

THE LIVING CHURCH NEWS

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Satan's Plan to Divide and Conquer!

Dear Brethren and Friends,

We can all surely recall the recent news about five policemen in Dallas who were *murdered*, with seven others wounded. It took place during a “peaceful protest” by thousands of people marching in that city to protest the recent police killings of a black man in Louisiana and another black man in St. Paul, Minnesota. News reports on the radio reported that the police spoke to the killer, Micah Xavier Johnson, who admitted that he “hated” white people and especially white policemen. So it certainly looks like Satan the Devil may be trying to stir up “race riots” across the United States more than ever!

In the United Kingdom, great political upheaval is occurring, along with all kinds of infighting among various factions of the population because of the recent “Brexit” vote to remove Britain from the European Union. And now the Scottish people are being pushed to break away from Britain itself and remain in the EU. A *divided* United Kingdom will certainly be much weaker in the future, militarily and politically, and will become a “ripe plum” for the coming Beast power to more easily conquer or perhaps just “absorb” by political means.

Brethren, one of Satan's key methods to destroy God's people has always been “divide and conquer.” Satan the Devil knows that modern Ephraim and Manasseh have been the “birthright people” of God and have been the main

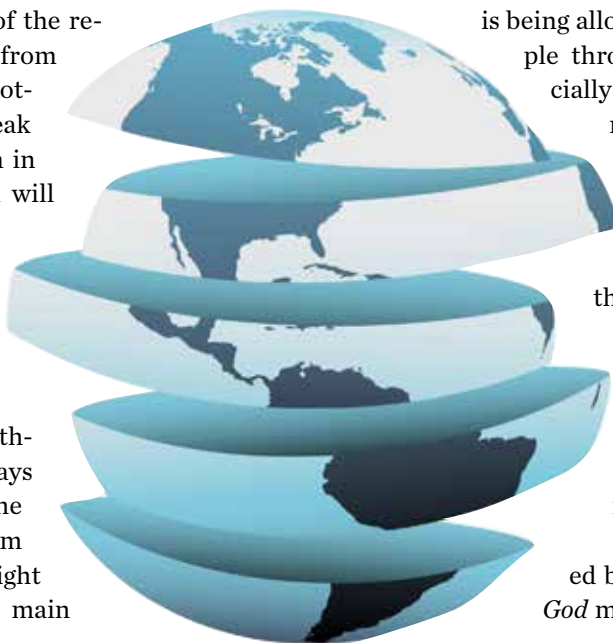
ones sending out Bibles and missionaries all over the world—far more than other nations.

So, he is “going after” our nations now more than ever before in history, because we have continued to turn away from God in a *horrible* way by literally “despising” God's statutes and laws—turning away from the Christian way of life in every way and even promoting *sexual perversion* among our peoples. So the former “protective hand” of Almighty God is being totally *removed* from our peoples because of our *rebellion* against Him and His laws. Almighty God reveals to us that Satan is the “prince of the power of the air” (Ephesians 2:2). He is the “spirit who now **works** in the sons of disobedience.” As the present

ruler of this human society (2 Corinthians 4:3–4), Satan

is being allowed by God to heavily influence people through this earth's atmosphere—especially through the pervasive *media*, which now seems to control the ideas and attitudes of increasing millions of people. Although many in the media perhaps don't even realize it themselves, their methods and the way they “frame” their approach to all kinds of issues is turning people more and more away from the approach of the Bible and more toward Satan's approach, which will certainly divide and **destroy** our nations in due time unless we **repent**.

So all of us in God's Church—guided by God's Spirit—must *profoundly seek God* more than ever before. We must genu-



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inely **study** the word of God to gain the “mind of Christ.” We must meditate on the real meaning of all these issues and **fast** as we have the strength and opportunity. In *every way we can* we must truly “seek” God’s guidance and strength as the end of this human society approaches, and as Satan becomes angrier and “lashes out” at God’s Church—and at the modern nations descended from ancient Israel—in *every way he can*.

For Satan is literally “brainwashing” millions of people, especially our *young people*, to **assume** that the perverted way of life they see promoted by many of our political and religious leaders—and *especially* through the pervasive influence of modern media—is somehow “normal.” For this world is becoming a

We need to wholeheartedly cry out for His intervention and His guidance in helping us learn to observe the laws and the ways of that Government, and to practice them in our own lives **right now**.

modern “Babylon” right before our eyes and God Almighty tells our peoples, “**Come out** of her, my people, lest you share in her **sins**, and lest you receive of her **plagues**” (Revelation 18:4).

I pray that all of you dear brethren in God’s Church—*whatever* your race or ethnic background—will try to truly come out of this world and fully realize that “our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Philippians 3:20).

So we are waiting for Christ to return soon from heaven and set up a truly Christian Government—the Kingdom of God—on this earth. We need to wholeheartedly *cry out* for His intervention and His guidance in helping us learn to observe the laws and the ways of that Government, and to practice them in our own lives *right now*. We need to do everything we can to get Christ’s message out and help this confused world understand that there is a **real** God—and that He *does have* true servants on this earth who preach to the *entire world* the powerful message of the coming “Government of God” under Jesus Christ as “King of kings and Lord of lords” (Revelation 19:16).

I pray that *all of us* will begin to truly “walk with God” more than ever and have **Christ’s mind** on all these issues so we do not get sidetracked, disillusioned, discouraged or even *led away* from God through the intrigue of Satan the Devil and his demons! For Satan really is trying to **destroy** God’s people and God’s Church!

Please remember, brethren—and help our *young people* understand!—the so-called “fall” of man was when Adam and Eve took of the tree of the knowledge of good **and** evil (Genesis 2:9–17). The “fruit” of this tree was **not** “all evil”! So Satan often uses certain situations where there is a little bit of “good” mixed in with a **great deal** of evil. That way, he can deceive well-meaning people more easily. For instance, Satan has led our modern professing “leaders” in the media and even in religion to constantly talk about the *murder* of unborn children as merely a “woman’s health issue”! Instead of focusing on the *murder* of an unborn child made in the image of God, they “frame the issue” so that people are focused simply on the woman and *her desires*—**not**, under any circumstances, the **purpose** of Almighty God in creating man in His image and how we *ought* to treat one another, including our unborn children.

So it becomes—in “Satan’s Alternative Universe”—a *health issue*! They do not focus on the “health” of the little child who is to be **murdered**! Also, our modern society completely neglects to involve the husband or boyfriend who “fathered” this child. For **if** we were a truly Christian society, desiring to “live by every word of God” (Luke 4:4), the **father** of this child would **always** be brought into such decisions and given an opportunity to prevent it!

Jesus constantly talked about the Old Testament as “Scripture.” We in God’s Church keep the Holy Days and observe the laws of unclean meats—as you all know. Upon **what** are these based? They are based upon the “statutes” of Almighty God as given in the Old Testament.

One of these God-inspired statutes describes how a *father* may “overrule” his unmarried daughter if he hears her make a vow that does not make sense. Also, a **husband** may nullify

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EDITORIAL

By Roderick C. Meredith

Living Faith

The Eternal God has inspired me regarding the vital need for all of us to *grow in faith*.

Because of all of our modern distractions, and because of the breakup of our former association, many thousands of brethren around the world have been deeply hurt or confused. Many are also disillusioned—left with the feeling that Christ “deserted” them, and now they do not know where to go.

As I have previously explained, Christ did raise up the Global Church of God in early 1993, through me—just a *very few months* after the blasphemous, “God Is...” booklet came out, along with other heretical changes in doctrine. But many were not aware of Christ raising up this Church—or had been poisoned against us by vicious rumors and accusations. So, instead of *zealously searching out* and *proving* to themselves where Christ was continuing His Work, many just stayed put or even dropped away from the Truth altogether.

But—*mark this!*—the living Christ *did* give people in early 1993 a “way out”—He *did* raise up a Church with a trained, dedicated ministry of long standing who preached the full Truth and who quickly—within weeks—went on the radio, published literature and began to revive the Work. So Jesus Christ did *not* “desert” you or *anyone else*. He is still the living Head of the Church. He is alert, active and **powerfully** in charge of His Church and His Work! And in His great wisdom, He is now “testing” His people to see what is *really* in their hearts.

Has the splintering of God’s people been a trial? *Of course it has*. But God specifically reveals that He allows trials for our good and “tests” us through them. Notice these words of the Apostle Peter: “In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is *tested* by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:6–7). The Apostle James was also inspired to tell us the same thing: “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the *testing* of your faith produces patience” (James 1:2–3).

So all of us need to exercise *living faith* in our Head and Savior, Jesus Christ. Increasingly, we need to “see” His hand as He orchestrates world affairs to bring about the fulfillment of biblical prophecy—*often in minute detail!* We need to “see” His hand as He leads His Church—continuing to have at least one faithful group preaching the whole Truth, doing the Work and practicing the government of God, and so training its members in the *exact kind of government* we will be administering in tomorrow’s world!

Christ is **alive!** He has *not* gone off and left His Church! He is *not* the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33).

Therefore each of us needs to **believe**. We need to know—and *know that we know*—that when Christ says



He will do something, *He will do it!* When He makes a *promise* in His inspired Word, we need to **believe!**

Jesus said, “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you” (John 15:7). We do need to saturate our minds with the Word of God—to learn to *think as Christ thinks*. Then His Words will “abide” in us as we pray, and we will ask *according to His will*. For as the Apostle John also wrote, “Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him” (1 John 5:14–15).

Additionally, remember Jesus’ powerful promise in Mark 11:23–24: “For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.”

Brethren, if we in the Living Church of God “feed” on these and related scriptures, then we certainly will begin to build “an atmosphere of **faith**.” Also, obviously, we *cannot* just “work up faith.” Each of us must do his or her part in fervently studying the Word, meditating on the examples of faith in the Bible and on the things we see God do even in His Church and Work today. Then, we must CRY OUT to God in heartfelt prayer and

fasting that our heavenly Father would give us the “gift” of faith through His Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:7–9).

Remember, God’s Word tells us, “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6). Building an atmosphere of faith within God’s Church today is absolutely *vital*. We cannot even fully imagine the trials, tests, persecutions and difficulties that will come upon His people during the next several years. We will all *need* living faith in God. And to do the Work which God really wants us to do, we will have to walk with God, commune

with God and wrap our minds around some of the direct statements of Jesus Christ, such as John 14:11–12: “Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he

will do, because I go to My Father.”

Jesus also said, “When the Son of man comes, *will He really find faith* on the earth?” (Luke 18:8). Although the world will not have much faith, let us in God’s true Church do everything we can to strengthen our faith—individually and collectively. For, as we have seen, without faith we *cannot please God*—and certainly we cannot do the great Work which He wants us, as His servants, to do in these latter days. (L)

Brethren, if we in the Living Church of God “feed” on these and related scriptures, then we certainly will begin to build “an atmosphere of **faith**.”



Dr. Roderick C. Meredith gave a sermon earlier this year on a related subject, titled “Build Faith and Courage.” You can find it on our website at LCG.org by clicking on the left side of the home page where it says “Sermons.” This page is a wonderful resource for sermons given at the Headquarters congregation in Charlotte and distributed throughout the Church. Sermons can be downloaded from there in video or audio formats, and you can also subscribe to the LCG sermon podcasts on iTunes or Google, which will allow you to receive new uploads automatically on your smartphone.



Looking Through the Eyes of Faith

By **Dexter Wakefield**

How many eyes do you have? Two? Think again! In an important sense, whether you are sighted or blind, you have many eyes. You will look through one kind of eyes in one situation and through another kind of eyes in another. For example, if you look through the eyes of offence, you will see only faults. If you look through the eyes of envy, you will see only unfairness.

There was once a popular song called “Looking Through the Eyes of Love.” It was about someone who found another person special by “looking through the...”—well, you can guess from the title. We see someone we love differently than others do. A particular man may seem to be unremarkable to most people—but to his little son, he is a tower of strength. And to his wife, he is the most wonderful person in the world. Often, what we see depends on which eyes we look through—and, usually, we choose how we will look.

Abraham and the others named in the “Faith Chapter” of Hebrews 11 *saw something that others could not see*. They **saw** the promises of God “afar off.” They were able to do that because they were **looking through the eyes of faith**.

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. **By faith** he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God (Hebrews 11:8–10).

This chapter also mentions Abel, Enoch, Noah, Sarah and others. It tells us, “These all died **in faith**, not having received the promises, but **having seen them afar off** were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (Hebrews 11:13).

These individuals saw something that the rest of the world could not see, because they believed God. We in God’s Church are informed both by what we see in the material world around

us and *also by faith*—which involves seeing and trusting what God has revealed to us. *What do you see when you look through the eyes of faith? Can you see what they saw?*

The Fall Holy Day season is a good time to look at the future of this world and the coming Kingdom of God *through the eyes of faith*.

Spiritual Blindness

There is an old saying: “You can fool all of the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time.” Alas, it seems that some politicians keep trying! But God says that Satan successfully deceives the whole world, attempting to deceive even the true Church of God (Revelation 12:9; Matthew 24:24). How does Satan deceive *almost* all of the people all of the time? The “eyes” have it!

Through what eyes does the world look at God’s word? *Through eyes blinded by disbelief*. The Apostle Paul explained, “But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has *blinded*, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them” (2 Corinthians 4:3–4).

Faith *illuminates* our world. We can see *more*—not *less*—through faith. God makes it possible for an uneducated person to know things that the greatest professors do not know. King David wrote, “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, *making wise the simple*” (Psalm 19:7). God had a reason for inspiring King David to write that. The Apostle Paul often confronted intellectual authorities who were either offended by his message or thought it to be nonsense. He explained to the Church in Corinth why this was so: “For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world *to put to shame the wise*, and God has chosen the weak things of the world *to put to shame the things which are mighty... that no flesh should glory in His presence*” (1 Corinthians 1:26–29).

Many secularists have the conceit that they are intellectually superior to people of faith, whom they see as intellectually

deficient. But the opposite is true. *Believing God makes you smarter!* You can know and understand things they cannot.

Through faith, we can see the things *not seen*—such as divine law, which truly identifies what is right and what is wrong. We can see God’s plan for humanity and a comprehensive way of life that leads to fulfillment and happiness. We can even see God in action in our lives. But you cannot see these things if you do not believe what He reveals in His word.

The world is blind to things that are revealed by God—and the reason is that mankind likes it that way: “And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and *men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil*. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed” (John 3:19–20). The world prefers its spiritual darkness.

So Secularism Prevails

A lot of debate goes on about the role of religion in public life, and the secularist view is winning. Generally speaking, secularists believe that they can only be informed by the material world and what they can reason from it (what they would call “evidence and reason”)—a worldview often called *materialism*. God’s Church believes that God *reveals* things we cannot know otherwise. We have an *additional* source of information. We understand that we can be *informed by faith, and as a result, we know more, not less, because of our faith*.

The light of faith is very dim in public life of Western societies, if it can be seen at all. Many people see religion as merely a comforting tradition that can be turned to in times of difficulty. They seek no personal relationship with God and see Him mainly as an abstraction, or a projection of their own spirituality—sometimes useful, sometimes not. Instead, Western societies are increasingly moving their foundation from the bedrock of revelatory knowledge to the shifting sands of secular human reason.

Is Western society now more secular than religious? Have we reached a moral “tipping point”? Do more people reject faith in God’s revealed word for a secular, materialist worldview? Have Western governments willingly blinded their “eyes of faith”? The following scripture could indicate that they have: “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting” (Romans 1:28). Solomon said, “Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint...” (Proverbs 29:18). That is certainly the case in our society today. However, Solomon continued: “...but happy is he who keeps the law.” That is certainly the case with God’s

Church today. God’s divine law arises from His own character, and God repeatedly says in Scripture that those who love Him love His law also (e.g., John 14:15, 21; 1 John 2:3–4; 5:3; Deuteronomy 11:13, 22; 19:9).

Often the secularists who used to advocate tolerance for diverse views now demonstrate intolerance for religious views.

Some Things God Reveals

Our God **reveals** things that “eye has not seen, nor ear heard”

(1 Corinthians 2:9)—things that we cannot know without His help. For instance, He tells us that *His power works in us through faith*. The Apostle Peter explained that we are those “who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Peter 1:5). The

salvation that Peter speaks of is our *salvation from death* at the resurrection to immortality, which takes place at *the end of this age*—“to be revealed in the last time.” We “put on immortality” in the future “at the last trumpet,” which occurs at Christ’s return (1 Corinthians 15:52–54). That eternal life is a gift from God (Romans 6:23).

God uses our faith to keep us in His way all our lives, which leads us to a great reward upon the coming of Christ. But it is all nonsense to those who are blinded and cannot see it. One can only know it through God’s revealed knowledge in His word.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Church of God in Corinth, “And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of *human wisdom*, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God” (1 Corinthians 2:4–5). He told them that we speak of the “hidden wisdom,” ordained “for our glory,” which the world’s rulers don’t understand (vv. 7–8). God reveals His great purpose for mankind, and physical, material means are not capable of knowing it apart from God’s revelation.

Paul continued, “These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for *they are foolishness* to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (vv. 13–14). What God has in mind makes no sense to the worldly mind.

God also reveals *future history* to those with faith to believe. The Creator God of Israel said, “I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand’” (Isaiah 46:9–10). God reveals that He has a Holy City planned and that Jesus Christ will rule from Jerusalem. Abraham was able to see it (Hebrews 11:10, 13).

God reveals that He has a Holy
City planned and that Jesus Christ
will rule from Jerusalem.
Abraham was able to see it.

God's great plan for mankind—the *good news of the Kingdom of God*—is another thing we can know only through His revelation to us, and one of the ways He reveals it is through His Holy Days. As noted earlier, the Fall Holy Days picture this “salvation ready to be revealed in us in the last time” (1 Peter 1:5).



In order to complete this extraordinary plan, we must *live* in that faith. Paul told the Church of God in Rome, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is *revealed from faith to faith*; as it is written, **‘The just shall live by faith’**” (Romans 1:16–17).

Our spiritual vision is precious. Jesus said, “Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see; for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it” (Luke 10:23–24). Do we sufficiently value what God shows us?

Can We See What Abraham Saw Afar Off?

In his letter to the Church in Ephesus, the Apostle Paul tells them that he prays that God might give them “the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the *eyes of your understanding* being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe” (Ephesians 1:17–19).

Let's look at each of the three items Paul mentions.

Can you *see* “the hope of His calling” (v. 18)? The three Festival seasons remind us of an important part of our calling, and they culminate in the Feast of Tabernacles, picturing the beginning of the rule of the Kingdom of God on earth. These

three seasons teach us what Christ *did*, what He *is doing*, and what He *will do*. Do we *see* that hope year-round? God makes it possible to see it through His Holy Days, when we look through the eyes of faith.

Can you *see* “the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints” (v. 18)? God has glory reserved for His children! Jesus prayed, “And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the *glory* which I had with You before the world was... And the *glory* which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one” (John 17:5, 22).

John explained further, “Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure” (1 John 3:2–3). Do the “eyes of our understanding” comprehend being as He is—a time when Christ “will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His *glorious* body” (Philippians 3:21)?

The saints will also inherit rule and authority. They will administer law and government in God's Kingdom—His Holy Mountain—serving beside Him at a time when “He shall judge between many peoples, and rebuke strong nations afar off” (Micah 4:3). Such righteous rule will provide hope for a blind, hopeless world.

Finally, can you *see* “the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe” (Ephesians 1:19)? This includes the great hope of *eternal life*. “Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, in hope of *eternal life* which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began” (Titus 1:1–2). That hope includes an increase of God's government and peace, with no end (Isaiah 9:7). And that hope includes many other good things for the world, such as healing, right agriculture, properly designed cities, righteous social policies, along with good art, and good music.

God promises such things, and He has the **power** to do what He promises (Isaiah 46:10).

Do You See It?

The Fall Festival Season is a good time to think about our faith as something that *changes how we see*. The Bible often presents faith that way. Faith does not limit our vision. We don't see **less** because of our faith—we see **more**. True faith is never *blind* faith, because faith increases and *adds to our vision*. We don't have **less** knowledge because of our faith. We have **more**.

Believing God makes you smarter. If God can make even the simple wise (Psalm 19:7), think what He can do for a smart person like you! We need to keep the eyes of faith wide open and, particularly during this Feast of Tabernacles, *catch the vision* of what God wants us to see in the picture He presents in these fall Holy Days. This Feast, let us catch the vision—by **looking through the eyes of faith!** (LN)



What Are You Building This Feast?

By **Peter Nathan**

We understandably see the Feast of Tabernacles as a time of friendships, family, spiritual food and travel. But of course, there is so much more to consider! For instance, the God Family sees the Feast as a time symbolizing the coming restoration of all things (Acts 3:19–21). What’s involved in restoration?

Building or rebuilding are very much part of the restoration that God intends after Christ’s return—but this time, on a tried and true foundation. With this in mind, it is interesting to note that building and construction are frequently associated with the Feast of Tabernacles in Scripture.

For instance, in Nehemiah 8 we read of the returning Jews building their temporary dwellings from “olive branches, branches of oil trees, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of leafy trees” (v. 15) in a manner that had not been done since the days of Joshua, when Israel was similarly less settled. The temporary nature of our dwellings during the Feast of Tabernacles reminds us of important truths—first among them, that lives are temporary. We are not yet immortal. Our surroundings and everything we possess are temporary, as well. The people of Israel were supposed to learn this when they sojourned in the wilderness. Also, when they dwelled in booths or tents in the wilderness, their ultimate protection was the cloud of glory that accompanied them. Today, our temporary accommodations during the Feast remind us of the reality of our lives. Our lives are not protected by the substance we collect around us but by the presence and oversight of our heavenly Father. Though the dwellings we stay in may seem a “physical” matter, God intends that we learn important lessons!

One of the most famous construction projects associated with the Feast of Tabernacles is the temple of Solomon, which was completed and dedicated at the Feast. All the preparation

and building had been done beforehand so that it was ready. That holds great lessons for us as we look forward to the Feast this year, and to its ultimate fulfillment in the future. The Book of Chronicles provides details of the timing and setting of this important event in Israel’s history.

At that time Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great assembly from the entrance of Hamath to the Brook of Egypt. And on the eighth day they held a sacred assembly, for they observed the dedication of the altar seven days, and the feast seven days. On the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people away to their tents, joyful and glad of heart for the good that the LORD had done for David, for Solomon, and for His people Israel (2 Chronicles 7:8–10).

This act of the dedication of the Temple by Solomon is also covered in 1 Kings 8:1–66. More detail on the preparations are provided in 2 Chronicles 5:1–7:11.

Parallels Between Solomon’s Reign and the Millennium

It should be no surprise that Solomon’s reign, especially the first part of the 40 years he reigned over Israel, is associated by some with the Feast of Tabernacles. While his later moral failings can’t be ignored and would eventually have a devastating effect on Israel, Solomon was specifically chosen by God to reign over “the kingdom of the LORD” in his time (1 Chronicles 28:5). His reign was a time of wealth and plenty (1 Kings 4:20–22), in which the king of Israel became known among other nations for wisdom and understanding (vv. 29–31, 34) and in which “Judah and Israel dwelt safely, each man under his vine and his fig tree” (v. 25). Parallels between Solomon’s

reign and the Millennium pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles are easy to find.

Note the way in which David prayed about his son. He was to do the work of the Eternal by building a physical temple just as Jesus Christ came to do His Father's work by building a spiritual one.

Furthermore King David said to all the assembly: "My son Solomon, whom alone God has chosen, is young and inexperienced; and the work is great, because the temple is not for man but for the LORD God... And give my son Solomon a loyal heart to keep Your commandments and Your testimonies and Your statutes, to do all these things, and to build the temple for which I have made provision" (1 Chronicles 29:1, 19).

Later in the same chapter, the author notes that the Eternal had heard and answered the prayer of David:

So the LORD exalted Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed on him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel (1 Chronicles 29:25).

During Solomon's reign, that temple was built and dedicated. It was also a time of great peace and prosperity for Israel. Solomon, like his father David, was a writer, and several books of our Bible have been attributed to Solomon. One, in particular, Ecclesiastes, is to this day associated with the Feast of Tabernacles by the Jewish people. As such, it is read in the synagogues during the Feast of Tabernacles. At the time of its writing, Solomon was able to see the futility of the physical world and the need for the things of God—the spiritual dimension.

In chapter 3 of Ecclesiastes, he lists a series of physical events that occur in life, that define the parameters of human existence. There is "a time to be born, and a time to die" (v. 2). Likewise,

When we consider the Millennium pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles, it is not hard to realize that there will be **a large amount of rebuilding to be accomplished during that time.**

there is "a time to break down, and a time to build up" (v. 3)—that is, a time to destroy and a time to build or rebuild. These observations are a result of Solomon's efforts in life. In the previous chapter, he tells us about what he set out to accomplish:

I searched in my heart how to gratify my flesh with wine, while guiding my heart with wisdom,

and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the sons of men to do under heaven all the days of their lives.

I made my works great, I built myself houses, and planted myself vineyards. I made myself gardens and orchards, and I planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. I made myself water pools from which to water the growing trees of the grove (Ecclesiastes 2:3–6).

The temple wasn't the only building project Solomon undertook. He set out to build great works and houses—or, more precisely, palaces—which have not survived to this day. Yet many visitors to Israel, even in our time, have looked in amazement at the pools known as Solomon's Pools, located between Jerusalem and Hebron—massive undertakings built of hewn stone.

When we consider the Millennium pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles, it is not hard to realize that there will be a large amount of rebuilding to be accomplished during that time. Many of the facilities that survive the end times and that we consider essential to our present lives may be incompatible with the values taught under the Kingdom of God and will require rebuilding. The prophets spoke of rebuilding; Isaiah frequently wrote about this facet of the Kingdom of God. He spoke of rebuilding the ancient ruins on restored foundations (Isaiah 58:12; 61:4). Jeremiah also wrote about the restoring of the ways (Jeremiah 6:16). While he was referring to the Way of God or the way to be lived, the right paths will also be needed for the transportation and movement of people. How will all nations come up to worship in Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles without those means (Isaiah 2:1–4; Zechariah 14:16–21)?

The "Now" Aspect

Let's return to Solomon's building of the temple and appreciate some lessons we can learn from it. Much preparation had gone into the temple before a stone was ever laid on Mount Moriah. 1 Chronicles details much of the planning and assembling of material that David undertook before Solomon ever ascended the throne. Likewise, a notable verse tells us that all of the preparation of the stonework was undertaken off-site, so that no sound of a hammer or metal tool was heard at the construction site (1 Kings 6:7). That speaks to careful preparation of the material.

So 2 Chronicles summarizes the building and dedication of the temple with these words:

Now all the work of Solomon was prepared unto the day of the foundation of the house of the LORD, and until it was finished. So the

house of the LORD was perfected (2 Chronicles 8:16, *KJV*).

In the *NKJV*, the statement is simply that “the house of the LORD was completed.” Yet the Hebrew term translated “completed” conveys more than just the finishing of the work. The Jewish Publication Society *Tanakh* notes that “the House of the LORD was completed to perfection.”

With this in mind, now consider modern knowledge of the Feast among nominal “Christians” in the world. The Festival was largely unknown outside Jewish circles a century ago, but now the Feast of Tabernacles is the largest draw for “Christian” tourists to Israel. Last year, the *Times of Israel* reported that evangelical Christians from over 80 countries gathered in Jerusalem during the Feast. In recent years, over 6,000 “Christians” have visited Jerusalem to observe the Feast. But what does it do for them if the Feast is nothing more than something they “know about”?

In his epistle to the Corinthians, Paul tells us, “Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies” (1 Corinthians 8:1). If these nominal Christians simply “know something” about the Feast and no more, then they are puffed up according to Paul. Yet Paul points us to more than knowledge: godly love, which *edifies*. The English expression “edify” comes from the same root as the word “edifice.” We use that term to describe a building of substance—something that is going to last against the ravages of time.

Look at the pyramids of Egypt. Any one of them is a prime example of an edifice. So when we exercise godly love, we are building something that is very durable. The Church is to be that durable. Jesus Christ said, “I will build My church” (Matthew 16:18). The term “build” is translated from the same Greek word translated “edify” in Paul’s letter. We are individually and collectively being built up into something that will last for all eternity. Our foundation is the very best that can be laid. It has Jesus Christ as the cornerstone, from which all angles and elevations in the building are determined. It also includes all the prophets and apostles that the Word has inspired to convey our Father’s instructions (Ephesians 2:20). It is a building to last forever, and we are now being shaped and prepared for our role and place in that structure. While it is true that we are God’s temple in which His Spirit dwells (1 Corinthians 3:16), we can also see our lives reflected in the stones and metal work of Solomon’s temple, which were prepared in advance and off-site before the completed assembly of the building itself. We, too, are in a preparation stage now as living stones (1 Peter 2:5), being shaped and molded to fit within the great edifice of the Kingdom of God in advance of its arrival.

So what are we concentrating on building at the Feast? We will hear sermons about our calling and purpose and about our roles in the Kingdom of God. Are we thinking of that structure of which we will be part or is our mind on the present needs of our bodies and appetites?

What Will We Build?

Those with small children keeping the Feast at a coastal Festival site may find themselves helping build sand castles for their little ones. Those who have built even the most elaborate sand castle know very well what the first tide does to the effort. It’s obliterated and washed away so that nothing remains. There is nothing left that can be used for something greater. Our building should not be like that—as Christ, Himself, clearly teaches us (Matthew 7:26–27).

In his advice to other ministers about how they were to build on the work of ministers before them, Paul uses an analogy that we would do well to consider, ourselves, this Feast concerning our own construction efforts:

For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is. If anyone’s work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire (1 Corinthians 3:11–15).

In this way, Paul’s words can suggest a standard by which we can evaluate our lives and how we approach the Feast of Tabernacles. Can our efforts at preparation for the building program be consumed by fire? Would fire enhance or purify our work, or will our efforts become a pile of ash—as worthless as a sand castle on a beach after the tide has passed? Each of us has to answer for himself or herself before Almighty God and His Son Jesus Christ.

Isaiah gave us an insight into the type of building material our Father is looking to use on the foundation laid by His Son:

Thus says the LORD: “Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is my resting place? All these things my hand has made, and so all these things are mine, says the LORD. But this is the one to whom I will look, to the humble and contrite in spirit, who trembles at my word (Isaiah 66:1–2, *NRSV*).

We could say that a “humble and contrite spirit” might be equated with the gold, silver and precious stones of which Paul spoke.

As we prepare to appear before our heavenly Father this Feast of Tabernacles, let us consider what we are building in our lives in preparation for the reality of the Kingdom that is soon to come. ^(LN)

Glimpsing Our Eternity in God's Festivals

By **Wallace Smith**

God's Festivals are an incredible gift to His people! From beginning to end, they give us a "map" to His plan of salvation. As we write in our *Official Statement of Fundamental Beliefs*, "God's annual Festivals picture the seven vital steps in His plan of salvation."

Beginning with Jesus Christ's death for our sins and concluding with the hope of salvation extended to all who have ever lived and died without having a real opportunity to know their Creator, God's plan is laid out in beautiful, comforting, and inspiring detail through the seven "feasts of the LORD" (Leviticus 23:4). Observing these days is a privilege to be treasured, and the plan God reveals through them is a truth to be cherished and protected!

But when we leave our Festival sites after observing the Last Great Day, do we consider what comes *next*? Once God's plan of salvation has been successfully extended to the entirety of humanity, what awaits us?

After all, we are called to *eternal* life, and the purpose of the plan of salvation is to create the Family of God who will enjoy eternity together, forever! Jesus Christ says that those who truly and deeply partake of what He has to offer will *live forever* (John 6:51). After the first seven *thousand* years of human history, what will the next seven *billion* years be like? Is there any way to comprehend, in even a small way, what to expect from *eternity*?

Yes, there is. While the Bible does not go into great detail about our future eternal lives after the plan of salvation is complete, there are beautiful truths about that life to come that can be seen in Scripture.

In fact, the Festivals of God, themselves, can serve as an excellent tool for meditating on our future state. Let's take a little time to meditate together on each of the Festivals and try to catch what glimpses they may offer on the eternity we all long to see *after* the Last Great Day, when God's plan of salvation is complete.

Passover

Passover pictures the death of Jesus Christ, our Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7), for the removal of our sins. It teaches us that salvation begins not with us and with our own actions, but rather with God's willingness to act on our behalf and save us from the death we had earned with our sins (Romans 6:23). "We love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

The sacrifice of Jesus Christ is also intended by God to be the ultimate tool for revealing His love to us. As the Apostle John explains, "In this the love of God was manifested toward

us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:9–10).

When we think of the eternal lives we long to inherit, the Passover season can remind us of the great and immeasurable love with which God desires to envelop us for *all eternity*. An unending existence awaits us where, for all time, *that* love, comfort and encouragement becomes our rich reality, forever—an existence in which we will *never* know the lack of that love or fear distance from it ever again.

Passover reminds us that our Almighty Father and His Son have gone to the ultimate length to make Their home with us. And in the eternal life to come, we will know the joy of Their intimate presence and love forever.

The Days of Unleavened Bread

The Days of Unleavened Bread picture the only rational response to the sacrifice of Christ: repenting and removing sin, pictured by leaven, from our lives while taking in righteousness, pictured by unleavened bread. Yet, these days can also remind us that there will be a time when the removal of sin from our natures has been completed forever!

How many of us read Paul's words in the book of Romans and relate to them? "For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do... For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice" (Romans 7:15, 19). We *struggle* against sin in this life!

But there will come a day when our character will be complete! In another letter, Paul promises that "[He] who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6, *ESV*).

In our eternal lives we will be *utterly filled* with righteousness, just as God is! We will have "*become* the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21). The perfect, sinless nature and character of God will have become our *own* nature and character, forever! Just as the Bible says that God will never lie (Titus 1:2), *we* will never lie! As God is never drawn away and tempted by the desire to sin and do evil (James 1:13), neither will we be so enticed! As God is so filled with sincere, outgoing concern for others that the Bible can truly say "God is love" (1 John 4:8), so, too, will we possess that beautiful, giving, caring nature for all time!

In a very real sense, the unleavened bread we eat in those days represents only a mere taste of what is to come. We will

one day possess righteousness in *full measure*, and our eternity will be a time when we never know the corruption of sin *ever again*. What a joy!

Pentecost—or the Feast of Firstfruits

Pentecost pictures the beginning of God's Work with His "little flock" (Luke 12:32)—His Church, the firstfruits (James 1:18)—and the giving of His Holy Spirit to that Church. We need that Spirit in this life to help us overcome and grow as God's laws are written in our hearts (Hebrews 8:10), and we are sanctified and set apart by that Spirit (2 Thessalonians 2:13).

God assures us that the Spirit placed within us at our baptism through the laying on of hands is "the *guarantee* of our inheritance" until our redemption (Ephesians 1:13–14). The Greek word for "guarantee" means a *down payment*—a portion promising more to come.

When we look ahead to the eternal lives mankind will begin after the Last Great Day, we can appreciate the fullness of what it means for the Spirit we possess now to be only a "deposit." For one day the promise implied by the down payment will be experienced in full!

As Paul highlights, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Corinthians 15:50). Those who have entered eternity are no longer flesh and blood but are *spirit*! We are told that "God is Spirit" (John 4:24), and His children will be, as well!

God describes our eternal lives and bodies in remarkable terms: glory, power, incorruption, *spirit* (1 Corinthians 15:42–45). Can you imagine a life with no physical limits—a life in which you *never* tire or grow weary (Psalm 121:4)?

Remembering that the Holy Spirit which God has placed within us is merely a down payment for something greater to come can remind us that in the eternity that lies ahead of us, the aches, pains and limitations of our *flesh and blood* bodies will one day be less than a faint memory!

The Feast of Trumpets

The Feast of Trumpets can be a very sobering time, highlighting for us the terrible things that need to happen immediately before the return of Jesus Christ—the consequences of a world addicted to sin and the measures required to shake it free.

But such things can also point us forward to that eternal time when "there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" (Revelation 21:4). Sin will be gone. Suffering will be gone. Only joy will remain, and the sound of the trumpet will nevermore signify warfare or disaster, but only celebration and rejoicing.

The Feast of Trumpets includes the *last* trumpet, declaring the beginning of Christ's return and the resurrection of His saints to glory (1 Corinthians 15:52)! And that resurrection will be the beginning of our existence for *all eternity* as glorified spirit beings in the Family of God!

When we consider what our eternal lives will be like after our resurrection and transformation, we can reflect on what Jesus Christ was able to do and experience after His *own* resurrection. That life He began to live after His resurrection—and knows *now*—is the life He intends for us (Romans 8:29; 1 John 3:2)! And that life is *wondrously* different from the life we know now.

Consider some of the things Jesus Christ did in His resurrected state. We are told that He appeared suddenly to His disciples in the middle of a closed room (John 20:19) and could just as suddenly disappear (Luke 24:30–31). Scriptures seem to describe Jesus as varying His appearance at different times

to serve specific purposes in working with His followers (e.g., Mark 16:12; John 20:26–27; Revelation 1:12–20). He apparently traveled from this physical realm to heaven to appear before His Father and then returned in barely a moment of time (compare John 20:14–17 with Matthew 28:9–10).

In our post-resurrection bodies, what will our eternity be like when the limitations of physical space and time are no longer the concern to us that they are now? Where will we go when we can go anywhere? What will we do when our existence is defined by power and possibility instead of lack and limitation?

The Day of Atonement

Even as we fast on that day, we celebrate on the Day of Atonement knowing that it signifies the binding of the devil for 1,000 years at the start of Jesus Christ's reign with His saints—after which he is "released for a little while" (Revelation 20:3) before the Great White Throne Judgment.

Yet, the temporary, thousand-year binding of the devil celebrated on the Day of Atonement can remind us that in the eternity that follows God's plan of salvation, his removal will be *permanent*!

A time is coming before the Great White Throne Judgment when Satan the devil will be removed *forever* and will play no part in God's Creation ever again (Jude 13)! Jesus was manifested "that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). When eternity arrives at the end of God's plan of salvation, His mission will have been completed! Indeed, the entirety of creation itself will have been purified with fire (2 Peter 3:10–12), leaving "a new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells" (v. 13).

The Day of Atonement is also the day in which Israel began its years of jubilee (Leviticus 25:8–12). Those in debt were freed, and those who had lost lands saw them returned. It was

Can you imagine a life
with no physical limits
—a life in which you never
tire or grow weary?



a time of freedom and rejoicing. And it is a wonderful picture of the freedom the *world* will enjoy in the Millennium when the devil is removed.

And we can be mindful that God intends the *entire universe* to one day enjoy such freedom, and that our eternal lives are a big part of that cosmic freedom! Paul tells us that “the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Romans 8:19–21).

What will that eternal, “glorious liberty” mean for creation? Perhaps we can take a cue from the next of God’s Festivals.

The Feast of Tabernacles

God’s Feast of Tabernacles is a time of joy for His people—indeed, a time of *commanded* rejoicing and abundance for all (Deuteronomy 14:26–27)! It is a beautiful picture of the Millennium to come, when the saints are glorified and will be serving the nations of the world alongside Jesus Christ (Revelation 20:4).

And yet, if the Millennium is a time when joy and plenty are brought by God’s Family to the world, what greater joy and plenty will be brought to the entire universe in the eternity that follows?

As noted earlier, our Father promises the fullness of *all creation* as the eternal inheritance of His children, and we’re told that creation awaits their revealing! God tells us, “He who overcomes shall inherit *all things*, and I will be his God and he shall be My son” (Revelation 21:7). “All things” means “all things”! The entirety of Creation, seen and unseen (Hebrews 2:8), will be our inheritance—to beautify, cultivate, and perhaps to extend through our own work of creating, reflecting the work of our own Creator.

Just as our Father once renewed the face of the earth, bringing life and beauty where there had been none (cf. Psalm 104:30), so, too, might the Family of God embrace its inheritance and take up the “family business” of renewing creation?

When we look out into the cosmos now, we see desolations such as that of the planet Mars—a universe begging to be freed from its futility. During the joyful abundance of the Feast of Tabernacles, can we imagine how the entire *universe* might one day blossom and bloom in abundance and joy under the loving hands of the Family of God? How might we seek to please our Father with what we create, just as our own children seek to please us with their creations?

During the Feast, as we picture the beauty and abundance of the Millennium when the saints serve the nations as kings and priests, we can remember that such splendor is only a foretaste of what the Sons of God may one day bring to the whole universe for eternity!

The Last Great Day

Finally, comes the Last Great Day. What might this day bring to mind concerning our eternity?

This day pictures the Second Resurrection, when God reaches through the gates of death—of which Jesus Christ has the keys (Revelation 1:18)—and brings forth all who have never had their opportunity to truly know Him, so that they may finally have their chance. It teaches us that God’s plan is for everyone, and that He longs to fellowship with *all* who will accept His invitation (cf. John 7:37–38).

So, too, can the day remind us of the more “personal” side of our eternity: That it will not be spent alone. And, perhaps, that will bring us the greatest joy. The reason there is a plan of salvation *at all* is because it brings God joy to share life in His eternal Family with others. Might the greatest joy of *our* eternity be the same for us—knowing that we will share it with those we love?

How much *more* will our eternity of creation, play and joy in our inheritance mean to us when we look around and see the faces of those we have loved and lost in this life *enjoying that eternity with us*?

The Last Great Day reminds us that God looks forward to seeing *many* fulfill their eternal destiny. And our endless future will be the richer for it.

God’s Festivals are designed by our loving Father in heaven to help us understand His plan of salvation—the means by which He is “bringing many sons to glory” (Hebrews 2:10). And, with a little thought, they can also offer us glimpses, however small, of the eternity that lies beyond—an eternity in which that plan has been completed, when it is finally true that God is “all in all” (1 Corinthians 15:28).

Let us rejoice that this eternity is sure, guaranteed by the One who says, “Behold, I make all things new” (Revelation 21:5). (LH)

2016: Another Great Year at Ohio Teen Camp

By **Sheldon Monson**

Four hundred and forty-two enthusiastic campers and staff attended the Living Youth Camp in Delaware, Ohio during the first two weeks of August 2016. This summer, attendance was up for the sixth consecutive year! While those of us serving the young people at camp were encouraged by this trend, we were also aware that we had a big responsibility to provide a quality camp experience for each individual involved. So, once again, many people went to work making camp all that it could be!

A Sad Farewell

Just one week prior to camp, long time minister and former Activity Director at LYC Ohio, Engelo Monson, husband of Shirley Monson, died peacefully in his home. He was 76 years old. Mr. Monson had a long history of working with the youth and had served as the youth director of the Regina, Saskatchewan Y.O.U. (Youth Opportunities United) program in the 1970s and early 80s. He'd been a member of the Church of God since 1970, was ordained an elder at the Feast of Tabernacles in 1978 and was the father of five children. On the Monday prior to the start of camp, a memorial service, attended by over 350 people, was held in his honor at the Lodge on campus. Among those present were many who worked with him and got to know him at summer camp. He is missed.

An all-camp orientation meeting was held Monday evening to kick things off, and camp was in full-swing by Tuesday morning, with clear skies and a full day of camp activities ahead.

Special Guests

We were privileged to have several special guests attend the Teen Camp again this year. Mr. and Mrs. Richard Ames spent four days with us during the initial week of camp. Mr. Ames spoke to the entire camp during a Christian Living Class on Thursday and gave the sermon on the Sabbath. Dr. Roderick C. Meredith was present during the last several days of camp, as well. Upon his arrival, he addressed the entire camp at the Evening Reflection on Wednesday night, presented a Christian Living Class and gave the sermon on the final Sabbath.

In addition to having these headquarters ministers as

guests, we were honored to have the Montgomery family, from Australia, with us for the entire length of camp. Mr. Martin Montgomery served as one of the instructors for the Speech and Communication class, his wife Vicki worked in the kitchen, his son Gus served as an Assistant Counselor, and his daughter Ellie worked in the Media department. It was good to have them there, and they were an encouragement and an inspiration to all.

Mr. Lawdi Ferreira, the Camp Director of our summer camp in South Africa, spent nine days working with us, getting to know everyone and gathering ideas and information that could be used at their camp, which is located on the other side of the planet. Both Mr. Montgomery and Mr. Ferreira conducted Christian Living Classes, addressing all the campers and staff. The theme for camp this year was “Those who turn many to

The theme for camp this year was **“Those who turn many to righteousness shall shine like the stars forever and ever”**

righteousness shall shine like the stars forever and ever”—taken from Daniel 12:3. All of the Christian Living Class topics revolved around this theme, as well as around James 5:19–20, which states, “Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he

who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.”

Blessed with Good Weather—Again!

Once again, we were blessed with good weather. Even though temperatures climbed into the mid-90s on a number of occasions, God did hold off the rain, and no activities had to be cancelled due to rain. The only rain, lightning, or thunder we did have came during lunchtime, dinnertime, or at night, which just served to cool things off. It is amazing, but we've had great





weather every year at this site. A number of times heavy rain was experienced less than a mile south or north of camp—sometimes raining south and north of us at the same time—and yet our location remained dry. One of the vulnerabilities of this camp location is that it is not “weatherproof,” and rainy weather would force us to cancel many of our activities. We are thankful that God has looked after us and has consistently given us great weather year after year. Heavy rains did come on Sunday *after* camp, which made taking down camp challenging, but doable. This made us all the more thankful for the good weather we experienced *during* camp!

A Full Slate of Fun Activities

This summer was the first time we had a Country & Western Dance, which was a big hit! People wearing boots, jeans, western-style shirts and hats filled the Lodge and spilled out onto the deck and grass outside. Tasty treats and cold drinks provided by the “special projects staff” were enjoyed by all. The hall, both inside and out, was decorated with hay bales, leather saddles, a horse-drawn buggy, a campfire, and other western paraphernalia. Considerable time was spent selecting a variety of appropriate country music songs for this event, resulting in a very busy dance floor the entire evening. We’ll certainly be repeating the Country & Western dance once we relocate to Texas next year!

Another new and exciting activity was added to the schedule this year. Because camp coincided with the Summer Olympics, we decided to dedicate one of the evening activity sessions to



having our own “LYC Olympics.” Camper dorms were divided into groups and participated in four camp “Olympic” events: a speed cornhole game, which is much like horseshoes played with small bean bags; a three-person water-balloon launch, in which groups launched balloons in a giant sling-shot and attempted to hit a target located 125 feet away; a group trivia game; and a multi-station relay race. Events were timed, scores were kept and winners announced. An incredible amount of excitement and energy was experienced during this first-of-its kind event here at camp.

As usual, a talent show was held on the last Thursday evening of camp. If you have not seen one of these shows before, in person or through our online videos, we encourage you to do so. There is an amazing amount of musical talent in the Church of God and a great deal of it among the youth. More than two dozen selections were performed before a crowd of approximately 350 people. This proved to be a special production once again.

The 2016 Final Dinner and Dance was amazing! At this formal event, prime rib (with horseradish), baked potatoes, vegetables, salad and dessert were served for dinner. Following dinner, everyone headed down to the Lodge for the dance. Strings of “twinkle” lights, balloons and creative decorations, complete with a special light that created a “starry” ceiling inside the Lodge, made for a fantastic setting. Appetizers and treats, along with a variety of cold drinks were enjoyed throughout the dance. During breaks, many awards were announced for dorms and individual campers, and an end-of-camp video was shown.

It’s noteworthy that even though we had several special occasions throughout camp and were able to enjoy great food and drinks at all of these events, we were still able to keep the food costs reasonable. Our food cost, once again, averaged just under \$6.50 per person per day.

The Ohio Teen Camp 2016 was memorable and profitable. We had many first-timers, and look forward to having more new people added to camper and staff lists again in the summer of 2017 at our new facility in Texas. All of the staff does their best to make it a positive and rewarding experience that you will not forget. We encourage you to sign up! (LN)

Teen Camp 2016







LYP Teen Camp Is Moving to Texas!

By **Jason Fritts**

It's happening! After six summers of Teen Camp in Central Ohio, the Living Youth Program is moving its premier camp to Texas!

Change can often be a difficult and exhausting process, yet sometimes it can facilitate real progress. And thanks to the generosity of so many, we are excited to be able to share the news of this incredible blessing to the youth program.

You might be asking yourselves, "Why move from our great location in Ohio?" There are a couple of reasons. First, we simply outgrew the facilities. Over the last five years, our attendance has increased by 175 percent! Housing, meeting space, and dining capacity in Ohio have all been exceeded. Also, we were not able to secure our ideal dates with the Ohio campground management, often leading to kids missing out in order to be back to school on time.

You also may be wondering, "Why Texas?" Well it certainly isn't because of the heat and humidity! Extensive research was done all across the country, searching for a location to serve as a long-term solution for our growing youth camps. Needless to say, there are quite a few factors that go into the selection of a facility for the teen camp. First, it must be sizeable enough to accommodate our largest gathering of kids for the year, upwards of 350 total guests, including staff. Secondly, it must be available for rental during a six-week period from the end of June into the first week of August, which are prime dates for summer camps throughout the U.S. and often unavailable. Finally, it must be affordable and within our budget for the youth program. Checking all these boxes can be a real challenge!

Thankfully, God has opened the door in the quiet, country setting of Athens, Texas, approximately one-and-a-half hours east of Dallas. Lone Star Camp and its 278-acre beautiful pine-wood surroundings have been secured for our use for the next

ten years, and will be our home for three weeks in July every summer. Campers will love the brand-new air-conditioned dormitories, with built-in shower and bath facilities! Also, comfortable air-conditioned staff housing will help our volunteers recharge and relax, many with views of the 25-acre private lake! The "physical" food will be provided at the freshly-enclosed, air-conditioned Dining Hall, with seating capacity for over 450! And, of course, we can't forget the "spiritual" food, hosted in the massive, air-conditioned gymnasium, providing a restful place for Sabbath services. (Did we mention that every building on campus was air-conditioned? We really like that part.)

The tremendous facilities of Lone Star Camp will help us create a camp experience like no other. For the first time in more than a decade, we will be able to offer basketball as an activity. Volleyball will be moved indoors and will benefit from the air-conditioned courts. The gymnasium building also includes three large classrooms and extra activity space, establishing optimal learning environments for Music, Arts and Crafts, Speech and Communication, and Dance. Additionally, Waterskiing will be a part of the daily class schedule, providing campers with the opportunity to further sharpen their skills. Moreover, ample field space will make it possible to have official, regulation fields for Softball, Football and Soccer. Finally, Swimming and Water Polo classes will enjoy the brand-new 25-meter pool, set to be completed by the end of 2016!

With the help and support of the ministry, Living Youth Programs continues to strive to provide a wonderful place for young people to not just learn about God's way of life, but to experience it in a remarkable way. We are extremely thankful for this blessing of a new camp facility, enabling the Church to continue its mission to share God's plan of salvation and His soon-coming Kingdom with more of God's youth in the exciting years to come! We hope to see you there! (LH)



Lessons from Adventure Camp in Banff

By **Matthew Kidney**

Do you want to stretch yourself and go outside of your comfort zone? Do you really want to see what you are capable of doing, both physically and mentally? If so, then Adventure Camp will be a challenge you will enjoy. This was my first year attending Adventure Camp, and it was one of the most memorable experiences of my life. In addition to memories of breathtaking views and new friendships, I left camp with a greater sense of *perseverance*, *appreciation* and *inspiration*.

The *perseverance* of my team this year in the beautiful Canadian Rockies was inspiring. One aspect of perseverance is achieving something despite difficulties, failure or opposition. Adventure Camp will push you to your limits, and I can say that it was one of the most physically demanding things that I have done in my life! At the same time, it was one of the most rewarding. During the trip this year, there were several times that we would climb for 10 minutes and take a 2-minute

break. We would go as hard as we could—pushing ourselves to the point that we thought we could not go any further. At that point, we would take a short break, regroup, say a silent prayer and then push on. Several times a day, I would ask God to give me the strength to keep moving forward. One of our days included a 13-hour hike that covered 14 miles of tough hiking that varied greatly in elevations. We were in danger of losing daylight and having to hike to our campsite in the dark. We pushed *very* hard the last four hours of the hike. I was in awe of my group, encouraging each other through this *incredibly* tough time in the trip. At times we were tired, sore, wet, cold and, in general, just plain uncomfortable, but we persevered and completed the journey.

Adventure Camp will give you a better *appreciation* for everything in your life. First of all, you will appreciate the things that you see in the area in which you travel. Mr. Sheldon Monson chooses these locations because they are some of the most spectacular places in the world. The towering mountains, brilliant blue lakes and crystal clear glacial rivers of Banff National Park did not disappoint! There were times along the trail

that we stopped just to take in the awesome views provided by our Creator God. In addition, you will appreciate the everyday things in life that we tend to take for granted. Running water, a bed to sleep on, drinking water that doesn't need to be filtered and shelter away from the bugs are just a few. Temporarily being away from the luxuries of modern life will help you to appreciate them so much more.

Adventure camp was also an *inspiration*. It was truly inspiring to watch the young adults in my group encourage one another and lift each other up. It wasn't anything "major"—just simple things, like someone walking next to another person who was struggling, talking with them up the hill or giving them an encouraging word. I also witnessed our young men and women rely on God to get them through tough situations. I heard their prayers before every meal, before every Bible Study and before we crawled into our sleeping bags every

night. It was inspiring to see the next generation living God's way, and it was inspiring to be in the presence of young men and women of faith and courage. We are told that we need to be lights to this world, and the young people I had the honor of leading were inspiring to me in so many ways.

This year's trip to Banff required *perseverance*, taught us all to *appreciate* our many blessings, and it was a reminder that we have the power to *inspire* others by our words of encouragement. It was a trip that I will never forget, because it was absolutely incredible in so many ways. Yes, it was extremely difficult, but so are many things in our lives. My campers came to realize, at the end of the trip, that if they could conquer a 54-mile hike while carrying 50 pounds or more of gear on their back through the Canadian Rocky Mountains, then they could conquer *any* of the challenges that will arise back home in their daily lives. (LN)



Brooke Eby's beautiful photo of Lake Louise, making her the girl winner of the Banff Adventure Camp 2016 photo contest

A spectacular view of Moraine lake, taken by the boy winner of the Banff Adventure Camp 2016 photo contest, Jerod Loy



New Hope for Men in the Northeast

Some 70 men from congregations across the U.S. came together in New Hope, Pennsylvania for a Men's Training Camp over the weekend of August 26. The camp was designed to help men in the Body of Christ to understand the biblical role of men, to build bonds of brotherhood and to honor God. The weekend was kicked off Friday evening with a chili dinner and orientation with Regional Pastor, Mr. Jonathan McNair.



Sabbath morning, Mr. Bill Long, who pastors congregations in the mid-west, delivered a sermonette on love and tolerance, and Dr. Douglas Winnail expounded on "Vital Les-

sons in Life" for the main message. After lunch, we attended breakout sessions on some specific challenges facing men in the Church today and a special session with Dr. Winnail on "The Vision from Headquarters."

Later in the evening, Mr. Long held a workshop on building sermonettes. Sunday morning, elders Dennis Chornomaz, Wayne Tlumak, Larry Alverio, Todd Lawrence and Randall Moran gave a tag-team presentation on the traits of a patriarch using Jesus' life as an example.

The camp wound down with closing comments from Dr. Winnail and Mr. McNair.

Attendees remarked that the weekend was enlightening, rewarding, refreshing and uplifting. Many said that they were returning to their local areas "renewed in spirit" and were looking forward to sharing what they had learned with the other men in their congregations.

— Randall Moran

Adirondack Canoe Trip 2016

The Upstate New York Living Church of God brethren hosted another awesome trip to the Adirondack Mountain region on Raquette Lake.

On Wednesday afternoon, we took a canoe trip out to Tioga Point where we had a busy afternoon and evening setting up camp for the next four days. God blessed the weather that first day with sunshine and warm temperatures. Thursday was another exceptional day of warmth while we learned many new skills such as canoeing basics, how to make a shelter from a tarp, knot tying, wilderness first aid, group dynamics, wilderness signs, orienteering and how to make a rocket stove. Friday was a full-



day adventure as we canoed out to West Mountain and climbed to the summit by mid-afternoon. We enjoyed beautiful views of the Raquette Lake area of the Adirondacks and a much-needed rest be-

fore heading back down the mountain.

Saturday we received a little rain but God cleared the skies for Sabbath services. We heard inspiring messages from Messrs. Rod McNair and Phil Sena and enjoyed a special "hymn sing." Then on Sunday we packed up camp and took a final canoe trip back to Golden Beach where we departed with fond memories of a full weekend of fellowship and godly instruction. Many campers expressed interest in returning next year for another grand adventure amidst God's creation, in which we can once again worship our Creator, learn how better to live His way of life together, and build bonds of brotherhood.

— William Long



Slander on Steroids

By **Gerald Weston**

It was a very sobering time during Jesus Christ's last Passover meal with His disciples, when He gave instructions that were heavy on His mind. Among them was a warning of future persecution. This was not the first time they had heard this warning. Jesus had told them before that they would experience many blessings in this life, but those blessings would be seasoned with persecutions (Mark 10:29–30). When He sent out His disciples, He warned them that they would be like lambs in the midst of wolves, and that if He were called Beelzebub, how much more they could expect to be falsely accused themselves (Matthew 10:16–26). And during that final Passover night in 31AD, Jesus soberly reminded them, “A servant is not greater than his master,” and explained, “If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you” (John 15:20).

Persecution can come in many different forms, and slander is one of them. Today we have more than slander—we have slander on steroids: the Internet. We all know the Internet can be a tool for good, but also for evil, and there is an evil spirit being who is promoting the latter.

When I refer to the Internet, I'm using an umbrella term to cover a variety of ways people communicate electronically: websites, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, e-mail, texting and any other form of information quickly transferable through computers, smartphones and other devices and applications.

The Work of God uses a number of these technologies and programs to preach the Gospel to this dying world and to warn it of what is coming, but the Adversary uses the same technologies to hinder the Work of God. He, too, uses webpages, YouTube, Instagram and Facebook.

Every minister of the Church has run into people who are “on fire” for the Truth one day but who somehow lose all interest overnight. We know that some of this is the result of their reading something negative about the Church on the Internet. How many are turned off this way we can only guess, but we know it happens. We also know that some unscrupulous “Church of God” organizations actively leech off the others. They deliberately target other churches by paying to have their *own* website come up when people are searching for *other* organizations. Look for information about a “Church of God” group on a search engine, and, instead, the other organization's false site comes up first, masquerading as the one being searched for. They then use the false site to discredit the “Church of God” organization the individual was originally trying to find.

Of course, every business, social group or church will have a few disgruntled and unhappy individuals who are eager to trash the object of their dissatisfaction. When was the last time you found a hotel online that had 100 percent happy reviews? You cannot please everyone all the time, especially if part of your mission is to call upon people to change their behavior (Isaiah 58:1). Human nature being what it is, we have a tendency to believe the worst, especially if there is a bit of colorful sarcasm and wit thrown in.

Some Protestant groups distort our teachings and call the Church of God a cult, even meriting whole chapters in some books. There is nothing new about distortions, misrepresentations and name-calling (Acts 24:5), but the Internet in all its facets spreads such misinformation and epithets more swiftly and to a wider audience than was ever possible before through books and tracts. There is sometimes some element of “truth” but always with a twist and misinformation that distorts the “truth,” turning it into a lie. Since Satan is the father of lies (John 8:44), it should not surprise us that he would use this tactic, as seen in the temptation of Christ recorded in Matthew 4. The devil accurately quoted from Psalm 91: “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: ‘He shall give His angels charge over you,’ and, ‘In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone’” (Matthew 4:6). But he took these passages totally out of context.

In Great Company!

Paul told Timothy, “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12). However, it is encouraging to see that we are in good company. Ancient King David experienced slander and lies: “For I hear the slander of many...deliver me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me” (Psalm 31:13–15).

David did not lack enemies. In Psalm 64 he wrote, “Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked, from the rebellion of the workers of iniquity, who sharpen their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows—bitter words, that they may shoot in secret at the blameless; suddenly they shoot at him and do not fear. They encourage themselves in an evil matter; they talk of laying snares secretly; they say, ‘Who will see them?’ They devise iniquities: ‘We have perfected a shrewd scheme.’ Both the inward thought and the heart of man are deep. But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly they shall be wounded. So He will make them stumble over their own tongue; all who see them shall flee away” (vv. 2–8).

The prophet Jeremiah also experienced hateful slander and lies. “Then they said, ‘Come and let us devise plans against Jeremiah... Come and let us attack him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words’” (Jeremiah 18:18). Asaph wrote about those who claim allegiance to God, but slander others: “But to the wicked God says: ‘What right have you to declare My statutes, or take My covenant in your mouth, seeing you hate instruction and cast My words behind you? When you saw a thief, you consented with him, and have been a partaker with adulterers. You give your mouth to evil, and your tongue frames deceit. You sit and speak against your brother; you slander your own mother’s son. These things you have done, and I kept silent; you thought that I was altogether like you; but I will rebuke you, and set them in order before your eyes. Now consider this, you who forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver’” (Psalm 50:16–22).

Yes, it is hard to find in Scripture an example of a significant servant of God who did not suffer persecution by false accusation. The Apostle Paul was a special target for the “bloggers” of his day, who falsely accused him of lying and encouraging sin. “For if the truth of God has increased through my lie to His glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner? And why not say, ‘Let us do evil that good may come’”—as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say” (Romans 3:7–8). Some in Antioch of Pisidia used slander and false accusations to stir up people against Paul and Barnabas: “But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city, raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region” (Acts 13:50). It is evident that Paul had to continually defend himself against false accusation (e.g., 1 Corinthians 9; 2 Corinthians 11:16–28, 31).

The Dynamics of Slander

It is important for us to understand the dynamics of slander. I certainly don’t need to remind you of the source of this sin. How many times have we read Revelation 12:9–10, where it tells us that Satan is the accuser of the brethren—but do we really get it? Do we understand that when we falsely accuse others we are letting him do his evil work through us? Do we understand that he has a whole army in Internet-land working day and night to discredit God’s Work and His servants? Do

we follow these workers of iniquity, just a little, just to find out what may be going on that we “haven’t been told”?

Some years ago, I was aware of two men going around saying, “Mark my word, there will be no Living Church of God in six months.” They were trying to sell people on the idea that we would merge with another church group. Eventually, these men left to help form their *own* group. Nearly ten years have passed since that time, and the Living Church of God still exists. On the other hand, the very small group they created has become smaller and smaller and is, for all practical purposes, doing nothing.

It is Satan who stirs up slander, and he has no regard for the truth. He can be sarcastic, funny and charming in the way he sells his lies. How many times have we read John 8:44? And yet do we, as human beings, really get it? Jesus said of certain ones, “You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own re-

sources, for he is a liar and the father of it.”

Satan specializes in one particular kind of lie, as we read near the beginning of this article. He mixes truth with error and by doing so is able to deceive gullible people. A perfect example of this is found in Matthew 26:61 where Jesus was charged with saying: “I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.” Did Jesus actually say that? Yes, and no. Notice that He said, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (John 2:19), but He was not referring to the physical temple in Jerusalem, as they accused Him of doing. When Christ used the words “this temple,” John explains, “He was speaking of the temple of His body” (v. 21). It was a subtle but important difference, and even though the accusation contained some of His actual words, it was totally false! What He intended to say was ignored, and those accusing Him were more interested in winning their case than they were in the truth.

Here is what Mark 14:55–59 adds to the account: “Now the chief priests and all the council sought testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but found none. For many bore false witness against Him, but their testimonies did not agree. Then some rose up and bore false witness against Him, saying, ‘We heard Him say, “I will destroy this temple made with hands,



and within three days I will build another made without hands.” But not even then did their testimony agree.”

Of course, Satan is not averse to making up outright lies, as seen in Genesis 3 where he told Eve, “You will not surely die,” even though God had told Adam they would. Just as with Eve, some people naïvely believe a total stranger more than someone they have known for a long time—and that is one of the problems with the Internet. Unknown and unrighteous individuals who have accomplished little, but who have lots of time on their hands, can become a “somebody” overnight. Sadly, there are plenty of people who will believe whatever they say, especially if they say it dogmatically, along with a tiny bit of truth mixed with falsehood.

Keeping Focused

Instead of preaching the Gospel to the world and warning Israel and all mankind about what is coming, these individuals are content to tear down and slander those who are doing these jobs, and they are often “equal opportunity” slanderers. It isn’t just the Living Church of God they are eager to destroy. They have animosity toward any group that teaches anything about the Sabbath, the Holy Days and the Kingdom of God. Why?

It should be obvious that they have an agenda, and even if everything they report were true—which it never is—their passion is not for God. How anyone can expect to enter the Kingdom of God by such behavior is beyond comprehension, and maybe that tells us something about what truly motivates them. But the answer to the question of “why” is given by Paul: “Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be” (Romans 8:7). Some of these Internet hate-bloggers are weighed down with their own sins and prefer pointing fingers at others rather than repenting. You may consider this when you read 2 Timothy 3:1–7, as it perfectly describes those whose sole identity and purpose in life is wrapped up in gossip and tearing down others. Which one of us can honestly conclude before God that this pleases Him?

So why is Satan so successful? We must be honest with ourselves: too often our human nature loves dirt! It loves to hear some “juicy” tidbit, and it is in our nature to trust ourselves and our ability to separate truth from error. Have we learned the lesson of Genesis 3, or are we still choosing to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil? Personal arrogance can lead us to believe we can sort through a garbage heap and

come out clean. And the more we do so, the more this becomes an ingrained habit. As the Feast of Unleavened Bread teaches us, sin is bondage. It is addictive!

But we need to come to grips with other aspects of our human nature, as well. How easy is it to justify passing along an evil report about someone you don’t like? Perhaps it’s someone you really don’t know but about whom you’ve heard bad things, someone with whom you’ve had a run-in, someone who offended you, or simply someone whose looks you don’t like. *Emotionally*, we “know” that negative report “must” be true, but *logically* that does not follow. Whether we will repentantly admit this to ourselves, or continue in our self-deception, the truth is that when we actively indulge in slander we want to hurt that person or group. We exalt the self by tearing down others.

The Apostle John reveals to us: “But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes” (1 John 2:11). That is how someone can justify indulging in slander and passing it along. That is how someone can justify participating in another man’s sins by feeding the slanderer

How easy is it to justify passing along an evil report about someone you don’t like? Perhaps it’s someone you really don’t know but about whom you’ve heard bad things, someone with whom you’ve had a run-in, someone who offended you, or simply someone whose looks you don’t like.

with tidbits of information, and that is why this article is written for the converted, who are sincere but occasionally come up short. Those who have hatred in their hearts are blind to their own sinful nature, and such an article will have no effect on them whatsoever.

That the Bible condemns slander is not in question. Among many scriptures that we could turn to are Proverbs 16:27–28, Proverbs 14:5–7, and Proverbs 17:9. Proverbs 6:12–19 goes so far as to tell us God hates behavior that sows discord among brethren, and Proverbs 10:18 tells us, “Whoever hides hatred has lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool.”

Gossip and slander have always been a problem, but today instantaneous electronic communications magnify the problem and present each of us with a real challenge. We must avoid taking part in such behavior. But more than that, we must also guard our hearts and minds from those who deliberately try to destabilize us by sowing discord. We must be spiritually wise enough to understand that those whose sole purpose is to tear down others are bringing a very strange doctrine indeed, and John tells us how to deal with such individuals: “If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds” (2 John 1:10–11). (LN)

Woman to Woman

WOMEN'S IMPORTANT PLACE IN GOD'S PLAN

By **Linda Ehman**

As women, do any of us feel left out because we don't have the same authority as men in the Church? God doesn't discount women in His word or in His plan.

Recently, I was reading in Acts 2:16-18 where Peter was explaining to the "devout Jews" from every nation what was occurring in Jerusalem, with the disciples speaking in tongues on that day of Pentecost, and he quoted the prophet Joel:

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your **daughters** shall prophesy... And on My menservants and on My **maidservants** I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy."

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance shows that the Greek word translated "prophesy" here means to speak or sing by inspiration, in prediction or simple discourse. The "simple discourse" refers to communication of thought by words—that is, "talking." It would not necessarily refer to preaching to the church, which is a role God has assigned to men. Also, it mentions singing as part of the definition.

We women can fulfill part of the spirit of this prophecy, in one sense, through speaking encouraging words to others. As we read of the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31, "She opens her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness" (v. 26).

God adds more encouraging words through the prophet Malachi: "Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD listened and heard them; so a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who meditate on His name. 'They shall be Mine,' says the LORD of hosts, 'On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him'" (Malachi 3:16-17).

A Different Role, Not a Lesser One

When God created Eve, he described her in Genesis 2:18 as a "helper" who would be suitable for her husband, Adam. The Hebrew word for "helper" in that verse is *ezer*. As the Church

explains in its *Personal Correspondence Department* letter on the matter (L089):

This is not a demeaning label. God, seeing that Adam could not make it on his own, provided a partner for him who was equal in value and potential in the overall plan God had for mankind.

As the letter says, just because men and women are designed for different roles in life, "[in] the final analysis, God does not look at men or women differently." It points out that although the Bible is clear and that women are not to become elders or preach sermons and are not to be ordained as ministers (1 Timothy 2:12), Paul allows for the ordination of deaconesses for service to God's Church, and it highlights the example of Aquila and Priscilla—a husband and wife whom the Bible indicates were a deacon and deaconess—and how, together, they both helped the young teacher Apollo learn "the way of God more accurately" (Acts 18:26). They worked together as a team.

"Watching" Is for Women, Too!

Being a woman doesn't mean we should not be aware of the world around us or examine it for insight.

In today's world there are many very intelligent and prominent women who are very much engaged with the world around them. Queen Elizabeth II was featured recently in a documentary on the Smithsonian Channel. She is 90 years old and still "going strong" reigning over Britain and the Commonwealth. She has sat on the throne of David since age 26. Our booklet *The United States and Great Britain in*

Prophecy explains more about this. It is quite inspiring to see her still functioning in her office. Duty and service are two main modes of operation

that she strongly focuses on daily. We know we are to be rulers in God's Kingdom, and it is most interesting to see her example.

A very intelligent female writer for the *Wall Street Journal* is Peggy Noonan. She frequently provides excellent insight into the situation of the world today. Her July 1, 2016 article, "A World in Crisis, and No Genius in Sight" was a good example. Ms. Noonan wrote that she was "thinking, again, of

...just because men and women are designed for different roles in life, "[in] the final analysis, God does not look at men or women differently."

the concept of the genius cluster. They happen in history and no one knows why. It was a genius cluster that invented America. Somehow Franklin, Jefferson, Washington, Adams, Madison, Hamilton, Jay and Monroe came together in the same place at the same time and invented something new in the history of man... We could use a genius cluster.”

Like Ms. Noonan, women need to be aware of how world events are proceeding, as Christ commanded in Mark 13:35–37: “Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning—lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!”

I have talked with some women who believe that the Church is doing the watching for us, but Christ was speaking to us as individuals. Watching is part of working out our own salvation, and we, personally, need to be paying attention. The Church gives us a great deal of information about how world events are shaping up to fulfill prophecy, but unless we’re watching world news closely, the information may not seem relevant. We don’t want to find ourselves on the outside looking in, or to be like the Laodiceans in Revelation 3:20, where Christ was *outside*, saying, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.” They were evidently not paying attention—not sitting at His feet, as it were—but were in a separate room or building.

Women Used in the Bible

There have been women prophetesses mentioned in the Bible, such as Huldah in 2 Kings 22:11–14, who was used by God to convey a message to Josiah, king of Judah, when he was shown to his horror that the forgotten Book of the Law was found in the temple and great wrath was coming on Judah because of their disobedience. Josiah actually sent to inquire of God’s words from her.

Scripture also mentions the prophetess Anna, who was present when Jesus Christ was brought to the Temple as an infant. She was a “widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem” (Luke 2:37).



Yet, it is not necessary for a woman to be a prophetess or deaconess to count as a noteworthy servant of God. I know there are many other women spoken of in Scripture who served God. It seems we read of more of them in the New Testament, such as Mary and Martha. We read of the remarkable example of Mary who anointed Christ’s feet with fragrant and costly oil and wiped them with her own hair (John 12:3–8). For this act, Jesus said, “Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her” (Matthew 26:13).

Being a woman does not mean that God does not work with us—just that He may work with us differently in different roles and in different ways. Considering all of this, I take great hope that God will continue to work with all of us, despite our human frailties. We don’t *practice* sin, though we stumble on occasion, but we repent and “pick ourselves up” and continue on our walk, knowing that we have Christ as our Advocate. We *practice* righteousness, and the Apostle John said, “Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous” (1 John 3:7).

So we can all have the hope that Peter spoke of when he was quoting the prophet Joel, “I will pour out my Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath... Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved” (Acts 2:18–21). Our roles may be different than those of men in the Church, but men and women, both, are a vital part of God’s plan for the world! (LH)

DIVIDE AND CONQUER continued from page 2

his wife's vow when he hears about it if he realizes that her vow is not wise. So *how much more* would a husband or the father of an unborn child have *every right* to **prevent** the murder of his child? God concludes these passages in Numbers 30:6-16: "These are the **statutes** which the LORD commanded Moses, between a man and his wife, and between a father and his daughter in her youth in her father's house" (v. 16).

Brethren, I have come to realize that *even in God's true Church* too many of us have been "brainwashed" *so much* by the ever-pervasive media and the teachings of false Christianity that many often *do not even think* about what *God directly says* about such matters! For it would never occur—in our "politically correct" society—to ask what Almighty God would say about all these matters that are now becoming *pervasive* in our confused world.

When people talk about "transgendered" people, they **assume**—because of what the *media says*—that all such individuals are "born" that way. Yet, as I have described to you in other articles, Dr. Paul R. McHugh, the chief psychiatrist at Johns Hopkins Hospital, has stated clearly that people who *imagine themselves* to be the opposite sex are not "born transgender," or born into any other perverted state. Rather, they become that way. As Dr. McHugh states, "It is biologically false that one can exchange one's sex... Transgender men do not become women, nor do transgender women become men... All (including Bruce Jenner) become feminized men or masculinized women, counterfeits or impersonators of the sex with which they 'identify.' In that lies their problematic future" (*CNS News*, May 11, 2016). But such comments are usually "hushed up" by

our modern "leaders" in the media and even in the educational system—in *Satan's society*. So, again, we in God's Church need to *deeply meditate* on the laws and statutes of God and get back to the "mind" of God as revealed in His inspired word. Let us *wake up* and truly "come out" of this world!

Near the end of his life, the Apostle Peter powerfully exhorted God's people: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. **Resist him**, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen" (1 Peter 5:8-11). Notice that the wonderful reward will be granted us **if** we truly resist Satan and also "after" we have "suffered a while"!

God does allow us to go through all kinds of "trials and tests" before we are given **glory** in the coming Kingdom and Family of God. So we all need to *pray fervently* for one another, to **endure** the trials and tests that we will be suffering and to come out with a *right attitude* that we may become members of God's Family **forever**! What a *magnificent reward* we will all have if we truly seek to have "Christ's mind" and fully surrender to let Christ *live His life within us* through the Holy Spirit in the months and years ahead (Galatians 2:20). May God grant that **all** of you dear brethren learn to do that. Again, let each of us *pray fervently* for one another, pray for God's Work, and pray for Christ's Kingdom to *come soon* to this very confused world. (LN)

Rodney C. Meredith

TOMORROW'S

WORLD

Upcoming Telecasts

November 3-9

They Turned the World Upside Down

November 10-16

Can We Trust the Bible?

November 17-23

Sabbath or Sunday?

November 24-30

Ezekiel's Message Unlocked

December 1-7

The Secret History of Hell

December 8-14

Watch the Middle East

December 15-21

John 3:16—So Misunderstood

December 22-28

Is Christmas Christian?

Schedule subject to change | For stations and times, check the Television Log on page 35 of your *Tomorrow's World* magazine.

Births

Derek and Mariah Lee of the Charlotte, NC congregation brought **Avery Scott Lee**, their first child, into the world on July 28. He weighed 7 pounds and 10 ounces and was 21 inches long. Their families and the brethren of the Charlotte congregation celebrate their new addition!

Cecilia Annette Ridgeway was born April 27 to Justin and Haley Ridgeway. She was 19.75 inches long and weighed 7 pounds and 4.5 ounces. Justin, Haley, and Cecilia are from the Charlotte, NC congregation. Congratulations Ridgeway family!

Mr. and Mrs. Mike (Lacie) Dickson are glad to announce the birth of their third child (second boy)! **Micah Levi Dickson** was born August 5 and weighed 10 pounds, 7 ounces! The Dickson family attends in the Charlotte, NC congregation where Mr. Dickson serves as a deacon.

Jacob Brantley Jacques was born to Richard and Gretchen Jacques of the Charlotte, NC congregation! He was born on September 2, weighed 6 pounds 14 ounces and was 22 inches long. He has two older brothers and an older sister who are glad to have him as a part of the family!

Mr. Firman Bramantyo Yohanes and Mrs. Erika Harsi Oktaviani of the Malang, Indonesia, congregation welcomed their beautiful baby daughter, **Alexandra Nathania Yohanes**, on Feb-

ruary 25. She measured 52 cm in length and weighed 3.6 kg. She brings great joy to her parents and the congregation.

Mr. and Mrs. Julio (Melissa) Slayo of the Melbourne, Australia congregation are delighted to announce the birth of their son **Noah Slayo**. He was born on March 10 and weighed almost 8 pounds. The Slayo family is enjoying their beautiful new baby boy.

Mr. and Mrs. Dexter (Amy) Javate of the Adelaide, Australia congregation are delighted to announce the birth of their third child, **DeeAnne Amiela Javate**. She was born on June 22, weighing 6 pounds 1.5 ounces, and measuring 49 cm in length.

Mr. and Mrs. Leif (Jennifer) Kareliusson of the Washington, DC congregation are glad to announce the birth of their third child, **Elise Rae Kareliusson**, born January 14. Elise weighed 7 pounds 1 ounce and was 20 inches long. She joins her sister Eviana (5) and brother Silas (3) who both really enjoy entertaining their new sister with impromptu song and dance. The happy grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Bud (Gale) Kareliusson of California and Mr. and Mrs. Raymond (Rhonda) Clore, of Virginia.

Mrs. Tricia Casey of India gave birth to **Abygayl Patricia Casey**, on March 17. Abygayl weighed 2.8 kg. Both mother and daughter are doing well and Abygayl brings an abundance of joy to her family.

Jay-Ar and Rachel Ducayen-Guanzon of the Davao City congregation welcomed their second son, **Xian Win Gabriel Guanzon**, into their family on March 18. He weighed 2.96 kg. Everyone is captivated by Xian's four dimples whenever he smiles.

Mr. and Mrs. Scott Dennis of the London, Ontario congregation are happy to announce the birth of their son, **Kohen Levi Dennis**, born March 18. Kohen was born prematurely, but he and his mother are both healthy and doing very well.

Mr. and Mrs. Ryan (Laurel) Kemp of the Dallas, Texas congregation are excited to announce the birth of **Ronen Wyatt Gilchrist Kemp**. He arrived on Monday, July 11, weighing 6 pounds 13 ounces and was 20.5 inches long. Big sister Vivian is thrilled to have a new brother. Ronen's grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Ryan (Jayne) Kemp of the Ferriday, Louisiana congregation, Mrs. Diane Gilchrist of the Dallas, Texas congregation and the late Mr. Glen Gilchrist.

Cecilia Annette Ridgeway was born April 27 to Justin and Haley Ridgeway. She was 19.75 inches long and weighed 7 pounds and 4.5 ounces. Justin, Haley, and Cecilia are from the Charlotte, North Carolina congregation. Congratulations Ridgeway family!

We want to hear more about the happy milestones in the lives of our brethren. If your family has had a birth, marriage or major anniversary, please ask your local pastor to send word to the *Living Church News*, PO Box 3810, Charlotte, NC 28227-8010 (or to send e-mail to lcn@lcn.org).

Weddings & Anniversaries

Bleys Kimball Hazen and Erin Rachel Denny were united in marriage at Dennis Vineyards in Albemarle, NC on August 28. Guests included 155 friends and family and the ceremony was conducted by Dr. Scott Winnail, followed by a reception. Mr. and Mrs. Hazen attend together in the Charlotte area. The groom is the son of James and Robin Hazen, and the bride is the daughter of Mark and Laura Denny, who live in the Charlotte area, as well.

Dale Pahoki and Grace La Rocca were married on February 21 by Pastor Rod King. All the family and friends who attended the lovely occasion shared in the excitement of the day and rejoiced with the happy couple. Mr. and Mrs. Pahoki attend the Melbourne, Australia congregation.

On the First Day of Unleavened Bread, the Tannersville, Pennsylvania, congregation enjoyed the added pleasure of honoring members **Mr. and Mrs. Bob (Ginny) Cole**, who were celebrating their 65th wedding anniversary. Mr. and Mrs. Cole were presented a card along with flowers and a cheesecake decorated for the occasion. The congregation warmly congratulated them for their accomplishment and their fine example. The Coles reach another milestone this fall as they will be keeping their 55th Feast of Tabernacles!

Mr. and Mrs. Ron (Jean) Peterson were honored in a surprise 65th wedding anniversary party on June 5 in Lakeland, Florida. All seven of their children were present for the occasion as well as many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, brethren and friends—114 altogether. Eldest son Reg Peterson's toast noted that music has been a big part of the heritage that Mr. and Mrs. Peterson have given their children, including a family band. He said the legacy of the Petersons was more than talented musical children, however. It was the memories, character, traditions and example of service they provided. Mr. and Mrs. Peterson attend the Plant City, Florida, congregation where Mr. Peterson serves as an elder.

Mr. and Mrs. Eldon (Marylou) Davis, of Tonasket, Washington, observed their 50th wedding anniversary on June 6. On the Sabbath, the congregation presented them with a gift in honor of their achievement and in appreciation of their steadfast love and service to God and His Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Larry (Sharon) Richard celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on June 12. They were honored between services on Pentecost with a cake, card and gift, presented by South Louisiana Area Pastor Glen Harrison and elder Mickey Mayeaux of the Lafayette congregation, where Mr. and Mrs. Richard attend.

Mr. and Mrs. Carl (Sue) Derstine were honored by members from the Fayetteville, Greensboro, Jacksonville and Raleigh, North Carolina congregations after combined Sabbath services on June 25. Their exemplary service includes a marriage of more than 50 years, 33 years serving as an elder, several years as a deacon, and seven years pastoring area congregations in eastern North Carolina. More than 60 people attended and several addressed the gathering, expressing heartfelt words of appreciation. Area Pastor James Sweat presented a crystal gift in gratitude and recognition of the Derstines' selfless service. A buffet meal with a special cake and fellowship were enjoyed by all.

Mr. and Mrs. Don Davis of the Charlotte, North Carolina, congregation celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on June 26. The Charlotte congregation honored this wonderful milestone with a cake and hearty congratulations. Mr. and Mrs. Davis met at Ambassador College and have been faithful to God and His Work ever since. Their fine example and loving service to God's people over the years is very much appreciated.

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest (Heddy) Zaitoon, of the Asheville, North Carolina congregation, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on August 19. They were married on that date in 1956 in Syria, where Mrs. Zaitoon was born. Mr. Zaitoon was born in New Jersey, and the first 48 years of their marriage they lived in that state. The last twelve years they have lived in "the beautiful south and love it!" They attended their first Feast of Tabernacles in 1962 in Big Sandy, Texas. He was baptized in 1963, and she in 1968. "God has blessed us with His goodness in our marriage... and we direct all honor and praise toward Him."

Karaysa A. Franz and Cary L. Stapleton were married on July 17 at the picturesque Fox Creek Run in Eureka, Missouri. The ceremony, conducted by the bride's father, Dr. Richard Franz, was followed by a reception and dance. The groom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Doug (Lee) Stapleton of Bowral, Australia, and the bride is the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Richard (Darlene) Franz of House Springs, Missouri. The bride and groom now reside in Bowral, Australia.

Stephen Sweat and Kathryn Randolph were joined in marriage on July 24 in Carrollton, Texas. Family, friends and many brethren witnessed the ceremony conducted by the father of the groom, Mr. James Sweat. A festive reception followed, with speeches, toasts of joy and best wishes. The bride and groom will reside in Dallas, Texas.

Mr. and Mrs. Mike (Jenny) Stratton, of the United Kingdom celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary on June 13. Mr. and Mrs. Stratton were married in the Music Hall of the Ambassador College campus at Bricket Wood in 1971.

In Loving Memory

Mr. Mark Kruse, a deacon in the Reno Nevada congregation and longtime member of God's church, died peacefully on June 16 in his home in Gardnerville, NV. He was 63 years old. Mark was baptized in 1972 and met his wife in the same year at a church dance in Squaw Valley. They were married in 1975 and were blessed to celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary in October of last year. He is survived by his wife, Susan, five sons and two daughters. He was very active in the local Reno congregation and will be greatly missed by the brethren.

Mr. Garland Ropson of the Edmonton, Alberta, Canada congregation died peacefully on June 17 at the age of 81. He and his wife grew up, married and reared their children in Great Harbour Deep, Newfoundland. Having subscribed to the *Plain Truth* magazine in 1968, they were baptized together in 1989. Mr. Ropson first worked as a fisherman, then as a carpenter, including building two of his own homes. For a period of time he owned and operated a sawmill and became well known in later years for his excellent craftsmanship in woodworking. His family praises him for his integrity, ingenuity, resourcefulness and industriousness. Mr. Ropson is lovingly remembered by his wife, Mae, four children (Keith, Marcia, Jeff and Jason Ted) and seven grandchildren. A memorial service was held on June 24, officiated by Mr. Stuart Wachowicz.

Mr. Robert Toutant of Edmonton, Alberta died June 21 at the age of 76, after many years of declining health. He and his wife were baptized together in 1971 in Quebec City where he was ordained as a deacon several years later. Home construction and general carpentry was his lifelong trade, from owning his own business, to working for the Alberta government in its Cooperative Home Building Program. Mr. Toutant is survived by his devoted wife, Gervaise, four children, 14 grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. The Edmonton congregation remembers him fondly, in part for his sense of humour and determination in the face of great obstacles.

Mr. Engelo (Eng) Monson died at home in his favorite chair in Pataskala, Ohio on July 25 at the age of 76. He was born in North Dakota and, after his school years, worked in Minot, ND. After school he went to Minneapolis, MN to work. On June 12, 1960 he married the love of his life, Shirley,

and they were married 56 years. After they moved back to North Dakota to take over his parent's farm, Eng began to be called by God. He was baptized in 1971, and two years later he and Shirley moved to Regina, SK in Canada to be closer to a church. In 1979 he was ordained a minister at the Feast of Tabernacles and served the brethren in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and North Dakota, eventually moving to Columbus, Ohio. He was a devoted father and husband who loved his family. He was a great storyteller, conversationalist and card player, and he loved the brethren. He is survived by his wife, Shirley, and their five children: Sheldon and wife Joette (Zehrung); Nancy and husband Eric Case; Daryl and wife Vicki (Thornton); Ann Burns; Stacy and wife Jamie (Ott) and 16 grandchildren. He is also survived by his two brothers and one sister.

Mr. Joseph Raymakers, 90, of Melbourne, Australia died peacefully on May 5, 2015, with his loving wife and family at his side. Mr. Raymakers was a long-time Church member, known for his humility, sense of gratefulness, and as a quiet achiever. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends, including his wife Mieke, five children and 17 grandchildren. Pastor Rod King conducted his funeral service.

Miss Morgan Montgomery, 19, died in a boating accident at the Living Youth Camp in Ohio on August 2, 2015. She was serving as an Assistant Counselor and had been baptized just three weeks earlier. Mr. Bruce Tyler gave the funeral service in McLaren Vale, Australia on August 17. Morgan was involved in the local Country Fire Service (CFS), was a member of the Adelaide Church choir and was well loved by all who knew her. She is greatly missed.

Mrs. Jan Hemphill died peacefully on August 21, 2015. Mrs. Hemphill was a 1983 graduate of Ambassador College in Pasadena and was known for her warm friendly personality. She was a very supportive wife of her husband, Graeme Hemphill and is missed by all her family and friends.

Mr. Eric Charles Taylor, 64, a longtime member of the Church of God died peacefully on June 17. He is survived by his wife Janet and three boys. Mr. Taylor was baptized in November 1974 and was a member of the Perth, Australia

congregation. He will be greatly missed by family, brethren and friends and long remembered as a hard worker who provided well for his family and who provided work for brethren who worked for him in his business as an electrical contractor. Pastors Michael Gill and Mal Jennings conducted his funeral service.

Mrs. Julieta Gonzales died July 19 at the age of 75. Baptized in 1964, Mrs. Gonzales was a longtime faithful member and a deaconess in the Manila congregation in the Philippines. A memorial service was held on the following Saturday evening. Mrs. Gonzales was truly “salt of the earth,” and the brethren look forward to seeing her again.

Mr. Robert Jupe from the Brisbane, Australia congregation died on July 20, aged 90 years. He was baptized in 1973. Steadfast in the Truth, he has now crossed the finish line of his race.

Mr. Alvin Abrau, 69, died July 21. He was a deacon in the Davao, Philippines congregation and will be greatly missed by his family and all those whom he served.

Mrs. Rose Drum, 76, of the Charlotte, North Carolina, congregation died on March 13. She was married to Mr. Gaither Drum on June 24, 1958 and both were called into God’s Church in 1964. Mrs. Drum was faithful to the end. She was preceded in death by one son, Jason. She is survived by her husband, son Keith and his wife Frankie, grandson Eric and granddaughter Kaylee. Mr. Mike DeSimone conducted the funeral service.

Mr. Troy Riggs, 67, finished his race in his home in Monroe, North Carolina, on April 26 after a 17-month battle with cancer. Mr. Riggs was baptized in December 1979 and has been a faithful servant in the congregations of God’s Church ever since. Always one to work behind the scenes and uninterested in the spotlight, Troy was a source of loving support and warm friendship for many throughout the years. Besides his wife of 47 years, Zono, he is survived by his daughters and sons-in-law—Jeanine and Wallace Smith, Cheryl and Wade Brown, and Valerie and Jerry Craig—as well as nine grandchildren and five siblings. Memorials were held in Charlotte and in Temple, Texas.

ORDINATIONS

Mr. Tony Gary was ordained a deacon on the Last Day of Unleavened Bread by Evangelist Richard Ames, Area Pastor Phil Sena, and Elders Rodger Hagmaier, Eng Monson, and Jim Burson. Mr. Gary serves in the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania congregation.

Mr. Joseph Gonzales, a Living University student and ministerial trainee, was ordained an elder on Pentecost by Regional Director Robert Tyler, Pastor Michael Gill and Area Pastor Martin Montgomery. Mr. Gonzales will continue his training at the Australasian Regional Office in Adelaide, Australia before returning home to the Philippines to serve the brethren in that country.

Mr. Joseph Bobby Jacques was ordained an elder on Pentecost by Area Pastor Gene Hilgenberg, Pastor Wyatt Ciesielka and elder Shannon Christal. Mr. Jacques serves in the Fayetteville, Arkansas congregation.

Mr. and Mrs. George (Linda) Todd were ordained deacon and deaconess and **Mr. Roger Glaman** was ordained a deacon on Pentecost by Pastor Stephen Elliott. Mr. and Mrs. Todd serve in the Los Angeles, California congregation and Mr. Glaman serves in the San Diego congregation.

Mr. Nicolas Nosel was ordained a deacon on June 18 by Mr. Vincent Lardé. Mr. Nosel serves in the Paris, France congregation.

Mr. Michael Heykoop was ordained an elder on July 8 by Canadian Regional Director Stuart Wachowicz and Evangelist Richard Ames. Mr. Heykoop serves in the Mississauga, Ontario congregation and works at the Canadian office of the Living Church of God.

Mr. German Roldan, **Mr. Ron Brooks**, and **Mrs. Rosie Bueno** were ordained deacons and deaconess on the Last Day of Unleavened Bread by Presiding Evangelist Roderick Meredith and Area Pastor Rick Stafford. Mr. Roldan serves the congregation in Harlingen, Texas, Mr. Brooks serves in the Houston congregation; and Mrs. Bueno serves in the Corpus Christi congregation.

COMMENTARY

The Devil's End

As a society, we love a good story. Writers can make millions of dollars crafting thrilling tales to keep us on the edge of our seat. The most common formula used is that of good versus evil.

The story is made most interesting by keeping the reader guessing as to which side will prevail. Many have applied this view to the world itself, believing that the universe is locked in an epic battle between good and evil. Is this a contest with no certain outcome? Or, can you be sure that good will triumph over evil and that the very embodiment of evil, Satan the devil, will meet his end?

First, it is important to recognize that Satan is a very real being. Many people have wrongly used human logic to try to argue away the very existence of a devil. They are deceived! The Apostle John describes Satan as “that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world” (Revelation 12:9). One of his greatest deceptions is the myth that he does not even exist!

In the September-October 2010 edition of *Tomorrow's World*, Richard Ames takes a look at what the Bible actually teaches about Satan the Devil. In his article titled “Who Is the Devil?” he shares with us this insightful synopsis: “He is neither an imaginary figure, nor a comic-book character in a red suit with horns and a tail. He is not a creature to ‘have fun about’ on Halloween. The devil is your enemy, and wants to see you destroyed.”

Next, it's important to know that the Bible not only tells us the devil exists, it also tells us the end of his story.

Those who keep God's Holy Days, listed in Leviticus 23, are reminded each year of the seven crucial steps in God's master plan. This includes the removal of Satan! The Day of Atonement pictures a time in the not-too-distant future when Satan will be taken out of the equation. John saw this in a vision and recorded it for us in the book of Revelation:

“Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while” (Revelation 20:1-3).

Satan will be bound for a thousand years, and then released for a short while before being put away for good! We do not need to remain on the edge of our seat, wondering who will be victorious. There is no contest. God cannot lie (Titus 1:2), and His word makes it clear that the devil's end has been decided; that Satan's days are numbered!

If you would like to know more about the powerful implications of events pictured by the Day of Atonement, or would like to discover the path to truly understanding God's plan for all mankind, then please do not delay in reading online or ordering our free booklet titled *The Holy Days: God's Master Plan*. God has given us the Holy Days so that we can skip to the end of the story, confident that God will triumph over Satan and that He has a wonderful destiny for us. Do not miss this opportunity to peek into your future!

—Michael Heykoop

The above is adapted from one of the many commentaries, discussing vital topics facing our world, available at the lcg.org and TomorrowsWorld.org Web sites.