

Church of God News

Positive News of the Churches of God

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Article...

Is God's Kingdom Inside You?

Is God's Kingdom inside each Christian? Jesus said it is, didn't He?

Jesus told the Pharisees, "And when He was demanded of the Pharisees, when the Kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, 'The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you,'" **Luke 17:20-21**.

James Strong's first translation of the Greek word for within, *entos* [G1787] is inside. But *entos* is derived from *en* [G1722] which Dr. Strong identifies first as "A primary preposition denoting (fixed) position (in place, time or state)...." It is this translation that many modern versions use to describe Jesus' words.

The Contemporary English Version states, "God's Kingdom is here with you." The International Standard Version and The Bible in Basic English both say, "...the Kingdom of God is among you." Several others state, "...the Kingdom of God is in your midst" (Darby, LITV, MKJV, RSV). And the popular NIV, although it uses the preposition *within*, includes a footnote stating, "or among."

Bible prophecy is often dual, having a historical fulfillment, and future fulfillment. We see the historical prophecy of God's

Kingdom when John the Baptist cried out, "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand" **Matthew 3:2**. This was great news to the Jewish people who had been burdened by Roman law. But John did not say it is here; simply that it was "at hand."

John called it the Kingdom of heaven, realizing it was not an earthly Kingdom, as Jesus later said, "...My Kingdom is not of this world..." **John 18:36**. He also realized the King would not be an earthly king, but would be sent from heaven. While John preached about the Kingdom of Heaven, the King was still in the wings, waiting to be revealed to the public.

When the time came for His entrance on stage, Jesus was able to state, "...the Kingdom of God is within you."

Was Jesus inside the Pharisees He was talking with? They knew He wasn't: He was standing there with them. He was, as shown above, in their midst. It was His way of saying, "I am the King you've been waiting for."

But Jesus went back to heaven. The King was gone. Now what?

During His three and a half years of ministering on earth, Jesus' commission was to preach about the Kingdom of God (**Luke 4:43**). Why did He need to preach about it if it was already among the people?

Recall that Bible prophecy often has a future fulfillment. The message of the gospels is that the King will return, not as an infant in a manger, but in great power and glory (**Matthew 25:31-34**). He will be the King over all earthly kings, and the Lord over all earthly lords (**Revelation 19:11-16**).

At that time, the future fulfillment of the Kingdom of God will take place, and it won't only be the Jews who will be released from centuries of tyranny Satan's despots laid on them. The entire world will be released from Satan's control.

Until that time, what must we be doing? Jesus commanded His disciples, and Christians today, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," **Mark 16:15**. The gospel? What gospel? The gospel — the good news of the coming Kingdom of

God (Luke 4:43, 22:18).

— by Leslie A. Turvey
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Editorial...

Take a Deep Breath

There are many relaxation exercises. The most natural, and almost automatic, is to take a deep breath. It gives you a moment to unwind, refresh yourself, and even reflect on the reality of the situation. Sadly, the problem usually returns as we focus in again on the problem that entrapped us in the beginning.

I know so many people who are fighting for righteous causes. Yes, they are well-intentioned people, and pursuing noble causes. So, what is the problem?

Too often, I believe, we try to bite off more than we can chew; we get in over our heads, and lack the power to finish what we start. We try to “go it alone” much like Don Quixote in the *Man from La Mancha*. We become ensnared in the details of our own solutions. Jesus said, “... My Kingdom is not of this world: if My Kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My Kingdom not from hence,” **John 18:36**. “To fight” comes from the Greek, *agonizomai*, to struggle, lit. (to compete for a prize), fig. (to contend with an adversary), or gen. (to endeavor to accomplish something): — fight, labor fervently, strive. It is where we get our intense word “agonize.”

Acts 2:40 says, “And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” The word untoward is of importance: 4646. *skolios*, warped, i.e. winding; fig. perverse: — crooked, froward, [twisted]. It is the source of the word scoliosis: crookedness, lateral curvature of the spine.

Six thousand years of man’s campaign promises, conniving, and lying have gotten us where we are today. What makes you think that any man will produce a utopia tomorrow? The old definition of insanity is doing the same thing and expecting different results. But we always want to give it “one more try.”

Isaiah makes an astute observation. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts,” **Isaiah 55:9**.

Church of God News

“For the edifying of the body of Christ,”

Ephesians 4:12.

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Indeed, we are entrapped by man’s empty promises; we are “entangled in the land,” and that land is Egypt (sin).

Henry Clay, in the 1800s, advised against foreign entanglements, but it was President Warren Harding, in 1920, who used the specific phrase. The inspired Word of God cautions against foreign, and domestic entanglements.

Galatians 5:1 says, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”

II Peter 2:20 says, “For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus

Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.”

One of life's lessons: I find that the less I fight, and agonize to get what I want (or think I want) the more time I have to thank God for the blessings I receive. Then He blesses me even more. So take a deep breath, fall on your knees, cast off those things of the world that are consuming you, and glean all you can from **James 4:1-10**. It could change your life.



— by Steven J. Kieler

Poem...

Blessings

If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more blessed than the million who won't survive the 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 20 million people around the world.

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

If you have food in your refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof over your head, 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 some place, you are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy.

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

If you hold up your head with a smile on your face, and are truly thankful, you are blessed because the majority can, but most do not.

If you can hold someone's hand, hug them, or even touch them on the shoulder, you are blessed because you can offer God's healing touch.

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

You are so blessed in ways you may never even know.

— author unknown

Announcement...

Feast of Tabernacles 2005

Details about a new Festival site in San Jose, Costa Rica will be printed in the March issue.

— by Barbara Parada
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Of Interest...

Member Completes Music CD

Thanks for giving me a music link on your Web site, and in your July "Church of God News." Orders have come in because of you. Thanks also for the good articles and news in both your publications. If I started to list the ones that especially helped, this would be too long.

My second studio CD, called "Oh, Lord, My Light!" is done! I would like to contribute music to some of the overseas brethren you are in touch with. A man named Sasha in Serbia must have seen your mention of my Web site, because he emailed me that "it was beautiful." You had written about him in one of your issues. Going through you seems the best way to get one to him.

When I read of isolated brethren, scattered around the world, my heart goes out to them, and I want to donate some tapes. If you would tell me if you see a need for say, 10 cassettes and/or CDs, in places where you think brethren would like this style of music, I'd be happy to send them for you to put in your packages. That could be a starter anyway. (They probably are more likely to have a cassette player than a CD player, although many computers can play CDs.)

Here now is the "news item" about the new CD. Thanks for any publicity you might give, and keep up the good work. — Barri

News Item

November 11, 2004, Silver Spring, MD: A Church of God member and poet, Barri Armitage of Silver Spring, has released, "Oh, Lord, My Light!," her second professionally-produced compact disc, and cassette tape, 70 minutes long, containing 16 inspirational songs. The theme focuses on comfort and hope through trust in God.

Selections include "He Carries Us Gently," "No Greater Love," "Perfect Love Casts Out Fear," "Cast all Your Care On Him,"

“Come Unto Me,” and “What Can Separate Us?”

Mrs. Armitage has poetically adapted scriptures, and set them to folk melodies. Vocalists include Mrs. Armitage’s husband, Dave, who sings with a Grammy-winning choir, The Washington Chorus; her son, David, Jr. who has sung in Church of God choirs, performed special music, and was a soloist in a Centennial Players’ production of “Fiddler on the Roof;” and Cheryl Branham, a music teacher, and former assistant director and soprano in The Washington Chorus.

The CD is \$15, the cassette \$12, and a set of song sheets \$8 (which includes postage). Her first release, “Think on These Things,” is also available at those prices. Buyers outside the United States should add \$1. Maryland residents need to add 5% sales tax. For more information see www.dovesongs.com, or E-mail her at barri@dovesongs.com, or write 13904 N. Gate Dr., Silver Spring, MD. 20906.

— by Barri Armitage

Church News...

New Testament Evangelism

During Labor Day weekend, Guy Swenson and Bill Jacobs hosted a conference in the East Texas area at Big Sandy, just like the one that they held in Indianapolis on July 31st. This conference was to present ideas on how an independent Christian can perform the Work of God, such as personal Bible studies with friends and family.

Tapes and handbooks were given to individuals who attended to assist them in doing an individual work. It is great to know about others who have seen that individual Christians are able to do a part of God’s work.

Their Website is www.ntevangelism.org.

— by Doyle Carter

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Hmmm...

Some minds are like concrete, all mixed up and permanently set.

Article...

Blessed Are They Who Mourn

Has a loved one died without accepting Jesus as his Savior? Does your heart go out to those who are incurably ill? Do you mourn

over the wickedness of this world? Take heart. Jesus said you will have comfort.

“Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted,” **Matthew 5:4**.

Somewhere on a mountain in Galilee, Jesus was teaching His disciples (**Matthew 4:23**). At the foot of the mountain, were a multitude of men, women, and children who had heard of Jesus’ fame in healing the sick. Possibly, some had been present when Jesus healed a crook-backed old woman, or a man who had been born blind. And we’re told, “And seeing the multitudes, He [Jesus] went up into a mountain, and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him,” **Matthew 5:1**.

No doubt, there were many in that crowd who mourned over the recent loss of a loved one, or who grieved at a son’s prodigal lifestyle. Many of the sick no doubt had cried with pain daily.

Despite His need to get away from the crowds who all wanted to touch Him, Luke tells us that the power of God’s Holy Spirit went from Him and healed them all before He began His ascent (**Luke 6:19**).

Never should we imagine that Jesus, as He taught His disciples, stood up from time to time, and shouted down the mountain, “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” or “Blessed are they who mourn.” These were private words to His disciples, and were likely lost amid the babble of conversation at the foot of the mountain.

But, they weren’t lost on the disciples. They knew of sick and dying people. Peter and Andrew may have visited the bereaved families of fellow fishermen who had perished in one of Galilee’s violent tempests.

The disciples weren’t a group of charmed people who never had a sorrow in their life. They were ordinary human beings like you and me, and they heard Jesus’ words, “Blessed are they who mourn for they shall be comforted.”

Jesus may have also had another kind of mourning in mind when he spoke these words. All of Palestine was under the rule of Rome with local toadies who exacted excess taxes, and forced the people to bow to Rome’s dictates as it suited their purposes.

Not only that, there were six thousand Pharisees who laid heavy religious burdens on the Jewish people. An example of such a burden is this: Just before sunset on Friday, someone arrives at your home with news that your sister is sick and may not live through

the night. But, the Sabbath begins at sunset.

The Pharisees have a strict rule about how far one may walk on the Sabbath day. The problem is your sister lives more than twice that distance. So according to the Pharisaical law, you can't go to be with your sister until sundown Saturday: 24 hours later. This, indeed, would be cause for mourning, both by you and by those of the family who may already be with your dying sister, wishing you could join them.

Jesus could do nothing about the Roman rule. Nor could he change the Pharisees. That wasn't His reason for coming to earth. **Luke 4:18-19** reveals his purpose, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He [My Father] hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

The acceptable year of the Lord is yet in the future. But, we're promised in that time, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away," **Revelation 21:4**.

"Blessed are they who mourn: for they shall be comforted."

— by Leslie A. Turvey
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Article...

Blessed Are the Meek

It doesn't seem likely that a murderer should be considered meek. Yet, a man who murdered an Egyptian was called the meekest man who ever lived.

Most dictionaries define meek as overly submissive; spiritless; tame. Is this the kind of person Jesus spoke of when he said, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."

Matthew 5:5 poses a problem for most Christians, especially when combined with **Psalms 22:26**. David wrote, "The meek shall eat and be satisfied," Christians want to eat and be satisfied, but they can't unless they're meek. But, if they're meek, they won't be able to go to heaven because the meek will inherit the earth. It's difficult wanting the best of two worlds.

We run into the conundrum of Moses with Jesus' statement. Christians like to believe Moses is in heaven yet they read in **Numbers 12:3**, "Now the man Moses was very meek," Since the meek will only inherit the earth, where does that leave Moses?

Far from being overly submissive, spiritless, and tame, Moses was a feisty fellow. When he saw an Egyptian beating one of his brethren, Moses murdered the Egyptian (**Exodus 2:11-12**). No Milquetoast could lead six million people the way Moses did. And he certainly wasn't overly submissive when he defied God and struck a rock to give the Israelites water (**Numbers 20:7-11**).

What, then, constitutes meekness?

In **Matthew 11:29-30** Jesus proclaims, "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Jesus tells us He is meek, and He has a yoke. We need look back only half a century to see a farmer plowing his fields behind a team of horses. A heavy collar — a yoke — joins the two horses so they pull together. So Jesus, the meek One, tells us He will share our load if we are yoked together with Him.

But, a yoke has another value. By yoking a seasoned horse with a newcomer to the plow, the newcomer cannot rush ahead nor lag behind. The seasoned horse teaches the newcomer the steady rhythm needed to perform the work.

So, Jesus wants us to be yoked together with Him so we can learn His ways. What are His ways? He says, "I am meek and lowly in heart."

Psalm 149:4 promises, "For the Lord taketh pleasure in His people: He will beautify the meek with salvation." So, the meek will be saved even though they will only inherit the earth. But, doesn't salvation mean destination heaven?

Jesus' statement that the meek shall inherit the earth makes things awfully confusing for the go-to-heaven crowd. Are we to learn from Jesus, or the author of confusion (**I Corinthians 14:33**)?

The arch-demon, Satan, knows his destination is not heaven so he has convinced a billion Christians that they will go there when they die. But Jesus knows better. He says the meek, the teachable, will inherit the earth.

And, what an earth that will be. John wrote, "And I saw a new [renewed] heaven

and a new [renewed] earth...,” **Revelation 21:1,4**. “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.”

“And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal...and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life...and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations,” **Revelation 22:1-2**.

Read the rest of chapters 21 and 22 to learn of the wonders yet to come to those who are meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

— by Leslie A. Turvey
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Article...

Lesson from the Book of Joshua

While studying the book of Joshua, I realized that there is an underlining theme in the first twelve chapters. I noted that the Israelites had to work to receive the Promised Land; and that God did not just destroy the people of the land for them. We know that God could have made it easier for them to overcome the inhabitants of this land by the events covered in these chapters.

In **Joshua 2:1-7**, it states that Israel sent two spies into the land to scope out this area. To avoid being captured, the two spies had to make an agreement with Rahab, the harlot. The point is that God did not just give them a map of the area, but they had to put forth effort, and explore the region.

In **Chapter 6:1-27**, in order to defeat the city of Jericho, the army of Israel had to call seven priests to bear seven trumpets before the Ark, and circle the city seven times. This was to be done for six days, and then on the seventh day, the walls of Jericho fell. I would say that this took some effort to perform.

I have only presented a few examples from these verses that show how Israel had to put forth effort to conquer its enemies. Their battles with the Amorites and Canaanites confirm this theme.

In **Hebrews 4:8,9,11**, it states, “For if Jesus had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. ...Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.”

Revelation 2:7, states, “...To him that overcometh [Greek word means conquer] will I give to eat of the tree of life...” This call to overcome is repeated four more times in this chapter, and three times the third chapter of this book. We, like the seven Churches, are called to overcome, or conquer this world’s temptations, and our own sins.

In **Hebrews 11:16**, it states, “But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city.” As Christians, we are seeking a better place just as the men in this chapter were seeking for one.

Just as Joshua led Israel into the Promised Land with the assistance of God, and some effort on the peoples part, so we as Christians with the assistance of God the Father, and Jesus the Christ must overcome our sins and faults with effort on our part to enter the Kingdom of God, i.e. our Promised Land.

The lesson is that, yes, God will help us make it into the Kingdom of God, but we must be willing to change, and make the effort to overcome any obstacles that may get in our way.

It would be good for us to examine the examples in the Book of Joshua, and see what lessons that we can apply to our lives.

— by Doyle Carter
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Gem...

Buzzards, Bats, Bumblebees and People

Buzzard

If you put a buzzard in a pen that is 6 feet by 8 feet and is entirely open at the top, the bird, in spite of its ability to fly, will be an absolute prisoner. The reason is that a buzzard always begins a flight from the ground with a run of 10 to 12 feet. Without space to run, as is its habit, it will not even attempt to fly, but will remain a prisoner for life in a small jail with no top.

Bat

The ordinary bat that flies around at night, a remarkably nimble creature in the air, cannot take off from a level place. If it is placed on the floor or flat ground, all it can do is shuffle about helplessly and, no doubt,

painfully, until it reaches some slight elevation from which it can throw itself into the air. Then, at once, it takes off like flash.

Bumblebee

A bumblebee, if dropped into an open tumbler, will be there until it dies, unless it is taken out. It never sees the means of escape at the top, but persists in trying to find some way out through the sides near the bottom. It will seek a way where none exists, until it completely destroys itself.

People

In many ways, there are many people like the buzzard, the bat, and the bumblebee. They struggle with all their problems and frustrations, not ever realizing that the answer is right “above” them.

Feast Sermon...

Confronting the Twins

(The following was adapted from a sermon by Ian Boyne, Last Great Day, 10/7/04, Ocho Rios, Jamaica from notes by Eric Snow. It answers the question of why the Feast is meant to be a pilgrimage festival.)

People in the Church of God movement, as well as the Seventh-day Adventists, and the Church of God (Seventh Day), routinely attack Roman Catholicism, and the Pope. But this is only one part of Babylon. It has a twin — economic Babylon — which has a Mark of the Beast of its own. People may have to choose between eating food or family unity versus serving God. Attacking religious Babylon is not sufficient; we need to attack economic Babylon also. People want to be more into their jobs, careers, and school. The Feast of Tabernacles challenges both Roman Catholicism and economic Babylon (**I Peter 1:13-16**).

True, the Festival could be held in Kingston, and most people would stay at home. We leave Kingston not just for the scenery. We are acting symbolically to be distinct. Tabernacles is a rival to Babylon.

Church of God movement members have to act on faith because of keeping the Sabbath and Holy Days more than Sunday-keepers (who often make a big deal about faith compared to keeping the law). The Mark of the Beast is already here, not in the ultimate sense, but it is in effect, as it were, in that people who keep the Sabbath, and the Feast of Tabernacles can't get various jobs. There is already discrimination and persecution be-

cause people are keeping the Sabbath and the Holydays. People are victimized by economic Babylon. Economic Babylon asks us to negotiate, or to compromise (**Revelation 18:11-19**).

The economic system gives force to Roman Catholicism. Roman Catholic Europe has to become greater than the U.S. and the U.K. The EU has grown stronger.

Although the SDA and CG7 Churches can give testimonies about suffering, the COG people face more problems by keeping the Feast in such things as taking exams. (Are we studying the Bible for the really important classes?) Economic Babylon is also alluring and hard to resist. We have to learn how to examine our mind and heart. We have to do more than just “watch world events” and developments in Europe, and the Middle East. We must watch our own hearts, too.

In doctrinal purity matters, we have stood up well for pure worship; we do well against religious Babylon; but we still do things like gossiping, and not keeping the Feast. God wants changed hearts, not rituals. The wealth of Babylon will be wiped out eventually according to **Revelation**. Compare that with the fate of Tyrus (**Ezekiel 27**). You will remain if you reject the system as it is destroyed.

Despite America's power in the military and economics, the people in the United States and the world are still insecure and afraid due to terrorist attacks. This life does not offer us what is permanent. The COG movement needs to be balanced in its message.

We still need to attack religious Babylon, even if many (in the COG movement) want to shy away from this publicly. We have to preach clearly about having to leave religious Babylon. But economic Babylon is much harder to attack than the Religious Babylon. Keeping the Holy Days is harder than attacking Roman Catholicism because it could involve loss of jobs and economic opportunities. When opposition comes, we are tested; and too often brethren give in.

Tyre was wealthy. We are wealthy, or very concerned about maintaining our lifestyle. The Church of God needs to pay more attention to materialism and economic Babylon. We can't just concentrate on attacking Roman Catholicism, and ignore economic Babylon, especially our members in North America and Europe.

We rejoice in the Feast, and can think on our own special situation. The Feast of Tabernacles symbolizes that we are living as if we are just passing through this life, which we are.

Tyre was a type of Babylon, of Rome. Tabernacles is its very opposite. At Ephesus (**Acts 19:23-41**), there was an economic motive for false worship at the Temple of Artemis. Here, money, sex, and religion were all combined. Why did temple prostitution exist? Consider the “gay” churches, which try to combine together sex and religion today.

On trade days (fairs in ancient Rome), one couldn't participate unless they sacrificed to the emperor and local deity. They had annual festivals to pagan gods. If they didn't perform acts of worship, they couldn't have a job (or buy/sell things). There is sacrifice, a risk to take the Holy Days off. Ministers preach it, but few really believe it.

The Saints have resisted Babylon. There was a seventy-year test in Babylon, and four men (Jews) there resisted it. Polycarp was executed. Many Saints in history have shown they would die rather than submit. Babylon, ancient and modern, has both shops and spears. Pergamos (**Revelation 2:12-17**) was near the center of Roman worship. Its story is instructive to this lesson.

Money and sex are closely related as sins (**Numbers 25:1-18**). We are on the banks of the Jordan. We, including the leadership of the Church, are in far more danger from sex and money than Roman Catholicism. We are like Israel in the wilderness. The world is not called or judged now, but we are. I think it is likely that this Pope or Mother Theresa could accept the call, and be converted when they are resurrected; but you have to worry about yourselves now.

The Feast of Tabernacles, and Israel's wandering in the wilderness analogy show that, while we are still in the world (the land), we are coming out of it. Even Pharaoh said, “For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in,” **Exodus 14:3**. We should show the world that we are indeed leaving. We must show that we can (spiritually) conquer the Beast Power even if conquered by the Beast (physically). **Revelation 11:7** says, “And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them,

and kill them.” “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death,” **Revelation 12:11**.

Some only go to the Feast on Sabbaths, and High Days. But the Scripture says, “... ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days: on the first day shall be a Sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a Sabbath,” **Leviticus 23:39**. Do your actions represent that you are only willing to come out of the world on the High Days?

Jonathan knew Saul's kingdom was going down, so he made a covenant with David. The economic system is going down, so we must make a covenant with Yahweh, and His system.

Break all ties to economic Babylon. With faith, you can endure your trials. Don't forget God's promises and rewards. His judgments are being revealed.

— by Eric Snow
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Of interest...

Student Reprimanded For Religious Absences

The parents of a sixth-grade Lowell Middle School, Lowell, IN student says the Tri-Creek School Corporation has threatened to expel her child for religious beliefs.

Ruth Scheidt said middle school officials forced her 12-year-old son to sign a letter last month stating he understood that if he missed another day of school for any reason, before the end of the semester in January, he could be expelled. The family had just returned from an out-of-state, eight-day religious observance called the Feast of Tabernacles, celebrated by the United Church of God. Scheidt, a member of the United Church of God's Munster congregation, said she had contacted the school corporation well in advance of removing her son from school from September 29 to October 8 to attend the observance, and even presented a letter from the Church explaining the Holy Day observance.

She said Superintendent Alice Neal had told her she would contact the school corporation's attorney to find out the corporation's policy regarding religious observance.

“She never got back to me, and was out of town when I called her back,” Scheidt said. “I

told her, 'Either way, I'm going.'"

Neal called the issue "a misunderstanding," adding that she told Scheidt the rules spelled out in the student handbook regarding excused absences.

"The school corporation will accept one day off per semester for religious observance," Neal said. "We already did that for this particular family." Scheidt concurred that her son had already missed a day of school earlier in the year for the Feast of Trumpets.

Matters of Law

"Under Indiana law, there is no ruling as to whether children are to be excused for religious purposes," Neal said. The Indiana Department of Education holds firmly that it is not a reason to excuse students under Indiana law.

"I'm not arguing whether it should or should not be," Neal said. "We have to make a decision under existing law. Students are allowed five days of excused absences per semester."

Excused absences include illness with a doctor's note, a death in the immediate family, quarantine, or court appearance.

"Occasionally there may be an emergency in a family," Neal said. "The principal may excuse a day for that."

"After more than five absences, students must sign a letter acknowledging that they understand they could be expelled. Some states provide a list of approved absences that are religious-based, but Indiana does not," Neal said.

"At some point somebody may take this to court and there may be a decision," Neal said. "That has happened in other states."

According to United Church of God's attorney Larry Darden, just such a case was won on appeal by a student against a school in Amarillo, Texas, in 1982.

"The school allowed other children excessive time off for sports and other activities, but not for religious reasons," Darden said. "Occasionally we have problems, but when we explain that court case, they're usually quite cooperative."

(If you would like a letter of explanation for your school regarding your child taking time off for the Holy Days, please contact Giving and Sharing, 3316 Alberta Drive, Gillette, WY 82718; 307-686-5191; or E-mail Rich.Nickels@giveshare.org.)

Did You Know...

If a statue in the park of a person on a horse has both front legs in the air, the person died in battle. If the horse has one front leg in the air the person died as a result of wounds received in battle. If the horse has all four legs on the ground, the person died of natural causes.

Church News...

Thanksgiving in the Ozarks



The Springfield Church of God, Ozarks hosted a very nice Thanksgiving Sabbath on November 27, 2004. Approximately thirty people attended. Besides Missouri, there were people there from Washington, Arkansas, New Mexico, and Iowa.



Bill & Shelby Faith, St. Louis, MO



John & Irene Shavers, Albuquerque, NM

John Shavers from Albuquerque, NM gave an “eye opening” sermon on how important it is for all of us to “stay awake,” keeping God at the center of our final goal. We must not fall asleep and lose sight of our Creator, no matter how difficult it becomes. This can only be done with His Holy Spirit.

After services, a delicious turkey dinner with all the trimmings was served. An afternoon of uplifting fellowship followed. Everyone had such a good time that this may become an annual event. Thank you for your hospitality Springfield COG, Ozarks.

— by Suzanne Kieler

Video Review...

Surprising Discoveries Jonathan Gray's Video Series #4

Strange Signs in the Sky

(A review of Jonathan Gray's 82-minute video presentation, #4 in a series of 6 videos)

Once again, expect less than a perfect video of a narrated slide presentation. Disregard the quality, and pay attention to the message. This should change your perspective of the Zodiac, and all the unfavorable connotations that immediately come to mind, when thinking of the stars because of astrology.

Gray's description of this seems appropriate:

“From the glories of distant galaxies, to the coded message of the ancient sky maps, what were the ancients trying to tell us? Why does a man tread on Scorpio's head, and fight with the serpent for the crown? Why does Virgo hold a child in her arms called Iesu? Why did some ancient sages follow a star to a precise spot on earth? What did they know? How were they so sure what they would find?

“An amazing sign is seen over the North Polar star, and linked to prophecy. Ancient civilizations believed that a serpent — which represented the devil — took control of the world. They believed a virgin's baby would fight the serpent, defeat him and bring peace, life, and happiness back to mankind. The pictures on the sky map were used to describe the story and not to tell people's fortunes through stars. The names of the stars, as well as the star sign pictures told the story.”

Mr. Gray tells this story in several sections. The first section is called *Hostage Planet*, and gives the history of constellations,

the Zodiac, astrology, and horoscopes.

Section two is *When Did Star Signs Begin?* Did you know that the star positions change relative to the earth about ninety degrees every 6000 years? He states that the ancient star maps describe God's plan.

Section three, *The Original Star Wars*, is related to **Revelation 12**.

Are Other Worlds Inhabited? is the title of section four, but the question is not really answered in the way you would expect.

Rescue Mission is the next section with a long explanation of the true meanings of the constellations and Zodiac.

Then comes *Revenge and the Final Showdown*. This latter tells of a spectacular occurrence in 1833 you probably never heard before.

Many pagan customs and false religious beliefs are perversions of the truth. Perhaps you will find the comparison between astrology, and the real meaning of *Strange Signs in the Sky* to be one of these.

The six Jonathan Gray videos are available from **Sharing Library, PO Box 581, Granville, OH 43023**, for your viewing on the normal loan basis. A deposit of \$35 is required for each video, which will be refunded upon return. The videos may also be purchased through the USA representative of Jonathan Gray:

Anchorstone
103 B Street
Haines, FL 33844
863-421-1782,
BillFry@anchorstone.com

— by William B. Scherer

Establishing the Children...

Teach the Children

As we enter into the new calendar year, people reflect on the past year, and resolve to make changes in their lives. We resolve to lose weight, make better health choices, change personal behavior, and other lofty goals. These resolutions are made so easily, and in many cases, are broken within the first few weeks of the New Year. Everyone seems to know that they need to make changes, but are unable to keep their resolutions for very long. It's a shame that most of us don't have much will power, even to make the smallest changes in our lives, which would make us a better person. There is something all of us can

resolve to do, and that is to remember to pray more this year for each other, and especially for our children. They face tremendous pressure on all sides as they begin school, and go out into the world. There are so many broken children, and almost every one knows some child that desperately needs a steady calm influence in their lives. Resolve to be that influence to a child if you have the opportunity. It's so important that we pray for our children, and other children every day, and be the best example we can be for them.

A few years ago I was going through my mother's personal items after her death, and ran across an old newspaper clipping from 1944 written by Dan Valentine as he contemplated sending his son off to school for the first time. My brother was about four years old at that time, and I'm sure my mother was thinking of him as she read this clipping, knowing he too would soon be going out into the world. Many parents feel this way when their sons and daughters go off to school, and they are separated for the first time. We hope and pray for the best, as our children are somewhat at the mercy of the world after that. The world we live in today is not always kind! As you read the words that Mr. Valentine wrote, remember that the world back in 1944 was a more innocent place and time, even though there was a war going on. People treated each other better, and families were closely knit. You could count on your neighbors if you needed help. Mr. Valentine hoped for the best for his little son as he went off into the world, and his thoughts are written as follows:

Teach Him World...but gently if you can

(Originally written in 1944 by Dan Valentine as he sent his son off to school for the first time. Distributed that year by the North American Newspaper Alliance.)

"My young son starts school Tuesday. It's all going to be strange and new to him for a while, and World, I wish you would sort of treat him gently.

You see, up to now he's been king of the roost. He's been boss of the back yard. His mother has always been around to repair his wounds, and I've always been handy to soothe his feelings.

But now things are going to be different. Tuesday morning he's going to walk down the front steps, wave his hand, and start out on the great adventure. It's an adventure that

might take him across continents. It's an adventure that will probably include wars, tragedy, and sorrow.

To live his life in the world he has to live in will require faith, love, and courage. So World, I wish you would sort of take him by the hand, and teach him the things he will have to know. Teach him; but gently if you can.

He will have to learn, I know, that all men are not just, that all men are not true. But teach him also that for every scoundrel there is a hero...that for every crooked politician, there is a dedicated leader. Teach him that for every enemy there is a friend. It will take time World, I know, but teach him if you can, that a nickel earned is of far more value than a dollar found. Teach him to learn to lose...and to enjoy winning.

Steer him away from envy, if you can, and teach him the secret of quiet laughter. Let him learn early that the bullies are the easiest people to lick. Teach him, if you can, the wonder of books; but also give him quiet time to ponder the eternal mystery of birds in the sky, bees in the sun, and flowers on a green hill.

In school, World, teach him that it is far more honorable to fail than to cheat. Teach him to have faith in his own ideas, even if everyone tells him that they are wrong. Teach him to be gentle with gentle people, and tough with tough people.

Try to give my son the strength not to follow the crowd when everyone else is getting on the bandwagon. Teach him to listen to all men; but teach him also to filter all he hears on a screen of truth, and take only the good that comes through.

Teach him, if you can, how to laugh when he is sad. Teach him there is no shame in tears. Teach him there can be glory in a failure, and despair in success.

Teach him to scoff at critics and to beware of too much sweetness. Teach him to sell his brawn and brains to the highest bidder, but never to put a price tag on his heart and soul. Teach him to close his ears to a howling mob, and to stand and fight if he thinks he is right.

Treat him gently, World, but don't coddle him because only the test of fire makes fine steel. Let him have the courage to be



impatient. Let him have the patience to be brave.

Teach him always to have sublime faith in himself, because then he will have sublime faith in mankind.

This is a big order, World, but see what you can do. He's such a nice little fellow...my son!"

As I read this clipping I could feel the love, hope, and prayer of Mr. Valentine for his son. I also felt this way as I sent my sons off for the first time. It's a scary time and we need to ask God to be there for our children as they go out into the world, and to bless them always. I have added some thoughts of my own below, and it's my prayer for all our children.

"Teach him, Father, also to love abundantly and to be merciful and kind even when others are loveless and cruel. Teach him that even when the world seems cold and bare, he can find warmth and comfort within the circle of his family and friends, and most of all, You. And teach him, Father, to dream big dreams, but be satisfied with small successes. Teach him to hope for the best but be content with what life gives him. And teach him, please, that no matter how tough the going gets, or how dark the path, there will always be some place he can go for help, and there will be a torch to light his path. Remind him, gently, of all these things as he grows up and becomes a husband and father; and maybe one day, you can teach his son, gently, Father, please!"

— by Shelby Faith
sfaith@mindspring.com

Science...

Lying Activity Seen in the Brain

Scott Faro, director of the Functional Brain Imaging Center at Temple University School of Medicine in Philadelphia reported that functional magnetic resonance imaging, or fMRI, scans reveal lying and may even provide new technology for lie detection.

In an article by Reuters news service, Dr. Faro's team told a meeting in Chicago of the Radiological Society of North America: "There may be unique areas in the brain involved in deception that can be measured with fMRI," and "There were clear differences between the liars, and those telling the truth."

"We found a total of seven areas of acti-

vation in the deception group," he said. "We found four areas of activity in the truth-telling arm."

Dr Faro discovered that it seems to require more brain effort to lie than to tell the truth. Lying caused activity in the frontal part of the brain — the medial inferior and precentral areas, as well as the hippocampus, and middle temporal regions, and the limbic areas whereas a truthful response the fMRI showed activation of parts of the brain's frontal lobe, temporal lobe, and cingulate gyrus.

— by Steven Kieler, Editor

The News That Was...

Make Arrests by Machinery

October 17, 1904

Fort Dodge, IA is always up to date in everything, so no one will be surprised in the least when it is announced that the police have taken to making arrests of the "plain" ones by machinery. The trick is the easiest in the world. Hook on the grapple and a turn of the crank finishes the matter.

This morning there was a wild whirring jingle of the telephone, and after three policemen had fallen over each other in a rush for it, the blood freezing announcement came that there was a man in a drunken stupor lying in the cellar of an old building down town.

Chief Welch called out the whole police force, and selected Officer Peter Ditmer to go forth and make the arrest. This valiant representative of the law had no sooner received the word from the chief until he was sprinting toward the scene swinging his club wildly in the air. As soon as he arrived, he charged over the piles of lumber, and with a yell of triumph landed in the cellar beside the object of his quest.

He gathered onto the collar of the fellow, and tried to walk him out, but the overdose of bug juice was too much, and he could not navigate. There was the officer and his prisoner ten feet in the hole, and no apparent way out. When the rope of a nearby crane came within reach, he fastened it to the recumbent drunk. It was in an instant he was jerked high in the air and landed on the street level. The job was done, and the fellow was soon snoring away on one of the cots in the city bastille. This is the first known instance where an arrest was made with a derrick.

— from the Fort Dodge Messenger, 1904

‘WHAT IS LOVE’

“Love _____ long and is _____; Love does not _____; Love does not _____ itself, is not _____ up; does not behave _____, does not seek its _____, is not _____, thinks no _____; does not rejoice in _____, but rejoices in the _____; _____ all things, _____ all things, _____ all things, _____ all things. Love never _____.” (See I Corinthians 13:4-8 NKJV) for help)

In the word puzzle below use the same words and find these words on the grid. Words can go vertically, horizontally and diagonally, in all eight directions.

“LOVE IS... WORD PUZZLE”

S	W	N	K	E	D	A	R	A	P	Y
E	H	N	W	R	G	Y	E	S	K	T
V	T	O	M	O	K	L	N	U	C	I
E	U	R	P	I	Q	E	D	F	K	U
I	R	L	N	E	W	D	U	F	P	Q
L	T	D	N	Y	S	U	R	E	U	I
E	V	M	V	N	V	R	E	R	F	N
B	K	N	F	A	I	L	S	S	F	I
K	E	M	G	N	I	Q	N	K	E	Y
Q	P	R	O	V	O	K	E	D	D	R
L	T	P	E	S	R	A	E	B	T	L

s faith 2004

bears	kind
believes	own
endures	parade
envy	provoked
evil	puffed
fails	rudely
hopes	suffers
iniquity	truth

Bible Scramble #2...

(answers on page 16)

1. ceahlr _____
2. voel _____
3. eiprsst _____
4. aanmsli _____
5. tsra _____
6. battles _____
7. rvessapo _____
8. ahno _____
9. kar _____
10. eovd _____
11. anir _____
12. abinorw _____
13. dlonge lcfa _____
14. aegmnr _____
15. hleembeth _____
16. acdemmmnost _____
17. eeubnr _____
18. vales _____
19. ablest _____
20. btclaeaan _____
21. eeimnsw _____
22. osrsc _____

— by Carol Kieler, age 14
Cedar Rapids, IA

From Everlasting to Everlasting

A youth bible study (Lesson 1)

Our Incredible Universe

There's an estimated 400 billion stars in our Milky Way Galaxy, 60 billion galaxies,

and 10,000 billion billion (10 with 21 zeros) stars in the known universe. The scriptures say God created all the stars, has counted all the stars, has named all the stars, and continuously keeps track of all the stars (**Isaiah 40:26**). Considering this, how can the human mind deal with the knowledge that the farthest object we can see in the universe is perhaps ten billion light years away?

Imagine the thickness of a page of newspaper represents the distance from the earth to the sun (93,000,000 miles, or about eight light minutes). The distance to the nearest star (14 1/3 light years) becomes a 71-foot-high stack of paper. And the diameter of our own galaxy (100,000 light years) is a 310-mile stack. The edge of the known universe is not reached until the pile of paper is 31,000,000 miles high. (From *The Incredible Universe* by Kenneth F. Weaver and James P. Blair.)

How Old Is God?

A mother and her five year-old son listened while a salesman described the books he was selling. "This set of encyclopedias is so good," exclaimed the salesman, "it will answer any question your little boy can ask. Go ahead kid."

Without hesitation the boy asked, "How old is God?"

What is eternity? In an age when we measure time by everything from light-years to nanoseconds, it's difficult to think in terms of no time. To us everything has a beginning and an end.

So, how old is God? It's impossible to know (**Job 36:26**), because we're told He always existed, and always will (**Psalms 90:2**). And if it's impossible to know God's age, it's just as impossible to answer the age-old questions, "Where did God come from?" or "Who made God?"

But God does exist. He is the creator of life. You and I didn't just happen. You weren't poofed into existence by the wave of a magic wand, although after nine months your mother likely wishes you had been.

Scientists have their own magic wand: it's called guesswork. Some guess the universe is very young (14.5 billion years); others say it's older (35 trillion years); and others think it's at least 45 quintillion years. Strange, isn't it, although the word "science" comes from the Latin verb *scire* meaning "to know," there are some things scientists can only guess at.

The God who made you and me does

everything in perfect order, and in His perfect time. And He doesn't leave it up to us to guess about the past and future; He tells us about it in His Holy Word, the Bible. So, let's start our story where all good stories start, at the beginning.

The First of Many Beginnings

The gospel of John starts with the words, "In the beginning..." (John 1:1). But hasn't there been many beginnings? Your birth was the beginning of a new life. Your first step was the beginning of your travels around the house, down the sidewalk, and eventually to the mall. Your first word was the beginning of you becoming a chatterbox. Then there was the first day of school: another beginning for you.

But John lived and died two thousand years ago, so he couldn't have been writing about any of your beginnings. And although the years are creeping up on me I'm not so old that he was writing about mine.

Maybe he was writing about another beginning. Turn to the first page of your Bible and you'll see the same words, "In the beginning..." (Genesis 1:1)." But as you will learn, the Genesis beginning came after the beginning John wrote about.

Let's follow John for a few verses. He wrote, "In the beginning was the Word..." A more accurate translation is, "In the beginning was the spokesman..." a person who has the authority to speak for another. "And the spokesman was with God, and the spokesman was God." What's that? How can one person be with another person, yet be the same person?

John's statement isn't so difficult to understand when you look at your own life. You're at the mall with your mom, and she says, "I really like that jacket in the window. Go and ask how much it costs." Your mom has appointed you as her spokesman.

What's your last name? Isn't it the same as your mom's? So you are with a woman whose last name is the same as yours, and since she's your parent you are a member of a family with your last name.

Now you're ahead of me. You realize the spokesman in John 1:1 was with someone whose name is God, and the spokesman was a member of the family. So John has told us God is not a first name but a family name.

— by Leslie A. Turvey
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Obituary...

Herman L. Hoeh, 1929-2004

Dr. Herman L. Hoeh died of natural causes at his home on November 21, 2004. He would have been 75 years old on December 3. Cards may be sent to: 10530 Commerce, Tujunga, CA 91042-1539, USA. (1957 photo at left.)



In 1947, Herman Hoeh was one of the first four students to attend Ambassador College in Pasadena, California. He received one of the first two B.A. degrees conferred by the college in 1951. He also received an M.A. degree in 1952, and a THD degree in 1962. He was ordained by Herbert W. Armstrong as an evangelist on December 20, 1952, in Pasadena, California, along with Raymond C. Cole, Richard David Armstrong, Dr. C. Paul Meredith, and Roderick C. Meredith. All of these five original evangelists, except Roderick C. Meredith, are now deceased.



Dr. Herman L. & Isabell Hoeh

Dr. Herman Hoeh wrote, *Compendium of World History*, plus numerous articles for publication, including, "A True History of the True Church," "Which Old Testament Laws Should We Keep Today?," and "What You Should Know About Tithing?" For many years, he was the Managing Editor of *The Plain Truth* magazine, as well as dean and instructor at Ambassador College in Pasadena.

In his 1959 article, "A True History of the True Church," Hoeh wrote about a dangerous future condition of the Church: "This is the time of the end when prophecies hidden for

ages are being revealed, TRUTH is being restored, and knowledge is rapidly increasing. But knowledge brings *responsibility*; it becomes *dangerous* if not rightly handled. This frightful condition lies now ahead of us.”

“Notice Jesus’ admonition for today in **Luke 21:36**. ‘WATCH ye therefore, and PRAY *always*, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape *all* these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.’”

“Let us all *pray* and *work together* to carry this gospel to all nations so Jesus will say to each of us, ‘Well done, thou good and faithful servant’.”

Some of Herman Hoeh’s articles are available on our Web site at:

www.giveshare.org/hoeh.html. My favorite is “What You Should Know About Tithing.” Herman L. Hoeh will be remembered for his excellent writing which helped many understand God’s Truth.

— by Richard C. Nickels

Bible Scramble Answers:

(From page 14)

1.	ceahlr	Rachel
2.	voel	love
3.	eiprsst	priests
4.	aanmlsi	animals
5.	tsra	star
6.	battles	tablets
7.	orvesaps	Passover
8.	ahno	Noah
9.	kra	ark
10.	eovd	dove
11.	anir	rain
12.	abinorw	rainbow
13.	dlong lcfa	golden calf
14.	aegmnr	manger
15.	hhelembt	Bethlehem
16.	acdemmmnost	commandments
17.	eeubnr	Reuben
18.	vales	slave
19.	ablest	stable
20.	btclaeear	tabernacle
21.	seiw emn	wise men
22.	osrsc	cross

Feast Report...

Grand Junction Feast Report

This was a nonaffiliated site hosted by the Christian Church of God of Grand Junction

with an average of 70 in attendance. There were many denominations represented from New York to California.

God’s festival honored the beautiful Grand Valley of Western Colorado for the fifth year in a row. Surrounded by high mountains, desert vistas, orchards, and wineries, and dissected by the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers, we were all greatly blessed by the presence of God’s Holy Spirit.

There was a get acquainted social with lots of good food and friendly conversation, a complementary gourmet senior luncheon, an open forum Bible question and answer session, a complementary family day at a fun park (with paddleboats, bumper cars, batting cages, and miniature golf), an excellent video presentation proving the route of the Exodus, a riotous volunteer variety show, and a western dinner dance with music you actually dance to.

Inspiring special music, congregational singing, and prayer services gave all a feeling of peace, tranquility, and a real joy in the presence of the Holy Spirit. You may make plans for 2005 by going to our Web site at www.geocities.com/gjfestival or by calling 970-858-9299.

— by Del Leger
Christian Church of God
Grand Junction, Colorado

Church News...

Living Church of God

LCG’s Charles Bryce reports, “Responses to the semi-annual letter are pouring in from all over. A total of 15,141 responses have been received so far at the Headquarters office — a 9.3% rate of return for this office’s mailing list.

Mr. Meredith offered *The Ten Commandments* booklet in the letter, and it is truly inspiring to see so many people so interested in that subject in spite of the plunge into secularism in societies of the world today.”

As the result of a recent *Tomorrow’s World* telecast, LCG reported that it received 2,600 responses. LCG’s Wayne Pyle told me that the most responses LCG has received in a single month to its *Tomorrow’s World* telecast was 11,063.

He also reported that through September 2004, 319 people have been baptized who first came in contact with the COG as the result of LCG’s telecast (this excludes those

that were baptized in the old GCG). Also, at least that many who had a prior COG background — thus somewhere around 15% of LCG's baptized membership were baptized within the past six years.

Wayne Pyle stated that over five years the Nielson TV ratings show that over 6,000,000 households have actually watched LCG's telecast. It is higher now that it has been six years, but the Nielson numbers for this last year are not finalized yet. He mentioned that LCG's baptismal rate of 1 per 200 for five year subscribers is six times better than the WCG's best rate of about 1 per 1200.

Wayne Pyle also reported that *The Tomorrow's World* telecast is now going into 70 million homes in the United States, and another 7.4 million in Canada. There are approximately 120 million TV households in the U.S. and Canada. Most households in those two countries can view LCG's telecast.

— submitted by Robert Thiel
cogwriter@aol.com

2005 Bible Sabbath Association Scholarship Essay Contest

Scholarship prizes have been increased! This year's Bible Sabbath Association Scholarship Essay Contest has three prizes: \$1,500 (First Place), \$1,000 (Second Place), and \$500 (Third Place).

How to apply: scholarship application form is available at the BSA website, www.biblesabbath.org, or you may write, BSA Scholarship Essay Contest, 3316 Alberta Drive, Gillette, WY 82718, (307) 686-5191, or E-mail info@biblesabbath.org.

Due date: completed forms must be postmarked no later than June 20, 2005. A sufficient number of applications must be received or prizes will not be awarded. Help us by telling other youth about the contest.

Who is eligible: all Sabbath-keeping youth, who are enrolled or plan to be enrolled in 2005 in post-secondary education (college, university, or trade school), and are not older than 25 years old as of November 1, 2004.

A worldwide contest: international students are encouraged to apply!

How prizes are awarded: scholarship prizes are determined by a panel of judges based on the essay, grades, economic need, and other factors.

Scholarship funding: scholarships are funded by The Bible Sabbath Association

from contributions specifically dedicated for this purpose. The BSA encourages all students to apply, and asks for donations to the scholarship fund to continue this program year after year.

For more information: contact June Narber, jnarber@hercurian.com, or call the BSA at 307-686-5191.

About the BSA: Helping Sabbath-keeping youth is one of the activities of The Bible Sabbath Association, a non-denominational association of Sabbath-keepers with the sole purpose of promoting the seventh day Sabbath, and co-operation among Sabbath keepers. Members of The Bible Sabbath Association include Seventh-day Adventists, Seventh Day Baptists, Church of God Seventh Day, United Church of God, and others.

Founded in 1945, the BSA publishes a free bi-monthly magazine, *The Sabbath Sentinel*, distributes many books and tapes on the Sabbath, including, *The Directory of Sabbath-observing Groups* (now in its ninth edition).

The BSA frequently receives queries from people new to the Bible Sabbath, and directs them to local congregations in their area.

— by Richard C. Nickels, President
Bible Sabbath Association

In The News...

Procter & Gamble Now Pushing Homosexual TV Agenda

Procter & Gamble, maker of Crest, Tide, and Pampers, is the leading sponsor of two TV programs that continually push the homosexual agenda.

The sitcom *Will & Grace* regularly promotes homosexuality, and explicit sex-talk with obscene jokes. The series' two male stars are both homosexual. From the beginning, the series has been about nothing but sex. *Will & Grace* is the program that showed two men passionately kissing each other.

According to *Broadcasting & Cable* online magazine, P&G was the top sponsor of *Will & Grace* between September 2003 and February 2004 spending an astonishing \$8.2 million in sponsorship of this program.

Queer Eye for the Straight Guy depicts five homosexual men remaking the "cluttered, straight men of the world," so that they look, dress, and act in the manner of the "cool," and, by implication, superior "gay" community. The program consistently seeks to val-

idate and glorify the homosexual lifestyle. Between September 2003 and February 2004, P&G spent \$2,000,000 in sponsorship of this program.

Remember that P&G pulled all their advertising support from Dr. Laura's program after a complaint from the homosexual community. P&G will support programs that are pro-homosexual, but refuse to support programs that tell the truth about homosexuality! Procter & Gamble has become a leading advocate for the homosexual lifestyle.

For more information on P&G's promotion of homosexuality, contact their Chairman, A. G. Lafley at 513-983-1100. Be polite.

— by Donald E. Wildmon
Founder and Chairman

[American Family Association](#)

True Tales to Live By...

Looking Up

I once read a story about a boy who was watching a chimney being built on a Church near his home. With a boy's curiosity, he watched the men as they proceeded with the work. He longed to climb the ladder, and stand on the staging as it rose above the very top of the lofty room. However, his mother had warned him not to interfere with the workmen, and of all things, he was not to climb ladders. So he had to content himself with watching from his humble place on the ground.

Then one day, one of the men leaned over the edge of the staging and shouted down to him. "Boy, there's a trowel down there on the ground. Bring it up to me." That was a most thrilling moment in his young life. He grasped the trowel firmly, and climbed with it to the height where the men were working.

As he approached the staging, he heard the other man say to the one who had told him to come up "You ought not to have got him up here. When he looks down, he will be so scared he may fall." For the moment, the boy's attention was fixed upon the importance of the errand — the delivery of the trowel. But when that was done, true to the perversity of our natures, he looked down to see for himself what it was that would frighten him so greatly as to make him liable to fall. Being a mere child, the distance was appalling. He felt sick and dizzy. Overwhelmed, he would

have fallen but at that instant, he heard the assuring voice of his friend saying, "Look up, lad; keep looking up." Strength and control returned to his muscles and nerves. As he descended, he kept his eyes turned upward to the men on the staging. And all the while the workmen laid his bricks, he kept saying, "Look up, lad, keep looking up."

When he reached the ground, still looking up, he could see, against the ineffable blue of the sky, two men calmly laying bricks, and hear, like a cadence from another world, "Look up, lad; keep looking up."

So it is that through all the years of life, whatever difficulties and dangers may have attacked with appalling frightfulness, we should look upward for safety.

This story brings to my mind how easy it is for some of us who are handicapped, as I am, to dwell on our handicaps and not on our blessings. When my wife pushes me around in a wheelchair, I sometimes envy my friends who walk briskly down a hallway and smilingly greet their friends.

We should always be thankful if we are not in constant pain from some physical problem like backaches as some people are. We should, "Keep looking up."

One reason why some older people are unhappy is that they fail to "look up" to a heavenly Father who loves them and will gladly give them peace and happiness every day of their lives. The Bible says, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like Eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Let's not forget that story of the boy who was frightened and dizzy and perhaps would have failed until he heard the assuring words of the man at the top of the brick wall, "Look up, lad. Keep looking up."

— by Skip Westphal

Letters...

Poem Response

(The following letter was received by Stephen Kieler, age 13, who wrote a poem which appeared in the November issue of COGNews. It is always nice to know that the articles are appreciated.)

Dear Master Stephen Kieler!!

Greetings to you from a country so far away. Perhaps you would like to look on your map and see where Malaysia is? I'm writing to you after seeing your nice, meaningful

poem in the COGNews/Novemer '04 issue — titled “Nine Eleven.” I was quite amazed by the words that a 13 year-old boy could use in his poem — “Evil laughing,” “Evil ahead,” “the End Times are coming,” and “End Times are near” — really good and meaningful words to “wake-up” everybody!!

Well Stephen, keep up your good work, and try to write more meaningful poems. I'm always looking out for “stylish” poems, and I see you have that touch. Good for you, and I pray God will bless you with more knowledge and great wisdom. You're starting young, and I pray you will always walk with God, and serve Him well — just like what your dad is doing.

So, **remember well**, always put God and Jesus Christ No. 1 in your life, and your life will always be a happy and blessed one! Also, always love and obey/respect your parents — and, all the elderlys — love everyone, and **never** look down on anyone!!

You take care, and be good always. God bless you and your family.

Yours humbly in Jesus Christ!!

Duncan Dominic
29 - JLN Molek, 3/12
Taman Molek
81100 Johore Bahru
Jahore D.T.
Malaysia

PS: **Malachi 1:2:** “I have loved you, sayith the Lord.” To love God is to obey God!!

The more you love Jesus, the more you will talk about Him!! So, talk, talk, talk about Jesus to everyone; and you shall be loved and blessed always by Jesus!!!

Tsunami Hits Indonesia



December 26, 2004: Prayer request for M. R. Hubert, 5 Budda Street, Madras 600024 India and his congregations. They were devastated by the earthquake and tsunami which hit Indonesia and the area of the Bay of Bengal. It was one of the most powerful earthquakes in history to hit southern Asia. At this time, it is not known if any of his two congregations are alive. Initial reports are estimating nearly 80,000 people dead.



M. R. Hubert at cancer center

Hello, greetings:

I am making this letter in a sad state, when things just over turned and in few minutes everything went off just like that. The tsunami hit the costal areas of my state, which is called Tamilnadu. I live in Chennai, also known as Madras. It has hit the people, their belongings and everything inside the coast. I am and some of our members are safe. The worst part was people who went jogging and walking on the beach that morning. My cousin and his family were walking there on Sunday early morning of December 26th. The whole family was wiped out. It was a very bad day. I was running from pillar to post to find people who were safe or to find bodies. Our state was not prepared to face this disaster and our rescue missions are so poor. As a matter of fact, the decayed bodies are still not able to be cleared, the government does not know what to do. Few people volunteer to clear this great mess. Actually the people I work with such as down trodden poor families and others, are lost, and some have recovered. The people who are saved have lost every belonging. There is no food, dress, shelter, or utensils to cook with. Many are receptive to the truth, but since they come from a Hindu background, there are lots of cultural clouds from their relatives. It's quiet now and many are sick and tired. All I request is that I need your prayers for me to stand up and continue the work. Our people need help

and support to start their lives again. We need to help around 50 families at least, and we may need around 300 U.S. dollars per family. If you can help as much a family, I would send you the complete report about their well being. If you wish to know more, please write to me. Once again, I need your prayers. Thanks. Love,

— by M. R. Hubert

If you or your church group wishes to assist him and his congregation in India, you are welcome to contact John Walsh of ACTNET who has assisted Mr. Hubert in the past. To contact Mr. Walsh, You can call him at 707-738-5946 or e-mail him at:

stjohnwalsh@hotmail.com or stjohnwalsh@yahoo.com. His address is: John Walsh, 1532 Third Street, Napa, CA 94559.

Poem...

What to Pray For

I asked for bread and got a stone;
I used the stone to grind the grain
That made the flour to form the bread
That I could not obtain.
Instead of asking Him to give
The things for which we pray,
All that we need to ask from God
Is this: show us the way.

— by James A. Bowman

Announcement from the Editor

Beginning with this issue, the Church of God News will be published bi-monthly. This is primarily done to reduce the workload on the staff, and it will also result in a slight cost savings. The number of pages per issue will be increased.