

Church of God News

Positive News of the Churches of God

November 2004, No. 19

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Article...

That's Entertainment

Bryan was stunned, shocked, and incredulous even.

"I can't believe it," he said. "I thought, for sure, you would have seen it by now."

"Well, I haven't," I said. "Sorry."

"But this movie will be an Oscar winner! Two thumbs way up!"

"Uh-huh."

My indifference seemed to frustrate him. "So that means it's an important movie, maybe one of the most important movies of our time," he explained. "You need to see it!"

Now it was my turn to be incredulous.

"Bryan," I said, "we're talking about a movie here, you know — entertainment?"

Bryan's only response was a look that had "what's your point?" written all over it.

"I'm sorry," I continued, "but I just have a hard time putting the words 'movie' and 'important' together in the same sentence. I mean, a movie is...well...a movie."

"But this is more than a movie," he said. "This movie is an experience."

"I'm sure it's powerful," I said. "It's just not something I want to see."

He eyed me suspiciously. "It's the R-rated thing, isn't it?" he asked.

Bryan knew how my wife and I decided long ago that we would draw a hard line in the entertainment sand at R-rated movies.

Yes, we know that the movie ratings system is arbitrary, at best. And yes, we know that there are many PG-13 movies that are every bit as offensive as movies that are rated R. We get all that. But we figured drawing our personal and family line at the R-rating would eliminate a lot of cinematic garbage through which we wouldn't have to sift. The rest we would handle on a case-by-case basis. And even if we missed a few excellent movies in the process, well, they were just movies. You know.

"The rating is part of it," I admitted. "Look, I've heard all about this movie. How could I not? It's all anyone is talking about. And you know how I feel about the subject of the movie. It's something that's very important to me. I just don't want to see a movie about it."

"But this isn't just any movie."

"Even if it's the greatest movie that will ever be made, it's still just a movie. And believe it or not, Bryan, somehow I'll find a way to live a full and complete life without seeing it."

Bryan shook his head sadly. Obviously, he didn't understand me. But that's OK, because I'm not sure I understand him, either. Maybe I grew too cynical during my years as a TV critic for a daily newspaper, but I'm troubled when I see how totally consumed our culture is with entertainment and entertainers. Schools schedule PTA meetings around "American Idol." Network news anchors delay coverage of significant international developments to breathlessly report on a court case that has no widespread impact other than the fact that it involves a poplar athlete. And millions of star-struck fans watching televised awards ceremonies are tutored in political correctness by entertainers who seem to think that the world would flounder in ignorance if they didn't weave a few preachy pronouncements into their acceptance speeches.

While entertainment and entertainers can be — you know — entertaining, I can't help but be concerned when I see a generation of young people who resent being asked to do anything that isn't "fun." I wonder what it says about our values when entertainment is

considered “important.” And I wonder about the long-term implications for a culture that esteems entertainment so highly (do the words “Roman Empire,” and “bread and circus” ring a bell?).

I know, I know. I shouldn’t worry about such things. Believe me, I don’t do it because it’s entertaining. I only do it because it’s — you know — important.

— by Joseph Walker
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Editorial...

State of the Nation Address

The President usually gives a glowing, optimistic report of the condition of the nation and will again in January. The positive tone is even greater if it is his second term, as he will be recounting all the great things he has accomplished. Reality may be somewhat obscured. Maybe we need a “second opinion.”

The wise King Solomon recorded, “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun,” **Ecclesiastes 1:9**.

According to that, the President is, at best, merely reinventing the wheel; and according to 6000 years of history, the wheel of civilization has mostly been run flat, bent out of shape, and needs to be greased.

Jim Nelson Black, author of *When Nations Die*, identifies ten factors that have appeared in great civilizations of the past, and led to their decline and fall. In some cultures, Black observes, as few as three or four of these symptoms of social, cultural, and moral decline would be enough to bring a society to the point of imminent collapse. The list includes: 1) Increase in lawlessness; 2) Loss of economic discipline; 3) Rising bureaucracy; 4) Decline in education; 5) Weakening of cultural foundations; 6) Loss of respect for traditions; 7) Increase in materialism; 8) Rise in immorality; 9) Decay of religious belief; and 10) Devaluing of human life. **The United States is the first nation in history where all ten symptoms are present in one society at one time according to Dr. Black.**

Former White House assistant and mainstream evangelist Chuck Colson states, “In a society that begins free-floating discussion, certainty evaporates. After a while, nobody is

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“For the edifying of the body of Christ,”
Ephesians 4:12.

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Purpose: To discover what the Churches of God are doing right. News and information about, and of interest to, Church of God Sabbath-keepers. To inform, edify, stimulate, exhort (**Hebrews 10:24-25**), and unify (**Ephesians 4:3**).

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sure of anything. It introduces relativity, so to speak, in human affairs, and eternal affairs. You cannot be sure — there is no such thing as the truth — everything is equivocated — everything is subject to contradiction.” False ideas are bringing about the decline of western culture.

Finally, Carl F. H. Henry, in his book *Twilight of a Great Civilization*, says, “There is a new barbarism. This barbarism has embraced a new pagan mentality . . . not simply rejecting the legacy of the West, but embracing a new pagan mentality where there is no fixed truth.”

All problems we can observe in this world's systems, whether they be economic, social, political, or educational, are merely symptoms of the actual cancer, which is spiritual in nature. The spiritual nutritional deficiency mutates into the contagious moral infections of crime, divorce, adultery, etc. thus creating the conspicuous blotches on society.

The State of the Church

But what about the state of the Church? Who could write such a "State of the Church" speech? Jesus gave just such an address in **Revelation Chapters two and three** and, for the most part, it is not too complimentary.

Cambridge University Professor J. D. Unwin's study of 80 civilizations over a period of 4,000 years concluded that a society either chooses sexual promiscuity and decline, or sexual discipline, which produces a surge of creative energy. Dr. Unwin wrote, "Any human society is free to choose either to display great energy, or sexual freedom; the evidence is that they cannot do both for more than one generation."

There is a parallel between the direction of the nation and the direction of the Church.

Henry Blackaby noted a disturbing parallel between the world and the "Church." His study showed less than one percent difference in the rates of divorce and other symptoms of moral decline.

The lack of Spirituality or God centeredness in the Church is nothing more than a collective average of the same in its members. That's you and me.

Revelation 3:22, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches."

— by Steven J. Kieler

Words of Wisdom...

Do what you can to further God's Kingdom, and support those who are doing what you can't.

— author unknown

Poem...

Nine Eleven

Planes crashing, evil laughing.
People running.
People praying.
People falling out of windows
And under buildings.
Millions dead.

Evil ahead.

The end times are coming.

The end times are near.

The beginning of the end

Is when vanishings occur.

The end times are coming.

The end times are here.

— by Stephen Kieler (age 13)

Cedar Rapids, IA

Story...

Took My Place

One day, a man went to visit a Church. He arrived early, parked his car, and got out. Another car pulled up near him, and the driver told him, "I always park there. You took my place!"

The visitor went inside for Bible Study, found an empty seat, and sat down. A young lady from the Church approached him and stated, "That's my seat! You took my place!" The visitor was somewhat distressed by this rude welcome, but said nothing.

After the Bible Study, the visitor went into the Church sanctuary and sat down. Another member walked up to him and said, "That's where I always sit. You took my place!" The visitor was even more troubled by this treatment, but still said nothing.

Later, as the congregation was praying for Christ to dwell among them, the visitor stood, and His appearance began to change. Horrible scars became visible on His hands and on His sandaled feet. Someone from the congregation noticed Him and called out, "What happened to you?"

The visitor replied, "I took your place!"

— author unknown

submitted by Ian Hufton

Story...

Hannah's Story

To be infertile was the ultimate tragedy for a married woman since only by bearing a son to her husband could she provide a means of carrying on his name, and transferring his estate upon death. "And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold to me Thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that

shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir," **Genesis 15:2-4**. "And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac," **Genesis 25:5**.

So it was that a man named Elkanah had two wives: the first, Hannah, and the second one, Peninnah. Now Peninnah had both sons and daughters by Elkanah, but Hannah could not have children; and while this was bad enough, her rival would provoke her to irritate her. This happened especially at the Feast of Tabernacles time when Elkanah would go to make sacrifices, and eat before the Eternal.

At that time, Elkanah would give portions to his wives and their children. While he gave a double individual portion to Hannah, Peninnah received a far greater amount for herself and her children! She evidently flaunted this before Hannah who endured this year after year to the point where she could hardly bear it.

At this particular Feast, Hannah broke down and refused to eat or drink. Elkanah tried to comfort her with the words, "Why won't you eat? Am I not better to you than ten sons?" See **I Samuel 1**.

In her sorrows, she turned to God and went to the temple (tent) in Shiloh to pray. Her prayer was with tears, and wholehearted. She prayed in her mind while her lips moved. In her prayer she referred to herself three times as God's maidservant promising that if God would give her a child, she would dedicate him to the Eternal all his life through the Nazarite vow.

Eli, the high priest, happened to be sitting where he could watch her, and decided she was drunk (people did drink wine or strong drink during the Feast, and some over did it from time to time).

He rebuked her; but she spoke up directly and explained that she was not drunk, but "pouring out her soul" in prayer. This was an expression used to mean very fervent prayer (**Psalms 42:4, 62:8**). It is understandable that Eli would think she was drunk as most prayers in those days were audible. See **Daniel 6** and **Psalm 3:4**.

When Eli realized that she was a very sober and sincere woman, he said to her that he prayed that God would grant the request she made of Him.

God did remember Hannah and in due time she bore a son and named him Samuel which meant "His name is El." This was a

play on words from another Hebrew word that meant "asked of El" or "asked of God."

Hannah refused to go to the Feast again until her son was weaned. At that time, she promised she would deliver him for service in the house of God or the Tabernacle. Women of Israel used to nurse their children on average until they were about 3 years old.

When he was weaned, she came to Eli at the Tabernacle and gave her son to the service of God. She stayed away and only came to see him at the annual feasts; but each year she made him a robe to wear and delivered it to him at the annual Feast. See **I Samuel 2:18-19**.

As a result of her blessings, Hannah sang a song of praise to the Eternal. This song has similarities to **Psalms 113:7-8**. It also has similarities to **II Samuel 22**. Both songs begin by using a "horn" for strength, and by referring to God as the Rock, and by reflecting on divine deliverance, **I Sam. 2:1-2** and **II Samuel 22:2-3**. Both end by paralleling "his king" with "his anointed," **I Samuel 2:10** and **II Samuel 22:51**.

Another woman was blessed with a child. She no doubt had access to the song of Hannah, and there are parallel themes. Mary, the mother of Jesus, no doubt had access to the manuscripts containing Hannah's jubilant song. Compare **I Samuel 2:4, 7-8** with **Luke 1:52** and **I Samuel 2:5** with **Luke 1:53**.

The name Hannah is unique in the Old Testament to **I Samuel 1-2**. There are no other Hannahs in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament we read of a prophetess, whose name was Hannah; but transliterated as "Anna." It is found in **Luke 2:36-37**. Hannah in the New Testament was a prophetess, and Jewish tradition says the Old Testament Hannah was also.

Interestingly enough, the name Hannah means "Grace." Today, in modern America, I am told that Hannah is one of the most popular names for girl babies and we all know many women named "Grace."

— by David L. Antion

Rules for Flying...

Any pilot who relies on a terminal forecast can be sold the Brooklyn Bridge. If he relies on winds-aloft reports he can be sold Niagara Falls.

IFR: I Follow Roads.

The friendliest flight attendants are those on the trip home.

Good judgment comes from experience and experience comes from bad judgment.

Being an airline pilot would be great if you didn't have to go on all those trips.

Poem...

Somebody Said

Somebody said it takes about six weeks to get back to normal after you've had a baby, Somebody doesn't know that once you're a mother, normal is history.

Somebody said you learn how to be a mother by instinct. Somebody never took a three-year-old shopping.

Somebody said being a mother is boring. Somebody never rode in a car driven by a teenager with a driver's permit.

Somebody said if you're a "good" mother, your child will "turn out good." Somebody thinks a child comes with directions and a guarantee.

Somebody said "good" mothers never raise their voices. Somebody never came out the back door just in time to see her child hit a golf ball through the neighbor's kitchen window.

Somebody said you don't need an education to be a mother. Somebody never helped a fourth grader with his math.

Somebody said you can't love the fifth child as much as you love the first. Somebody doesn't have five children.

Somebody said a mother can find all the answers to her child-rearing questions in the books. Somebody never had a child stuff beans up his nose or in his ears.

Somebody said the hardest part of being a mother is labor and delivery. Somebody never watched her "baby" get on the bus for the first day of kindergarten...or on

a plane headed for military "boot camp"...or standing in front of a college dormitory.

Somebody said a mother can do her job with her eyes closed and one hand tied behind her back.

Somebody never organized seven giggling, punching boys for Little League practice.

Somebody said a mother can stop worrying after her child gets married.

Somebody doesn't know that marriage adds a new son or daughter-in-law to a mother's heartstrings.

Somebody said a mother's job is done when her last child leaves home.

Somebody never had grandchildren.

Somebody said your mother knows you love her, so you don't need to tell her.

Somebody isn't a mother.

— author unknown

Spiritual Truth...

Jesus did not do it all for you. Rather, He made it possible for you to follow in His steps. If you do what Jesus did, you will come to the same reward. If you do not, you will die in the wilderness.

Article...

Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit

The Church at Smyrna was materially poor, yet Jesus said it was rich because the congregation knew their need for God.

"And seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain: and when he was set, His disciples came unto Him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," **Matthew 5:1-3**.

Jesus spent a lot of time in the hill country around Galilee. He often resorted to one of the mountains to pray. Luke tells us, on one occasion, He went into a mountain and prayed all night (**Luke 6:12-13**).

The mountains also gave Him respite from the persistent press of people who looked to Him for healing and comfort. On this day, He needed to be away from the crowds to teach His disciples some very important lessons.

Before He gave the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus, no doubt spent time in prayer. When He was ready, His disciples came to Him and He began teaching them saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," **Matthew 5:3**.

James repeated the message of spiritual poverty when he wrote, "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him," **James 2:5**.

Among the multitude at the foot of the mountain, Jesus knew there were many who were poor in spirit. They were humble folk who knew their need for God. Although they were adults, many, perhaps in their twilight years, were like the little child of whom Jesus said, "...Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," **Matthew 18:3**.

God's secretary, John, wrote of the Church in Smyrna, "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich)," **Revelation 2:9**. Here was a congregation struggling to do God's will amid persecution and material need, and Jesus said, "You are rich."

Rich? How? Jesus taught his disciples, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Another time Jesus said, "...Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," **Matthew 25:34**.

Inherit? Doesn't that mean to receive as your own — to become the owner? No wonder Jesus Christ was able to tell the congregation at Smyrna, "You are rich: wealthy beyond your wildest imaginations." As Paul wrote, "...Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him," **I Corinthians 2:9** (quoted from **Isaiah 64:4**).

But isn't Jesus Christ the rightful Heir to God's riches? After all, He is the Son.

Absolutely. Jesus said, "All things are delivered unto Me of My Father," **Matthew 11:27**.

Yet Paul says we are destined to become brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ through adoption (**Ephesians 1:3-5**). In his letter to the Romans Paul wrote, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God....The Spirit itself beareth witness with

our spirit, that we are [present tense] the children of God," **Romans 8:14,16**. And as God's children we are co-owners of His kingdom with Jesus Christ.

Does this mean everyone who calls himself a Christian has inherited the kingdom? The name means little. The attitude behind it means everything. Abraham Lincoln expressed that attitude when he wrote in his journal; "I must confess that I'm driven to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I have nowhere else to go. My wisdom, and that of all those about me, is insufficient to meet the demands of the day."

"Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," **Matthew 5:1-3**.

— by Leslie A. Turvey

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Church News from India...

Greetings: I am forwarding a photo taken of children working on a 9/11 international memorial called the "Heart of America Quilt." The white stripes are made up of squares of fabric from around the world. The quilt is designed after the form of a one-acre United States flag. These panels are decorated with artwork to be presented in honor of those who lost their lives on 9/11, and during the war on terror.

There are small ones for children to play with as a pillow for their dolls. There are also large ones to be used as pillow covers. If anybody is interested in these cushion covers, the cost is around \$2 US dollars for the small ones, and \$7 US dollars for the large ones.



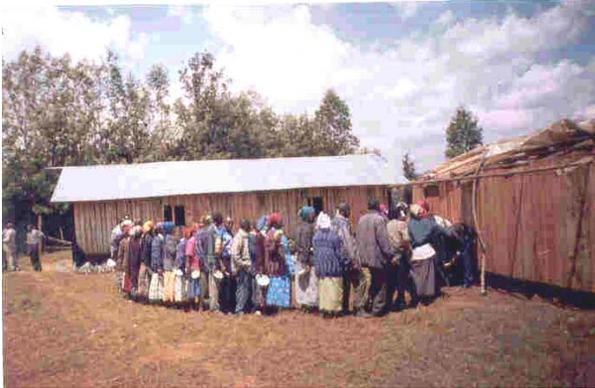
—by M. R. Hubert

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*Church News...***Kenya**

Dear Elder Richard Nickels,

May God bless you as you do the work of the gospel ministries. I know we sometimes face hard times in the ministry, and I know all things can be possible by God. Praise the Living God. We are facing hard times now with famine and drought in most parts of Kenya, and we need support.



Brother, send me the Church of God News along with the Sabbath Sentinel magazine and other books. May God bless you. I am looking forward to hearing from you. Yours in Christ's service,

— by Elder Overseer Andrew Koech
Giving & Sharing representative
Kenya & East Africa
joskomix@yahoo.com

*Church News...***Chad Republic Trip Report**

Before the destruction of Sodom, God sent a message to Lot, "escape for thy life; look not behind you, neither stay in all the

plain; escape to the mountain, lest you be consumed."

Jesus' disciples heard the same voice of warning before the destruction of Jerusalem in **Luke 21:20-21**. They must not try to secure anything from their possession, but must make the most of the opportunity to escape. There was a coming out, a decided separation from the wicked, an escape from death.

As it was in the days of Noah, so with Lot etc, and so it will be in these last days. Again, the voice of God is heard in a message of warning, bidding His people to separate themselves from the prevailing iniquity. God's ideal for His children is higher than the light human thought can reach. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," **Matthew 5:48**. This command is a promise. The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul.

I have a great love for the truth. From the very day God changed my life, the day I embraced the truth, I have had a great burden for the spread of the message of salvation. I know that only a pure doctrine could present that message. I have a great desire to see repentance, revival, and reformation in the Church of God. The greatest battle each person must fight is the battle with self and sin. There is no corporate salvation. Each individual must have a relationship of faith and obedience to Christ. No one is saved because his name is on the Church role at the Roman Catholic, SDA, Methodist, Baptist, or even the Church of God. His name needs to be recorded in the book of heaven. This is a time the law of God is trodden down under foot, being removed from public sight, and the great question is, who will stand for the truth? God is calling for volunteers. Who will respond? God gave a great Light to Christians; we should not allow it to go out. We must boldly proclaim the historic truths of Jesus' resurrection to set mankind free from the chain of sin. For almost a year, I have been praying for God's provision to reach the nation of Chad Republic with the saving message of Jesus Christ. It took us six months to plan for and make travel preparation for an outdoor evangelism in the Chad Republic. During last year FOT, Mr. Umaru (not real

name) was among my converts who attended the Feast, and begged me to come to his country for evangelism. Praise God. He now made the dream come true.

We traveled Nigerian roads, and it was a two-day trip from the Benin Republic. The sun shone in a blue sky, and the weather was very warm. Having arrived at the Nigerian border post with Chad, brother Maru and the other four brothers met us, and took care of our passports, etc.

Chad is located in the heart of the African continent more than 1500 km from the coast. Lake Chad, about 1200 km from Ndjamená, is fed by the Chari River (approx. 1200 km long) and the Lagona River (Approx. 970 km long); and varies in surface between 10,000 and 25,000 km² according to the season. The country covers an area of 1,224,00 km² and has about 4-5 million inhabitants. In the north, there is the Sahel zone with little rain and much sand, and in the south, there is Savanna with forest and fertile regions. A long time war (1972), and warlike conflicts with Libya have weakened the country politically and economically. Also, times of drought have done a lot of damage to the country. Large parts of the goat herds and cattle perished during these years of drought. The devaluation of CFA Francs (100%) made the situation of the populace very difficult — the purchasing power of the already low average wages (US\$85 per month) shrunk even further.

We went into action immediately. We were received in some places, but most places we were seen as taboos and infidels. We went to the Barma people with the message of salvation, and we conquered as twelve people were baptized. We witnessed in so many places. The twelve brethren would like to join us in this years' FOT in Togo.

We had open air meetings where people came, and received Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior. These new converts are in need of our prayers and support. They will be ostracized by their relatives, and they are ready for it. There were faces of poverty every where we visited. We distributed many Arabic literatures and Bibles; but we are in need of Sabbath school manuals, books, etc. We also need used clothes, pens, pencils, toiletries, soaps, stationeries, etc. Help us reach these forgotten people. The more than 50,000 Barma (or Bagirmi) occupy the territory between N'Djamena (Chad's capitol)

and Bousso, a small city farther south on the Chari River. The region varies from wet and tropical to semi-arid, and the average yearly temperature is about 82° F. The Barma herd some cattle, but only in the N'Djamena region because of the disease-carrying tsetse flies farther south. They speak Bagirmi, a Nilo-Saharan language. In the 1700s, the Barma's ancestors ruled the Bagirmi Empire, a large area across Chad and into Sudan. The empire was situated between two competing kingdoms: Bornu to the west and Wadai to the east. At the end of the 1700s, the empire was attacked by Islamic Wadai armies, and was never able to regain its political independence. In 1912, the Bagirmi Empire was incorporated into French Equatorial Africa. It remained under French rule until Chad declared its independence in 1960.

What Are Their Lives Like?

Most Barma rely on both fishing and agriculture as the basis of their livelihood. However, some individuals rely solely on one or the other. The fishermen spend each day at the Chari and Bahr Ergig Rivers, while the farmers can be found in the fields outside their villages. Millet and sorghum are the main crops. Beans, sesame, peanuts, cotton, and vegetables are also grown. Both men and women cultivate the land. The men maintain the large fields that produce the millet and sorghum. The women cultivate the vegetable plots, which are located either in or near the villages. Men fish, trade at the markets, and build the houses. The women prepare the meals, care for the children, and produce crafts such as pottery and baskets.

Barma villages consist of "family households." The settlements range in size from 50 to 1,000 or more people. Typically, each village represents a common lineage or extended family. The Barma are known for having small families due to low fertility rates. This can be attributed to several factors, including sterility (caused by venereal diseases), high divorce rate, and the large age differences between husbands and wives. Since much help is needed in food production and the labor force for each household is small, the Barma regularly participate in inter-village work parties.

There, the people work as one group for the good of the whole village. In previous times, parents arranged marriages. They did this to form alliances between villages or clans. Presently, the high divorce rate has

made it difficult to establish such bonds. Today, if many suitors are interested in the same girl, they must perform a traditional marriage ceremony simultaneously. The ceremony includes paying a "bride price" (money paid to the girl's family). The suitor who gives the most money is chosen to be the groom. In times past, young men did not have the ability to acquire money to pay the bride price. Today, however, many enter the market to sell cash crops or products of their labor.

Others depend on older relatives to donate money.

The Islamic courts and Chad's legal system settle disputes of the most serious crimes. The lesser ones are handled at the village level. Gossip, ostracism, and even sorcery, and witchcraft continue to be a way of punishing people at the local level.

What Are Their Beliefs?

The Barma have been followers of the Islamic faith since the sixteenth century. They

The Barma People Statistics

People name: Barma

Country: Chad

Their language: Bagirmi

Population:

(1990) 46,400

(1995) 53,100

(2000) 61,000

Largest religion:

Muslim (Sunni) 99.9%

Christians: <1%

Church members: 5

Scriptures in their own language: None

Jesus Film in their own language: None

Christian broadcasts in their own language: None

Mission agencies working among this people: 1

Persons who have heard the Gospel: 9,600 (18%)

Those evangelized by local Christians: 1,600 (3%)

Those evangelized from the outside: 8,000 (15%)

Persons who have never heard the Gospel: 43,500 (82%)

The Chad Country Statistics

Country: Chad

Population:

(1990) 5,553,300

(1995) 6,360,700

(2003) 7,306,700

Major peoples in size order:

Shuwa 21.5%

Sara Gambai 10.9%

Teda 4.3%

Daza 3.3%

Marfa 3.2%

Major religions:

Muslim 46%

Christian 35.3%

Ethnic religionist 18.4%

Number of denominations: 15 (Catholic, African tribal Churches, Methodist, etc. No Sabbath Church, praise God we have established two. Can you help it to grow?

Our next report will be on our outreach among the Bagirmi Fulani tribe.

are devout Muslims who read the Koran, say daily prayers, practice polygamy, and avoid alcohol. Some make a pilgrimage to Mecca, if they can afford to do so. A mosque is located in each village. The men regularly gather there for prayer. Islamic schools are set up in many towns. Adolescent males attend the schools, and are taught the laws written in the Koran.

What Are Their Needs?

Although one missions agency is currently targeting the Barma of Chad, there are only a handful of known Barma believers. Effective prayer and further mission work are needed.

Prayer Points: Ask the Lord to call people who are willing to go to Chad and share Christ with the Barma. Or, He should use His people to send those of us who are willing. Ask the Holy Spirit to grant wisdom and favor to Brother Mark Josiah who stayed back to work among the Barma. Pray for the translation of the Jesus film and other evangelistic tools into Baguirmi. Pray that God will reveal Himself to these precious people through dreams and visions.

Pray that God will give the twelve newly baptized Barma believers boldness to share the Christian faith with their own people. Take authority over the spiritual principalities and powers that are keeping the Barma bound. Ask God to raise up prayer teams who will begin breaking up the soil through worship and intercession. Christian schools, clinics and social services will help bring many to Christ. Ask the Lord to spiritually equip the newly established Barma Church for the glory of His name!



Baptism in Chad

— by Michael Porter, 03BP2991 Jericho
Cotonou, Benin, Africa
goodseed1st@hotmail.com

Words of Wisdom...

You must first clarify your own visions of the future before you can expect to enlist others in a shared vision. To create a climate of meaningfulness, first you must personally believe in something yourself. Before you can inspire others, you have to be inspired yourself.

— From *The Leadership Challenge*
by James Kouzes and Barry Posner
© 2002 John Wiley & Sons

Church News...

Feast of Trumpets in Tulsa, OK

The Tulsa Church of God observed the Feast of Trumpets. The Church of God Tulsa Fellowship also attended and all were blessed with special music under the direction of Ray Kurr. There were over one hundred in attendance that day.

The first sermon by David Hope, entitled “The Day Christ Returns” covered the possibility of you being at the grave site of a loved one at the resurrection.

The Fellowship Choir provided special music, “It Will Not Be Long Now” and “With the Sound of Trumpets.”

Then the main sermon by Matt Steel, “Trumpets of Joy,” addressed, at the personal level, how we overcome our earthly trials with the aid of Jesus Christ in our lives.

And, of course, every one stayed for the potluck at the end of services and shared fellowship and discussions of where they were going for the Feast.

by Doyle Carter
PO Box 690592
Tulsa, OK 74169

Article...

Church of God, Seventh Day, Reaffirms Deity of Christ

The Church of God, Seventh Day, has a long history of Arian belief concerning the nature of Jesus Christ. Today, however, the predominant view on the deity of Christ is Athanasian.

Seventeen hundred years ago, Arians and Athanasians argued over whether or not Jesus Christ was God. The Council of Nicea, 325 A.D., settled the matter in favor of the

Trinitarian Athanasian belief, and banished Arius and his followers, who nevertheless continued to have influence for several hundred years, and even today.

Andrew N. Dugger, the leading Church of God, Seventh Day preacher of the Twentieth Century, was an Arian. In his book, *A History of the True Church*, (originally published in 1936, reprinted in 1996 by Giving & Sharing) Dugger states that Dr. Arius “was a staunch observer of the seventh-day Sabbath; he held the Lord’s Supper once a year on the 14th of Abib, as did all the Jewish Christians, and most of the members and bishops of the Eastern Churches. He believed in the one God, and Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, and contended that the Holy Spirit was a power sent forth from God, entering into the hearts and lives of Christians, transforming them into servants of God, of which he himself was a living example.”

It is possible that Dugger’s claim for Arius being a Sabbath-keeper is true, because it is believed that Arius got many of his beliefs from Lucian of Antioch, where he studied, and Lucian was a Sabbath-keeper. Arius believed that Christ is not truly divine, but a creature *ex nihilo*, who at one time did not exist, i.e., a created being. His opponent was Athanasius.

Emperor Constantine called the first general Church council at Nice (Nicaea) in 325 A.D., which condemned Arius’ doctrines, fixed Easter as the Sunday after the Jewish Passover, and led to the Emperor’s edict for the “venerable day of the sun” being observed as the Christian day of rest.

The Athanasian creed adopted by the Council of Nicaea stated that the Son is *homoousion to patri* (“of the one substance [or stuff] with the Father,” thus declaring Him to be all that the Father is: He is completely divine. Arius, on the other hand, believed that the Father, Son, and Spirit were three separate essences (*ousiai*) or substances (*hypostaseis*); the Father was God in a unique sense, whereas the divinity of the Son and Spirit was only derivative, for they had been created in time. In contradistinction, the last lines of the Nicene Creed read, “As for those who assert that there was a time when He was not; and that He was made out of nothing; or that He is of a difference substance (*hypostasis*) or essence (*ousia*); or that the Son of God is created, changeable, mutable — these men the universal Church declares anathema.”

The Nicene Creed also states, “the Holy Spirit, the Lord and the life-giver, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son is together worshipped and together glorified, who spoke through the prophets.”

Thus, the Council of Nicea was a watershed event, which led to the establishment as Catholic (or universal) doctrine, Easter, Sunday, and Trinitarian belief. Dugger opposed all three teachings, siding with Arius.

In 1996, the Church of God, Seventh Day, Denver Group, published its revised doctrinal beliefs, as adopted by the 1994 North American Ministerial Council meeting, which point 3, “Jesus Christ, the Son,” states: “Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God. He is of the same substance as the Father. Before time began, He existed with the Father, shared the Father’s glory, and participated in creation. Voluntarily relinquishing the rights of His deity, he was conceived of the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary and was born in Bethlehem. In full humanity, Jesus perfectly obeyed the Father’s will, died by crucifixion, was buried, and rose again after three days and three nights in the tomb. He then ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God as Savior and Redeemer of all who trust in Him. Jesus is Lord! **John 1:18, 1:1-3, 3:16, 17:5; Matthew 1:21, 12:40; Luke 1:26-35, 24:51; Philippians 2:5-11; I Timothy 2:5; Acts 2:36.**”

Die hard Arians in the Church of God, Seventh Day, have not accepted this doctrinal statement. This led to a North American Ministerial Council meeting in Tulsa, Oklahoma in May, 2004, which voted to reaffirm the deity of Christ: “the statement: ‘He is of the same substance as the Father’ to mean that Jesus is an equal member of the Godhead (Deity) and shares the nature, attributes, and title of “God” with the Father. As the Son, Jesus is subordinate to the Father in rank.” Thus, the Son and the Father are equally and fully divine, and each, therefore, should be worshiped and may be called God. The vast majority of Church of God people, whether of a Church of God, Seventh Day background, or former Worldwide Church of God background, would agree with these statements, although many would have reservations about the words, “same substance.”

Here are some of my personal observations: It is curious why the word “substance” is used in the 1996 doctrinal statement

which refers to Christ being of the same substance as the Father. This is *Athanasian* language, not *Biblical* language. It is designed to antagonize Arians. Also, Arius himself had Trinitarian tendencies. Which leads to the next point: Both Arius and Athanasius had an incorrect understanding of the nature of God and Jesus Christ. For a further explanation, please see our articles on the subject of the Trinity:

“History of the Trinity Doctrine,” Study No.132, www.giveshare.org/Biblestudy/132.trinityhistory.html,

“God Is NOT a Trinity,” Study No. 161, www.giveshare.org/Biblestudy/161.trinity.html,

“The Sabbath and the Trinity,” Study No. 231, www.giveshare.org/Biblestudy/231.sabbathtrinity.html.

Jesus has always existed, He is God. God is a family, **Ephesians 3:15**, not limited by the closed Trinity. The Holy Spirit is the power and love and sound mind that comes from God, **II Timothy 1:7**, not a third person of a Trinity. As my daughter, Barbara Nickels Parada, says, “Anyone who can read Spanish would have a hard time accepting the Trinity, because in Spanish [as in Greek], all nouns have gender. So, the Holy Spirit being a ‘he’ is not different than a rock being a ‘she’. The use of gender with nouns does not make them persons. It is just a grammatical tool.”

The United Church of God publishes two free booklets on God and Jesus Christ: “Who is God?” 69 pp., and “Jesus Christ The Real Story,” 125 pp. Order from **United Church of God, PO Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027**, E-mail info@ucg.org. Fred Coulter of the Christian Biblical Church of God wrote an excellent 160 pp. book, *The Day Jesus the Christ Died*, available from **Giving & Sharing, 3316 Alberta Drive, Gillette, WY 82718**, for a \$3.50 donation for postage (USA & Canada), or \$10 International. This book explains the real meaning of the death of Jesus Christ, in contrast to the perversion of Mel Gibson’s movie, “The Passion of the Christ.”

It should be noted that the recent reaffirmation of the deity of Christ by the Church of God, Seventh Day, does not of itself indicate a move toward general acceptance of Trinitarianism by that Church denomination. However, at least two COG7

top leaders are avowed Trinitarians. One, the pastor of a large Church, admits he believes in the Trinity, but does not teach this because the Trinity teaching is not [yet] official Church doctrine. It should not be surprising if some Church leaders of any denomination differ with their Church’s official teaching. However, the Trinity doctrine is not just any doctrine. Perhaps more professing Christians have been martyred over the Trinity than the Sabbath.

Surprisingly, the subject of the Trinity did not come up at the Tulsa COG7 conference meeting. Is the Church of God, Seventh Day, slouching towards Protestantism? A while back, the President of the Church of God, Seventh Day, wrote an editorial in *The Bible Advocate*, praising what has happened in the Worldwide Church of God. When I wrote and asked him to clarify exactly what he meant, he refused to respond to my respectful questions. He asked another elder to E-mail me back that he would not answer my questions. Go figure. Recently, the COG7 has been promoting the distribution of the DVD of Mel Gibson’s movie, “The Passion of the Christ.” They are on the Catholic/Protestant bandwagon on this issue.

It is Good News that the Church of God, Seventh Day, has reaffirmed their belief in the deity of Jesus Christ. But, everyone should know that mere profession of belief does not get you very far, **James 2:19-20**.

Historian Edward Gibbon wrote concerning the Christians after the Council of Nicaea, where the influence of Rome was dominant: “They were more solicitous to explore the nature [of the infinite God], than to practice the laws, of their founder” (*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. 47, par. 1). Instead of having a North American Ministerial Council meeting to discuss the nature of God and Christ, why not have a council meeting to discuss how to live by the laws of Jesus Christ?

— by Richard C. Nickels

What Is the...?

- Most destructive habit.....sin
- Greatest Joy.....giving
- Greatest loss.....loss of Christ
- Most satisfying work.....helping others
- Ugliest personality trait.....selfishness
- Most endangered species...Spirit-filled leaders
- Greatest natural resource.....children

Greatest “shot in the arm”.....encouragement
 Greatest problem to overcome.....fear
 Most effective sleeping pill.....peace of mind
 Most crippling failure disease.....excuses
 Most powerful force in life.....love
 Most dangerous pariah.....a hypocrite
 Most incredible computer.....the brain
 Worst thing to be without.....hope
 Deadliest weapon.....the tongue
 Two most power-filled words.....God can
 Greatest asset.....faith
 Most worthless emotion.....self-pity
 Most beautiful attire.....**Gal 3:27**
 Most prized possession.....the Holy Spirit
 Most powerful way of communication..prayer
 Most contagious spirit.....enthusiasm

Church News...

Biblical Fellowship Group Has Fourth Anniversary

I want to announce the fourth anniversary of the Biblical Fellowship Group, Tulsa, Oklahoma, which was started on July 10, 2000.

A little over four years ago, I placed an ad in the local paper to announce meetings for Bible studies on the Sabbath. This ad brought six individuals to form a group that met in the local library. The name for this group originated from the fact that an individual cannot reserve a room at the Tulsa library, but a group or organization can. Therefore, we decided to call our study group by the above name.

Over the years, we have developed various methods on how to advertise booklets, courses, other Church literature, and even started an Internet course, which is sent out once a month.

At present, we are now a group of independent people from various places in the USA, which share our information and sources with others in the Churches and communities to assist them in spreading the Gospel. We are only an information ministry trying to assist others in their part of the Work.

One of the many activities that are being done is the home Bible study course, which are printed by Mr. Tom Justus. They are sent once a month to individuals as requested by E-mail and snail mail. These courses have been the most successful in getting the Work of God out to others.

In addition, I am a part of ACTNET, which was developed by Mr. Walsh about two years ago. This non-profit organization was created to assist individuals overseas in their part of the Work of God.

And, yes, I send prayer cards to those on Rosy's Prayer list every week with the assistance of the Church of God Tulsa Fellowship led by Ray Kurr.

Also, I am in contact with a hand full of individuals who do a Work in other countries and assist them in there part of God's work as funds allow.

There is so much Work that can be done in the world, and I pray that whatever your part is God will bless you in your efforts as we have been blessed.

You are welcome to contact me with any questions or comment at the address below. Or, if you would like to share your experience or information, feel free to write me. Have a great day.

— by Doyle Carter
 Biblical Fellowship Group
 PO Box 690592
 Tulsa, OK 74169
Photocrazy88@cox.net

Church News...

Feast in India

It was wonderful feast. Every year the thrill of the Feast is highly encouraging. We would call this Feast a moving Feast, as the brethren were located in three different locations.

The first place was in Vellore. There were sixty people in attendance including a few children. The messages covered were on the destiny of man, our relationship towards God and how it reflects the Feast days. We were there for three days and later moved on to Madras (Chennai) City.





We had a wonderful, cultural evening with lots of children. Some of our children from Liberation, Education, and Child Support programs gave their best performances. The attendance was above sixty including children. The message covered was on the image of the beast, its historical significance, and its relevance today. The next was from Luke regarding the four major areas Christ's ministry.



We later traveled to Tiruvannamalai. The attendance was about fifteen. We had participatory discussion type sermons. The women participated, and came out with wonderful answers. These ladies were so shy to speak out, but this was a big ice breaker. Thanks for your prayers. Yes, Satan was very angry with success. When the transport left with the brethren, the vehicle met with a big accident. Let me tell you, not one person was hurt; but the shock and trauma was high. The wives were shaken. I thought everything was des-

troyed. The brethren never gave up. They stood with me, even as a witness in the court to the accident. Thanks. Thanks. We are alive. This was a great adventure. Thanks for all your prayers.

Thanks. Thanks. Thanks.

— by M. R. Hubert
5 Budda Street
Madras 600024 India

Feast in Nigeria

Happy Feast of Tabernacles. I am writing to inform you that we have just returned from the Feast of Tabernacles a couple of days ago. The Feast was so beautiful, and well attended by the brethren in spite of all the constraints associated with camping together. The constraints include the cost of transportation for those coming from far away states to Imo State, the venue of the Feast.

Moreover, on the Sabbath of October 2, 2004, we were privileged to have Mark Mickelson of United Church of God, 4929 W. Shawnee Avenue, Spokane, WA 99208, in our midst. How beautiful it was to fellowship, and worship with him on that fateful Sabbath.

I'm sure you people enjoyed the Feast as well. Like I informed you earlier, our beloved brother and Pastor, Joseph Orie passed away.

How is life and the ministry? Jesus is the Lord. All the brethren love you people. Remain blessed.

— Bonny Okolo, Nigeria

Church News...

ACTNET

A little over two years ago at the Churches of God Outreach Conference, a man named John Walsh conceived the idea of an organization that would assist others outside the USA with their efforts in the Work of God. Of course, this organization would check the creditable of any one would wish to apply for financial assistance.

After two years, and the assistance of many friends in California and other places, he is now operating an organization which helps spread the gospel overseas. Even though it's just begun, it is assisting at least three individuals overseas with funds for this purpose in their area.

To set up this organization, he sought counsel from many in the Church who have

worked with other Church groups in similar projects. Many legal issues had to be covered.

ACTNET is a non-profit group started by a lay member in the Church of God, and is supported by a few Church members who donate a part of their tithe/offerings to assist in this effort.

This is one of many examples of what God can do with His people if they have the drive and will to assist others.

For more information, you are welcome to contact John Walsh at 1532 Third Street, Napa, CA 94559.

— By Doyle Carter

Video Review...

Surprising Discoveries Jonathan Gray's Video Series #2

This second video lasts two and one-half hours, and again covers three subjects: (1) Lost Cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, (2) Red Sea Crossing, and (3) Smuggled Out of the Desert.

Part One, Sodom and Gomorrah, is an account of the effort expended in locating the ancient cities of Sodom and Gomorrah as well as the other three cities mentioned in the same Biblical account. A good description of the Dead Sea location and history is included. You should find this interesting as it is a good lesson in geography.

Mr. Gray relates his experience of an overnight stay in these ruins. Proof of God's destruction of these cities is shown in a way you would not expect to see — certainly one that you probably never heard before.

Part Two, Red Sea Crossing, begins with a British Admiralty Map with no real explanation. A discussion of canals connecting the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea that existed before the present Suez Canal follows. Then comes a review of Egypt, the Israelites, slavery in Egypt, Moses and the plagues.

Gray then goes into a discussion of the proper route of the Exodus while giving a history of the traditional location of Mt. Sinai and why it is not correct. He offers Biblical proof of his conclusions as well as relating local traditions. Solomon is shown to have marked the proper location of the miraculous occurrence of the parting of the waters.

Part 3, Smuggled Out of the Desert, tells an intriguing tale of imprisonment,

suspense, and miracles while trying to get proof out of Arabia showing the true location of Mt. Sinai. Again Ron Wyatt (deceased) is brought into the story, and much of what we see is due to his efforts. This occurs in north-western Saudi Arabia, and some parts of it in the Sinai desert. You will find stories similar to the events in **Acts chapter two**.

Pictures of the altars built by Aaron and Moses are shown.

The rock that gushed out water at Moses' command is pictured as well as the areas where the people gathered below Mt. Sinai. This brings the Biblical account of the giving of the Ten Commandments to life as you can picture just what happened in this vast and remote area.

At the end of this video is a brief commercial, advertising Mr. Gray's other publications with an explanation of how the prices he charges helps cover his world travels looking for proof of the Bible account, and other Amazing Discoveries.

You will come away with an entirely different view of Biblical history. Just remember — ignore the poor quality and the bland presentation and pay attention to the message!

— by William B. Scherer

The video series can be borrowed from the **Sharing Library, PO Box 581, Granville, OH 43023** or may be purchased from the USA rep. of Jonathan Gray: Anchorstone, 103 B Street, Haines, FL 33844, 863-421-1782

BillFry@anchorstone.com

Hmmm...

"I learned how to act like a Christian years before I became one."

"Christianity is an outside in job, rather than an inside out job."

— by Herman Fickwirth

Church News...

Living Church of God

LCG's Mehm Pho Saw sent this report from Thailand, "We are constantly faced with some difficulties in our daily living status. Thai authorities are still looking at us as illegal immigrants although we are doing our best to walk in the spirit with love, kindness, goodness, and longsuffering. We still don't know when we will be able to have the rights

of citizenship, although my family has lived in this country for sixteen years. I would be very grateful if all of us are in your daily prayer. While I am writing this message, the rumor is spreading that Thai border police, and security officials will be investigating some Burmese in the village; so, I have to tell all our brethren not to leave their shelters for a few weeks. Even we have to close our gate doors and windows while we are gathering for the Sabbath Service. Hundreds of Burmese are arrested every day at the police boxes. According to my sixteen years experience in this border area, we never have free will on every occasion. We do not have faithful friends except God, and ministers of the Church. Our happiest times of the year are the days when the ministers visit, however, the voice of hymn singing is more beautiful on every Sabbath as our attendance is increasing. Right now, I have already translated four hymns into Burmese. But the brethren have to sing quietly because of the security problems.”

Bruce Tyler reported, “Rajan Moses recently visited the Thai and Burmese brethren. While in Thailand he held a Bible Study, and anointed a number of people. Mehm Pho Saw has been seriously ill of late and was greatly encouraged by Mr. Moses’ visit. He also received a beautiful get-well card from the Charlotte congregation. Mr. Meredith also signed the card with words of encouragement. Thomas Tial Ho in Burma reports that most of the Burmese brethren are doing well. In the past couple of months, he has traveled extensively around Burma and into Thailand, performed a wedding for a couple of Church members, and in May, he went to Gangaw twice to console our lone member there, whose wife and daughter died in the month in May.”

LCG’s Rod King reports, “As we survey the history of God’s Church in the Philippines, an interesting story emerges. The Church of God, Seventh Day had quite a presence here in the first half of the 20th century. When Mr. Armstrong’s programs and literature became available in the 1950s and ‘60s, many of these members became a part of the Philadelphian era God was building. Two of God’s ministers serving in the Philippines today can trace their roots to the Sardis era. After the apostasy of the 1990s, many who were faithful to God’s truth recognized where God was working, and are

now supporting Mr. Meredith in proclaiming the end-time gospel message. The Church here is served by four full-time ministers: Felipe Casing, Gideon Benitez, Basilio Osillos, and Benito Parbo. Together they serve 650 people in 27 congregations. An office staff of three takes care of the Church’s administration in Metro Manila. Abdon Buena, Sylvestre Bujau, and Merle Chua work in a small but efficient office in the central business district of Makati City. Our members face day-to-day problems such as low incomes, health risks and, in Mindanao, the threat of terrorist kidnapping and extortion.”

— Submitted by Robert Thiel
COGwriter@aol.com

Health News...

Butter

Do you know the difference between margarine and butter? Both have the same amount of calories.

Butter is slightly higher in saturated fats at 8 grams compared to 5 grams.

Eating margarine can increase heart disease in women by 53% over eating the same amount of butter, according to a recent Harvard Medical Study.

Eating butter increases the absorption of many other nutrients in other foods.

Butter has many nutritional benefits where margarine has a few only because they are added!

Butter tastes much better than margarine and it can enhance the flavors of other foods.

Butter has been around for centuries where margarine has been around for less than 100 years.

And, now, here are facts about margarine. It:

- Is very high in trans fatty acids.

- Tripled risk of coronary heart disease.

- Increases total cholesterol and LDL (this is the bad cholesterol).

- Lowers HDL cholesterol (the good cholesterol).

- Increases the risk of cancers by up to five fold.

- Lowers quality of breast milk.

- Decreases immune response.

- Decreases insulin response.

- And here is the most disturbing fact.

Margarine is but ONE MOLECULE away from being PLASTIC. This fact alone was enough to have me avoiding margarine for life and anything else that is **hydrogenated** (this means hydrogen is added, changing the molecular structure of the substance).

You can try this yourself. Purchase a tub of margarine and leave it in your garage or shaded area. Within a couple of days, you will note a couple of things: no flies, not even those pesky fruit flies will go near it (that should tell you something). It does not rot or smell differently because it has no nutritional value, nothing will grow on it...even those teeny-weeny microorganisms will not find a home to grow. Why? Because it is nearly plastic. Would you melt your Tupperware and spread that on your toast?

— CountryHarvestx@cs.com

True Tales to Live By...

Crying People of Liberia

Liberia is much in the news these days; so I think I will write a column about some of my experiences in that unhappy country. While our ship was taking on cargo, I had an opportunity to go ashore and visit one or Liberia's rubber plantations. As I listened to the men at work, I tried to imagine what those bales of rubber might one day become.

Would they be used in the making raincoats, overshoes, or bathing suits? Would they be used to go into hospitals in the form of surgeon's gloves, water bottles, or into baseballs, or golf balls? I learned that the average pay of the workers was 56 cents a day. That was many years ago. Perhaps they are paid more today and the rubber we use now is synthetic rubber. We only depend on the Africans for part of the rubber we use.

There were more than 13,000 trees on this plantation. One of the workers greeted me with a friendly smile, and agreed to show me how the gathering of the rubber was obtained. The sap from the trees flows from a cut into the bark about a third of the distance around the tree. A spout is inserted at the bottom of the groove to which is attached a small cup, about the size of a teacup, to catch the liquid rubber which lies under the bark of the tree. During the morning hours, a small drop of white liquid rubber drips from the spout into the cup every few seconds. That explains why the rubber tree is referred to as the "Crying

Tree," because of the tears of rubber that drips from its bark.

One of the characteristics of the people of Africa, for which I have always had a great deal of admiration, is the way they love to sing at their work. No matter how difficult the task, or how hot and uncomfortable the weather, it is seldom that they do not have a song on their lips to make their burden lighter.

I made the following comment to Margaret Moore, who was serving at that time, with the Salvation Army in Africa. "The inclination of all Africans toward their work is a common characteristic of all Africans," she said. "If you arrive at school early in the morning, you usually hear a group of boys drumming on their baskets on the way to the river, or a boy swishing a broom vigorously, and making up the words of a song as he goes about his work. Another may be cleaning the blackboard and singing softly, "I'm a child of God, hallelujah." Always, there is a song.

"We wonder," she said, "how many ulcers, nervous break downs, and heart attacks we Americans could avoid if we had that kind of patience to learn how to laugh at ourselves. Most of the African people have never heard of William Shakespeare, but they know what he was talking about when he said, 'What's gone and what is past should be past grief.'"

When we think of the "crying trees of Liberia," we wonder if that should remind us of the people of Liberia today. The people of Liberia are crying in the midst of a terrible war.

I read in the newspaper recently of a sports arena in Liberia where 3,000 people are sleeping on the floor because the enemy drove them from their homes.

There was a report of how at least 91 Liberians died and 360 were injured. Anguished Liberians cry out to other countries, "Why are you letting us die?"

I wonder if you can now say of these Africans that they still love to sing at their work. We are not concerned about the "Crying Trees" of Liberia today; but of the crying people of that unhappy country.

— by Skip Westphal

Why Go to Church?

A Church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to Church every week. "I've

gone for 30 years now,” he wrote, “and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons. But for the life of me, I can’t remember a single one of them. So, I think I’m wasting my time and the pastors are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all.”

This started a real controversy in the “Letters to the Editor” column, much to the delight of the editor. It went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher: “I’ve been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this... They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today. Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be

spiritually dead today!” When you are DOWN to nothing, God is UP to something! Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible, and receives the impossible! Thank God for our physical and our spiritual nourishment!

— by author unknown

NOTICE: Please notify us if you change your address. Steve Kieler, 2193 Sheker Drive, Fort Dodge, IA 50501. It costs us \$1.30 for every notice from the Post Office. Thank you.