page after convoluted page to prove their theories, rather than turning to the simple words of the Bible. One such thesis is based on going to heaven, but the two-penny solution is to turn to **John 3:13** where Jesus says no man has ever gone there.

— by Leslie A. Turvey
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Letter to the Editor...

Greetings to your good-selves:

I am in receipt of your latest COGNews. Thanks a lot. May continued success follow all your good works.

I was indeed surprised to read your editorial “Boomerang Effect.” I was happily reading your words until I came to page two, about this Malaysian man who wrote an encouraging letter to brother Loy Baker. Then I told myself “Wait a minute. This sounds familiar.” It was I. I was then overwhelmed with tears. Boy — I can’t believe it. I did write to Loy Baker because I really liked his style of writing, and what he wrote reminded me of my Dad. I am glad that I had written to him, although I knew nothing about his struggle with cancer. Cancer is that word I’ve heard three times this week. One brought me grief — another brought me joy — now, it’s

sadness. But, as I always say, we have a great and mighty God and He's the greatest, one and only Healer for all sicknesses. By praying harder and having stronger faith, with Yahweh, nothing is impossible! I write with great confidence, as I have been learning many things in a short while. I have just learned that if we want good to happen, we just have to pray harder and it shall be done if it's God's will!!

So, I've written to Brother Loy again to give him moral support and I'm praying for him now. It is our job as Christians to bring happiness to all. So, thanks a lot for your thought provoking and heart warming article about the "Boomerang Effect." I've learned something from you and will use it in my future talks to others!! Most of all, it is good to see that you've put the addresses of the many different writers. This also shows that you had a part in my correspondence to others. We can never tell about the future — only to find out later that we have done something truly good for others. Credit goes to you too!

Of course, it was nice to see my letter printed out. Hopefully, this year, I will get the opportunity to travel about and visit some Church of God folks and bring you that required news from our area. I am happy to read about news from Africa. Brother Michael Porter brought in some inspiring news from his area — really great stuff. God bless them over there!!

Well, dear friends, many thanks for everything. Happy anniversary for the success of COGNews. I pray God's great blessings upon you both/all in your ministry works. May He give us strength to push on further to attain more success — more lessons for all to attain. We just have to work harder as Satan is also on "overtime." God bless! Yours humbly in Yashua.

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Jahore D.T., Malaysia

Article...

Lessons from Samuel

Little did she know that her son would become such a force in Israel, and be instrumental in bringing about permanent change. She had no idea that her son would be the first of the Prophets, and the last of the judges, **Acts 3:24, 13:20**. Hannah had no idea

that her son would anoint the first two kings of Israel, and that from the lineage of one of those kings would come the Messiah!

She had no idea that her son would be considered a judge "all his life," **I Samuel 7:15**. She had no idea that he would follow in the footsteps of his mentor, Eli, and that his sons (Hannah's grandsons) would become corrupt in their dealings and take bribes to pervert judgment. She had no idea that because of his sons, the people of Israel would ask for a king.

Samuel was a prophet, a judge, a seer, a king maker, and wielded enormous power in Israel. He made intercession for the people just like Moses did.

Samuel wrote books, and his writings greatly contributed to our records preserved in the books of Samuel, **I Chronicles 29:29**.

Samuel gave two longer speeches to the people warning them what would happen when they sought a king. Though he hated the idea of a king, he nevertheless made every effort to ensure that God worked through the king as well as through the prophet. His speech in **I Samuel 12** is a beautiful display of his uprightness. However, he does not mention that one of the contributing factors to the people wanting a king was the bad conduct of his sons.

Samuel died before he ever got to see David installed as king. During the last days of his life, David was running from Saul to try to stay alive.

It appears that Samuel was a descendent of the Levitical line, **I Chronicles 6:26-28**. He performed priestly functions of sacrifices (**I Samuel 7:9, 9:13**), but he did not attempt to re-establish the temple again at Shiloh. He is considered by all accounts to have been one of the greatest Biblical figures of all time. In **Jeremiah**, God mentions him in the same sentence with Moses (**15:1**). And again he is mentioned with Moses and Aaron in **Psalms 99:6**.

If it hadn't been for Elkanah's other wife who tormented Hannah and brought her great anguish and depression, Hannah would never have been driven to appeal to God to grant her a son. Without this special appeal to God in her depression and anguish, we may have never seen a man, who in many ways altered the entire history of Israel! So, even the things we think are entirely bad, God uses for good.

— by David L. Antion
Guardian Ministries

*Establishing the Children...***Lesson for Forgiveness**

Take a potato and write on it the name of a person who has offended you, caused you to be angry, upset you, slandered you, embarrassed you, belittled you, etc. Do this for every person who has done something against you and has never received your forgiveness.

When you have finished, gather all your potatoes together and place them in a bag. Keep this bag with you at all times. Take it to work, take it to lunch and take it with you everywhere you go. Always have it with you at home.

How long will it take you to become weary of carrying this burden around? How long will it take the potatoes to sprout into other things, fester, and smell?

Wouldn't it be great to be free from the weight, stench, and constant reminder of hurt feelings, disappointment, heartache, and anger? By hanging onto things that are unpleasant, we create more anguish for ourselves.

When you forgive someone, you free yourself from an oppressive load of negativity. Forgiveness allows you to create peace in your life.

Every one of us has been offended or upset with someone at one time or the other. How long have we carried around the oppressive heavy burden, developed hardness of the heart, and just wouldn't let it go? It usually doesn't bother the person who caused you to be offended as much as it hurts you to continually be obsessing over the offense. Not being forgiving can cause you physical, emotional, and spiritual stress. This is a good lesson you can teach your children.

Just as we teach our children how to pray, we should certainly teach them to be forgiving. The "Lord's Prayer" in **Matthew 6** is often quoted as the example of how we are to pray. **Verse 12** reads, "And forgive us our debts [sins], as we forgive our debtors." **Verses 14 and 15** read, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Another set of scriptures we often teach our young ones is called the "Beatitudes" in **Mathew 5:3-11**. **Verse 7** reads, "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy." Explain to your

children how to forgive and how to show mercy to others. Better yet, set the proper example for them by forgiving those who may have offended you. Show your children that you can indeed have mercy toward those people because you have truly forgiven them. It's not always the easiest thing to do, but it's a Godly principle that we must do in order to become more like our Father and Jesus Christ.

— by Shelby Faith
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Prepare the Child for the Path

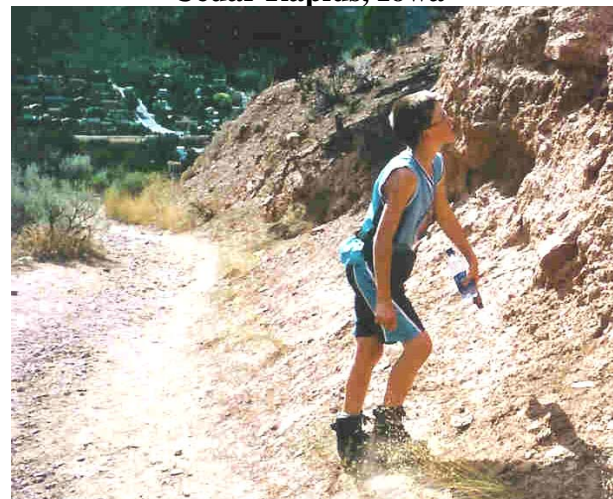
Prepare the child for the path, not the path for the child.

My Parents put this into practice when I was growing up. Many times I'd grumble at the chores I had to do. But my parents knew that the chores being done weren't as important as the child being formed by doing them.

—by Karen Eiler, Clearwater, FL
(See editorial on page three.)



**Carol and Dawn Kieler
Cedar Rapids, Iowa**



**Stephen Kieler
Cedar Rapids, Iowa**

BIBLE TRIVIA

See if you can answer the following trivia questions without looking them up:

1. What was the name of the New Testament person who “was crying in the wilderness?”

_____ (Mark 1:3)

2. Who was blind and deceived by Jacob?

_____ (Genesis 27:22)

3. When Moses was in the tabernacle where did God’s voice come from?

_____ (Numbers 7:89)

4. Who heard a voice that said, “Write down what you see?”

_____ (Revelation 9-11)

5. Where did God speak to Moses with a voice like thunder?

_____ (Exodus 19:19-20)

6. Who told Saul that obeying God’s voice was more important than sacrifice?

_____ (I Samuel 15:22)

7. What book says the divine voice sounds like a waterfall?

_____ (Revelation 1:15)

8. Who heard God speaking out of a whirlwind?

_____ (Job 38:1)

9. What according to Proverbs lifts up its voice in the streets?

_____ (Proverbs 1:20)

10. Who heard the voice of Jesus many months after He had ascended into heaven?

_____ (Acts 9:4)

(Trivia questions from *The Complete Book of Bible Trivia*, by J. Stephen Lang.)

Submitted by Shelby Faith

Church News...**Living Church of God**

Australia: According to Bruce Tyler's report, 329 subscribers were added to the *Tomorrow's World* subscription list in January. In December, 269 were added. The total *Tomorrow's World* subscription list in this region to date is 9,258. In January, 461 Bible Study Course lessons were mailed in Australia, and 31 to Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Papua New Guinea. In New Zealand, the present *Tomorrow's World* subscription stands at 3,287 (New Zealand and Pacific), an increase of 183 for the month. Our New Zealand office posted 3,835 pieces of mail during January.

Philippines: Rod McNair reported, "It is encouraging to see the growth in the Philippines Work in 2003. Last year, the Regional Office processed 890 pieces of incoming mail. A total of 1,762 booklets and 1,462 Bible Study Course lessons were mailed out. That last statistic is exciting, because it shows that *Tomorrow's World* readers, including many of you brethren who are taking the course, are interested in really studying God's Word.

"Also, last year's (preliminary) income growth was an excellent 11.6% over the previous year. This is also significant, because we took on a number of new projects last year, such as our first Living Youth Camp. In 2003, our expenses increased by 9.6%. This was a smaller increase than in 2002, so that is good news as well."

Kenya Update: Douglas Winnail reported, "I have just returned from a nine-day trip to Kenya, where Mr. Owino and I held Bible studies, and question and answer sessions with six groups across southern Kenya. During our travels, we spoke to and visited with about one hundred people. Many attending the LCG groups are coming from other religious backgrounds, and have basic questions about doctrines and the Scriptures. In spite of difficult travel over deteriorating roads, it was inspiring to see the excitement of those who are beginning to understand the Truth of God. For many who struggle with the grim realities of rural life in Kenya — no electricity, no running water, lack of jobs, hunger, and the ever-present threat of diseases such as malaria, typhoid, and other water-borne infections — the gospel of the coming

Kingdom of God is a message that inspires real hope.

"It was sobering to see the joy and enthusiasm of those in Africa who have never understood the truth of the coming kingdom of God. While at the same time remembering that many in America, Britain, and other parts of the world, who have heard dozens of sermons about the kingdom of God, are drifting away from the truth and turning to another gospel. During our visit, we discussed ways of doing the work more effectively in East Africa. We also noted the problems and needs of members, and discussed numerous ideas for development projects that would help generate food, clean water, and additional income.

"While in Kenya, we also had an opportunity to meet with and interview members of the government, business community, several physicians, and numerous individuals about their concerns in a country that is struggling to meet the challenges facing developing nations today."

**Member Involvement in the
Tomorrow's World Telecast**

Wayne Pyle wrote, "Might you be willing and able to help the telecast expand into as-yet unreached markets? As of this writing, more than eighty Living Church of God members are sponsoring the *Tomorrow's World* telecast on one hundred and three public access stations and fourteen leased-access stations. These stations are cabled into fourteen million homes across America, where hundreds of thousands actually watch the *Tomorrow's World* program. Since the telecast began in 1999, public access television has brought in more than 38,000 responses for Church publications and audiotapes. In the past four years, more than 25,600 individuals have been added to the Church's mailing list as a result of seeing the *Tomorrow's World* telecast on member-sponsored public access television. Sixteen percent — one-sixth — of *Tomorrow's World* telecast response come from public access television stations.

"I should add that more than eighty US members have been involved and are currently successful. For example, in our area, I had success in the GCG days, but not since. The county I reside in does not have traditional public access as the city government that the cable company had to work with has total control. They decided to only run

announcements, not programs, and George Todd (the other adult male in our video group) keeps trying in his cable area, and may also succeed soon. But the point is that it is not just the ordained, the evangelists, etc. that have a part in proclaiming the Gospel and that LCG does encourage lay members to participate, which I believe, also helps us become better Christians.”

— by Robert Thiel
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Article...

Stress Control

Stress is all around us as we go through our daily lives. It comes from our work place and home life. We are bombarded with negative influences and messages continually. Stress can cause illness. I would like to share parts an article written by Dianne Loomis in 2002 called “Stress and Illness” covering the health aspect of stress and how to control it.

She writes in the first paragraph: “Can suffering from too much stress make you sick? Scientists seem to think so. Stress can have a dramatic impact on the immune system. Biologically speaking, when a person suffers from prolonged or chronic stress, hormones that have an effect on the immune system are affected.”

As I researched this topic on the Internet, I discovered that many articles from science and health magazines do confirm this fact. Many studies have shown that stress leads to various health problems.

Continuing in her article, she writes: “This kind of stress can have a great impact on the rest of your body. Most commonly, it can make a person more susceptible to stomach problems, such as constipation or diarrhea, and can aggravate and make some disorders, such as ulcers, worse. Headaches are another common complaint made by people who suffer from stress.”

Later in the article she states: “Stress can also have an impact on the body in more serious and potentially life threatening ways. Heart disease, cancer, and diabetes can be linked to stress.”

She presented many solutions that can assist individuals in dealing with stress in their lives. Some suggestions in her article on how control stress are regular exercise, getting enough sleep, avoiding too much caf-

feine, not panicking when you are overwhelmed, and if you have a stress disorder, check with you doctor.

The Bible has some timely tips on stress relief also. **I Timothy 4:8** states: “For bodily exercise profiteth little.” Paul conveys that physical exercise does profit the body, but the verse is speaking of the spiritual aspect of our faith. Bodily training has limited benefits, whereas spiritual exercise is deeper and longer lasting.

When a stressful situation arises, the Scriptures tell us to place out trust in God in whatever situation we find ourselves.

An example is the account of Israel at the Red Sea recorded in **Exodus 14:11** “And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt?” That was panic time, but God did assist them with the miracle of dividing the Red Sea, and providing dry land.

God may not show this kind of miracle in your life as at the Red Sea, but He will assist you in your problems. You can look back on your life and see where God has helped you.

It is impossible to avoid stress in this world, but you can do the things recommended by Mrs. Loomis in her article, and you must learn to trust in God to provide for your needs during difficult times in your life. Peter wrote: “Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you,” **I Peter 5:7**. Paul did state to the Romans: “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose,” **Romans 8:28**.

Next time you are in a stressful situation, make sure you follow the steps mentioned in the article by Dianne Loomis and pray to your Lord God for His assistance in solving the problems that you have to face.

— by Doyle J. Carter

Article...

God’s Word Not a Burden

Dear treasured friend:

“For the [true] love of God is this, that we do His commands, keep His ordinances, and are mindful of His precepts and teaching. And these orders of His are not irksome, burdensome, oppressive, or grievous,” **I John 5:3, Amp.**

Do you know why the Word of God and the orders God gives to you in your spirit are not burdensome or oppressive? Because everything He tells you is for your good and for your victory!

God knows what it takes to live in victory in this present evil world. In fact, He's the only one who knows. The people of this world cannot tell you how to live victoriously. They don't know how; but God does! He can make things work, even in the middle of darkness, and if we'll follow His instructions, commands, and precepts from His Word, we can too!

Let me give you an example. One commandment that God gave to us is to love one another and forgive one another as He has forgiven us. This command is not grievous because it's the key to our freedom. If you can walk in the love that's been shed abroad in your heart, you'll have joy every day. But if you don't walk in this commandment of love, somebody will get your joy before lunch! God knows that. So, He made a command of love and forgiveness because love works! Without love, there won't be any joy, and the joy of the Lord is our strength.

Don't resent God's teachings. Don't consider His ways a burden to your lifestyle. Rejoice over them. Take them gladly by the hand and let them lead you all the way to victory!

Scripture Study: **I John 5:1-5.**

— by James Omorawa
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Phone #2348033882922

Hmmm...

That "black box" they find after air disasters is not black — it is actually orange.

Historic Sayings...

In the late 1700s, many houses consisted of a large room with only one chair. Commonly, a long wide board was folded down from the wall and used for dining. The "head of the household" always sat in the chair while everyone else ate sitting on the floor. Once in a while, an invited guest would be offered to sit in this chair during a meal (almost always a man.) To sit in the chair meant you were important and in charge. Sitting in the chair, one was called the "chair

man." Today in business we use the expression/title "Chairman."

Article...

Heartwarming Story

Wishing to encourage her young son's progress on the piano, a mother took the small boy to a Paderewski concert. After they were seated, the mother spotted a friend in the audience and walked down the aisle to greet her. Seizing the opportunity to explore the wonders of the concert hall, the little boy rose and eventually explored his way to a door marked "NO ADMITTANCE."

When the house lights dimmed, and the concert was about to begin, the mother returned to her seat and discovered that her son was missing. Suddenly, the curtains parted, and spotlights focused on the impressive Steinway on stage.

In horror, the mother saw her little boy sitting at the keyboard, innocently picking out *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*.

At that moment, the great piano master made his entrance, quickly moved to the piano, and whispered in the boy's ear, "Don't quit. Keep playing."

Then, leaning over, Paderewski reached down with his left hand and began filling in a bass part. Soon his right arm reached around to the other side of the child and he added a running obligation. Together, the old master and the young novice transformed a frightening situation into a wonderfully creative experience. The audience was mesmerized. That's the way it is with God. What we can accomplish on our own is hardly noteworthy. We try our best, but the results aren't exactly graceful flowing music. With the hand of the Master, our life's work truly can be beautiful.

After reading this unusual story of Paderewski, I would like to make a comment. Suppose the great musician would have entered the stage and grasping the boy by the arm had angrily said, "Don't you know that I'm scheduled to present a concert here in a few minutes? Get off the stage! What are you doing here?" If the pianist had acted in such an angry manner, the audience would have missed the beautiful example of the kind, gentle man.

Paderewski was a genius, an intellectual, a statesman, a beautiful orator, and a linguist who spoke in no less than seven languages

fluently, a great musician and most of all, a humanitarian who was so generous that every kindness to him was always returned many fold.

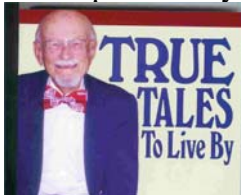
He was befriended and adored by the most prominent people of his time, as well as people from all occupations. He traveled all over the world from Africa to Australia and across the European Continent, crossing the Atlantic more than thirty times. He gave more than 1,500 concerts in the United States, appearing in every State and drawing the largest crowds in history at a time when the solo recital was still in infancy.

He was the first to give a recital alone in the newly built Carnegie Hall in New York City which held almost 3,000 people.

He traveled throughout the United States in his own railroad cars with several pianos, not only for practical purposes but because he enjoyed living in a grand style. Whole trainloads of people would come in from outlying towns to hear him play. Large crowds would go out to meet him and escort him to the concert hall, or would just come to see his train pass by.

They could not get enough of his playing and would refuse to go home even after hours past the end of his program. He gladly continued to play encore after encore.

On the tenth anniversary of Polish independence in 1928, Paderewski received messages from four U.S. presidents, Coolidge, Taft, Hoover, and Roosevelt acknowledging his work as a statesman. When he arrived in Brussels on one of his concert tours, the King and Queen personally went to the station to greet him, an action unheard of on the part of Royalty.



The main reason for his popularity was his magnificent playing. He literally made the piano sing.

— by Skip Westphal

Book Review...

Why Were Our Reformers Burned?

From the Book *Five English Reformers*
by J.C. Ryle, 1890

The following is a synopsis of a book review on the Web site www.masters-table.org/reformation/reformburned.htm.

There are certain facts in history, which the world tries hard to forget and ignore.

These facts get in the way of some of the world's favorite theories, and are highly inconvenient. The consequence is that the world shuts its eyes against them. They are either cut down dead as vulgar intruders, or passed by as tiresome bores. Little by little, they sink out of sight of the students of history, like ships in a distant horizon, or are left behind like a luggage train on a siding. Of such facts, the subject of this review is a vivid example: the burning of our English Reformers, and the reason why they were burned.

It is fashionable in some quarters to deny that there is any such thing as certainty about religious truth, or any opinions for which it is worthwhile to be burned. Yet, three hundred years ago, there were men who were certain they had found out truth, and were content to die for their opinions. It is fashionable in other quarters to leave out all the unpleasant things in history, and to paint everything in a rose-colored hue. A very popular history of our English hardly mentions the martyrdoms of Queen Mary's days! Yet, Mary was not called "Bloody Mary" without reason, and scores of Protestants were burned in her reign. Last, but not least, it is thought very bad taste in many quarters to say anything which throws discredit on the Church of Rome. Yet it is as certain that the Romish Church burned our English Reformers as it is that William the Conqueror won the battle of Hastings. These difficulties meet me face to face as I walk up to the subject which I wish to unfold in this review. I know their magnitude, and I cannot evade them. I only ask my readers to give me a patient and indulgent hearing.

After all, I have great confidence in the honesty of English men's minds. Truth is truth, however long it may be neglected. Facts are facts, however long they may lie buried. I only want to dig up some old facts, which the sands of time have covered over, to bring to the light of day some old English monuments, which have been long neglected, to unstop some old wells, which the prince of this world has been diligently filling with earth. I ask my readers to give me their attention for a few minutes, and I trust to be able to show them that it is good to examine the question, "Why were our Reformers burned?"

— by Timothy Youngblood

Perks of Being Over 60...

Your investment in health insurance is finally beginning to pay off.

Story...

Nothing but the Blood of Jesus
Psalm 55:22

If a person has changed, we should not judge them for their past. We should judge on their present actions.

One day God called a young woman and she responded. She had a very rough past, involving alcohol, drugs, and prostitution. But the change in her was evident. As time went by, she became a faithful member of the Church. She eventually became involved in the ministry, teaching young children. It was not very long until this faithful young woman had caught the eye and heart of the pastor's son. The relationship grew and they began to make wedding plans.

Then the problems began. About one half of the Church did not think that a woman with a past such as hers was suitable for a pastor's son. The Church began to argue and fight about the matter. So they held a meeting. As the people made their arguments and tensions increased, the meeting was getting completely out of hand. The young woman became very

upset about all the things being brought up about her past. As she began to cry, the pastor's son stood to speak. He could not bear the pain it was causing his wife-to-be. He began to speak. "My fiancée's past is not what is on trial here. What you are questioning is the ability of the blood of Jesus to wash away sin. Today you have put the blood of Jesus on trial. Does it wash away sin or not?"

The whole Church began to weep as they realized that they had been slandering the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Forgiveness is a very foundational part of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. If the blood of Jesus does not cleanse the other person completely, then it cannot cleanse us completely. If that is the case, then we are all in a lot of trouble.

What can wash away my sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus! End of case! "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved," **Psalm 55:22**. This prayer is powerful, and prayer is one of the best gifts we receive. There is no cost, but many rewards. Let us continue to pray for one another.

— author unknown