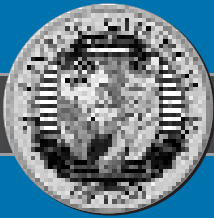


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An Excellent Feast!

Dear Brethren and Friends,

Greetings from Charlotte, North Carolina! Most of us experienced an *excellent* Feast according to the reports I have received from all over the earth! My wife and I had the privilege of attending the Feast at Lake of the Ozarks, Missouri and at Clearwater, Florida. We had 709 people in services one day at the Ozarks, and I hear that the high attendance at Clearwater was 909. The weather was beautiful in each place—though cooler weather was forecast for the latter part of the Feast in the Ozarks. Spirits were high there, and it was a beautiful Feast site.

However, one unusual event that *could* have been very discouraging was that Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ogwyn's baby—who was "supposed" to arrive in early November—was born just as the Feast began! Mr. Ogwyn had to leave the Feast site after a day or so to be with his wife, as the baby was experiencing *serious* complications. Many of us were praying and were deeply concerned. But the baby *did rally* during the Feast, and just yesterday (November 2), I was able to talk by telephone with Mr. Ogwyn, who was delighted to tell me that little Amy is now totally well—"out of the woods," as we say!

In Florida, the Feast went extremely well and the brethren were very upbeat and exuberant about both the activities and the sermons. Our only "hitch" there was that the remnant of Hurricane Wilma was projected to come through and possibly do some damage. It *could* have been a terrible storm causing significant destruction, as it did later on the Atlantic coast. However, God had other plans and diverted it to the south, *away* from our Feast site. All we had was a little high wind and an overnight rain, which did not really disrupt the Feast enjoyment at all! In fact, there was a dinner dance cruise arranged which most of us went ahead and attended even though some rain and heavy swells had been predicted. Later, the captain of the boat—an experienced seaman—told our cruise director, Mr. Fritz Winnail, that we were "very fortunate" in that the sea was not nearly as rough as he had anticipated, and the rain came *during our cruise* and stopped just before we were all ready to get off. So we did not have to get wet!

I am sure many similar circumstances "worked out" at your Feast as well, as our Father takes care of His people. This year's Feast of Tabernacles was a *tremendous* boost and inspiration to all with whom I have talked!

Meanwhile, our God is truly blessing the Work by opening more doors to preach the Gospel than ever before during this revived Work! Brethren, God

has given us five major “breakthroughs” over the last few months in the Work:

A major breakthrough was made back in April when the Inspiration Network International began airing the *Tomorrow's World* telecast across the United Kingdom, Europe and the Middle East, reaching 43 million households.

During the same month, the Work in Australia was blessed with an incredible television breakthrough when the telecast began airing on the NINE Network, which has the potential of reaching approximately seven million Australian households—virtually all TV households in Australia! Most amazingly, the NINE Network allows the Church to air the *Tomorrow's World* telecast for free—saving the Church hundreds of thousands of dollars each year!

In August, *another* significant door opened in the United States. We were able to begin airing on the Inspiration Network (INSP) across the nation, reaching more than 20 million TV households.

In September, *another* major “door” opened in the Republic of South Africa when, for the first time ever, the true Gospel began to be televised to approximately six million households. The *Tomorrow's World* program had aired previously on radio in South Africa, but the Gospel on television was a first.

And last but not least for the year so far, *Tomorrow's World* telecast began airing, last October, on a totally brand new cable network in Canada, called The Christian Channel, with a potential audience of 1.5 million households.

So the *potential audience* for the *Tomorrow's World* telecast is in the scores of millions! Please pray that “much fruit” will result from the telecast over the coming year or two as people become acquainted with *Tomorrow's World*, begin to watch it more regularly, and God begins to work with and “open” many of their minds to His Truth!

From January through September this year, the telecast in the U.S. and Canada brought in more than 93,000 responses by phone calls, letters, website replies and e-mails (and 122,000 since the Feast last year)! This is a solid 30 percent increase over the same period last year.

So we are *very grateful* that the great God has opened these doors, and that *much fruit* is beginning to be seen—with much more “fruit” in the offing!

On the *Tomorrow's World* telecast, I often point out to our audience that many do not take seriously what they read in their Bibles, and that many do not even read the Bible at all. So I am saddened to report that, in talking with some of our ministers, I am finding out that even some of *you brethren* in the Living Church of God do not truly *study* the Bible on a regular basis! I certainly do not want to “scold” you about this, but the lack of Bible study is a **far more** serious matter than some teenage “prank!” This matter of not **studying** the word of God will affect your life now—and the type of reward and blessing you will receive for **all eternity** in the resurrection! Not studying the Bible has a *much greater* effect than some of you may have thought!

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How to Build Leadership

Why do so few know the real secrets to leadership? Why do so many lack a deep sense of fulfillment in their jobs and day-to-day lives? Get out of your rut and live! Get out of your rut and lead and accomplish!

Editorial

By Roderick C. Meredith

There are two kinds of “leaders.” One is the kind who uses “authority” and compels followers’ grudging obedience. The other kind inspires, persuades and sets an example.

The authoritarian-type leader generally considers only self, and the grandeur he (or she) hopes to produce in an empire, nation or business. Such a leader does not give proper consideration to the legitimate needs, wishes and aspirations of followers. By contrast, the right kind of leader leads in order to *serve*.

Which kind will *you* be?

Jesus Christ, who brought a message about world government, showed that the greatest leader will be the *servant* of those who are led. Christ described how the leaders of the Gentiles—the strutting dictators and czars—“exercise dominion” over their followers and strut about to “exercise authority” over them. “Yet,” He said, “it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your *servant*. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your *slave*” (Matthew 20:25–27).

The Desire to SERVE Comes First

All too often, people desire positions of leadership and responsibility primarily for the sake of exalting

self—not for service. This is a great mistake, and often leads to grievous harm and unhappiness not only for those directly involved, but also for many others. Jesus said, “For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (Luke 14:11).

One who humbles the self in order to serve others will find, in due time, that he or she has become a leader because of the sincere desire and ability to help.

One of my friends from college days voluntarily took upon himself the lowly task of emptying the garbage from the dormitory kitchen. Even in his senior year, as a student instructor, he continued this practice until it was noticed by the college president—who thought it better that some other student be given this responsibility. My friend was trying to serve—and later, interestingly enough, he had a far greater opportunity to serve as dean of the college!

What is the point?

The point is that he was alert enough to see a genuine need, and to try to fill that need—even though it was a lowly job of service. His initiative and imagination displayed itself in far more important and interesting ways than this specific example illustrates, but the important fact here is that he was willing to exercise his initiative and use it to serve in this lowly capacity—not just to exalt the self! “He who humbles himself will be exalted.”

This spirit of *humility*—this desire to *serve*, and the spirit of selfless dedication to a cause—is the foundational approach to all true leadership. The leader who is willing to *sacrifice himself* to the task at hand is the one whose followers will be most inspired, and who will most quickly tend to emulate their leader. For he is a leader by sacrifice and service, and is leading by *example*.

Importance of Vision, Imagination, and a Goal

Every great leader must possess at least a certain degree of imagination and *vision*. Such a leader must be able to think ahead—to visualize and plan beyond the immediate present.

The leader must also have a *goal*. If the goal is practical and right—and the leader has created realistic plans and programs leading to that goal—this will certainly command the respect of others and will demonstrate true leadership.

The veritable modern “father” of West Germany, the late Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, asked: “What makes a statesman great?” His answer: “He needs first of all a clear conception of what is possible. Then he needs a clear conception of what he wants. Finally, a great leader must have the power of his convictions, a *moral driving force*. Churchill radiated it. He had

fire and daring from the days of his adventurous youth.”

A Leader Must LEAD and DECIDE

A certain amount of speed and decisiveness is found in the makeup of every great leader. For a leader must be ahead of those who are following. A leader must be alert, charting the course ahead, and able to *decide quickly* the right course of action when problems come up. This requires a degree of mental toughness and courage that many just do not have.

But these are qualities of Christ Himself, and they may be acquired—to a degree, at least—by any Christian who asks Almighty God for them in prayer, and seeks to build, use and exercise these qualities.

When Jesus found God's Temple being turned into a house of merchandise at the Passover season, He did not go off to meditate, call a committee meeting, or ponder what to do. He took decisive action. As the Son of God, He had the right to clean out that temple—and He did! He courageously and vigorously strode through the temple courts, then overturned the tables of the moneychangers and ordered them out. He then made a whip of cords and drove the cattle out.

A leader with this type of decisiveness and courage will bounce back from defeat or adversity. A leader will *not* be a “quitter.” Even though a course of action may sometimes be unpopular, a true leader will have the spiritual and mental resources to see it through and not be deterred by criticism or adversity.

Comradeship and Delegation

A leader must know how to work with other people. Leaders must

command the admiration and respect of other people—their trust, loyalty and responsiveness. Also, a leader must be able to so motivate and organize and guide people that they achieve their maximum potential.

Genuine friendliness and outgoing concern for others are two hallmarks of a great leader. A great leader has time for a smile or a friendly chat, and shows sincere interest in the lives, hopes and dreams of those being led. A great leader builds a sense of comradeship with those being led, so that they feel free to share their ideas and suggestions.

A leader does *not* live in a remote ivory tower, and does not hesitate to call conferences and meetings at which assistants and subordinates can have an opportunity to share their views regarding problems that face their nation or organization.

A top leader is always able to *communicate*. Having received the training—and having developed the discipline—to think clearly, the effective leader is able to communicate with clarity and persuasiveness to subordinates. In this way, those being led can accurately grasp the leader's ideas, goals and specific instructions, without wandering about in hopeless confusion—as actually happens from time to time in many great organizations. The leader's ability and *willingness* to communicate creates a *unity of purpose* among subordinates, and can achieve vigorous action out of an otherwise dissimilar group.

In most cases, a leader should accept the responsibility for the mistakes of subordinates. In like manner, a leader should, when possible, give subordinates public credit for their triumphs. In all of this, the effective leader will win confidence by the continual example of *fairness and honesty* in all dealings with those being led.

A leader must be willing to *delegate authority* to others. Otherwise, he will find himself running a one-man army, a one-man store or a one-man enterprise. An effective leader must have the discernment and insight to select as his administrators men and women of ability, honesty and balance.

Indeed, the challenge of doing all this—*training* the newcomers, *organizing* subordinates and *inspiring* them to accomplishment—is one of the greatest tests a leader must face.

Character and Integrity

A leader whose motives are continually being called into question by subordinates is *through* as a leader. To lead, one must consistently set an example of fairness, integrity and high moral character—if a group or enterprise is worth “leading” in the first place.

Self-discipline is an absolute must for a person in a leadership role. The minute a leader's morals begin to erode—the minute he or she begins letting down, hitting the bottle, engaging in unethical conduct, etc.—may well be the turning point at which successful leadership begins to erode. Very few people indeed can have a feeling of faithfulness and loyalty to an example of instability, dishonesty, weakness or debauchery.

A true Christian leader—the kind who will last—is one who adheres carefully to the principles of the Ten Commandments. Such a leader will be thinking far more about what is “right” than what is expedient. Such a leader's personal integrity will be above question, with a sense of faithfulness and loyalty that will permeate the institution. It is here that, in a very real and immediate sense righteousness “pays off.” There

can be no substitute for Christian character.

WHERE and HOW to Lead

In exercising these principles of service and leadership, you will find many opportunities to use them. First of all, you can begin right in your own family. For, in an important sense, your family is “a miniature kingdom.”

In describing the qualifications of an elder or minister, God asks, “If a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?” (1 Timothy 3:5). The place to begin is at home.

All husbands should, in humility and love, serve, inspire and lead their families. They serve them by providing for, protecting and guiding them as a unit through the rough spots of life. Yet, in this very service, they must *lead*. They must exercise the very qualities outlined in this article.

And—this is very important—learn to *build leadership* into your children! For they certainly *should be* leaders in Tomorrow’s World!

Apply the principles of this article on your job, in your business or on your farm. Learn to think ahead and employ right imagination and vision, decisiveness and courage. Learn to organize those under you, and develop a proper method of delegating responsibility to others—yet being faithful and fair to them, as you want them to be to you.

A gloomy warning on the declining state of American leadership was issued by former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare John W. Gardner. He said that unless the present trend is reversed, “We are in danger of falling under the leadership of men who lack the confidence to lead. And we are in danger of destroying the effectiveness of those who have a natural gift for leadership.”

This society has lost its way. It has no *goal*. It substitutes committee meetings, discussions and public opinion polls for leadership.

But, happily, a *new age* is about to be ushered in under the guidance of the living Christ.

We call it “Tomorrow’s World.”

Born to Rule

Many have never really thought about the fact that human beings were created with powers far transcending the animal realm.

Read it, in your own Bible: “Let Us [God is speaking] make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth” (Genesis 1:26).

Why have so few understood what the Bible says? Notice what Jesus told His disciples: “And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Luke 22:29–30).

Also, “And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron...’” (Revelation 2:26–27).

Human beings have been put on this earth to learn lessons in preparation for ruling this earth—and ultimately the entire universe—with and under God! That is one big reason why there are trials and tests, heartaches and headaches, and lessons that are learned through human suffering. Even Jesus learned “by the things which He suffered” (Hebrews 5:8). That is how He became a leader.

But, even here, many people often ask: “But why should I want to

‘domineer’ over others or give people orders? Why should I be interested in this idea of being a ruler in God’s government?”

Why, indeed?


Have you ever wanted to give real and lasting help to the starving people of our world? Have you ever wanted to really and permanently help the sad, lonely, lost orphan children around the world? Have you ever deeply wanted to *quickly* help the blind, deaf and disabled?

Why You Should Want to Rule in Tomorrow’s World

As a *servant* and a *leader* in God’s Kingdom, you will have that very kind of opportunity!

The “firstfruits” will have a wonderful opportunity to supernaturally help the sick, the starving, the orphaned, the disabled, the blind and the maimed! This kind of leadership—the type that will bring tears of thankfulness and joy to the faces of millions—is something we all should fervently desire. It is the real reason for the Christian life and our calling now. This is the constant subject of Jesus Christ’s proclamation of the world-ruling Kingdom of God. Those who overcome will be made kings and priests and rule over the nations. And our children who live on through the tumultuous days ahead may well become the human leaders in Tomorrow’s World—if we have trained, guided and inspired them to prepare now.

So, most of all, prepare for that day. It is coming sooner than you think! Try to help and serve others with the knowledge that you have. Develop and *use* these qualities of leadership in your everyday life.

Christian leadership based on *service* is the best possible preparation for your job as a king under Jesus Christ in Tomorrow’s World! 

Becoming a Team Player

By Douglas S. Winnail

In sports and in business, successful teams win games and achieve prominence. Winning teams are made up of individuals who develop skills that help them function as effective team players. However, it is not only in sports and business that successful people must learn the skills and develop the qualities that lead to effective teamwork. Christians must develop many of these same skills and qualities, in order to be useful instruments in God's hands—both now and in the Kingdom of God. In this article we will examine several qualities that can help each of us become more effective team players. These qualities are useful in marriage, family, on the job and in God's Church—as in the coming Kingdom of God.

The Big Picture

Individuals who function effectively as team players *learn to stay focused on the big picture*. They understand that they have been chosen to be part of a team that has an important mission to accomplish. Athletes who are outstanding team players focus on winning games and championships; they do not become side-tracked by petty personal issues or disagreements with other team members. Executives who lead successful companies stay focused on becoming the best in their field, not on trivial, peripheral concerns. Jesus told His disciples to “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness” (Matthew 6:33), yet it took them some time to see the big picture (Luke 9:46; 22:24–26).

The Bible reveals that for thousands of years, God has been selecting and training a team of individuals who will serve as kings and priests in His coming Kingdom. The book of Genesis records how God chose and worked with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their wives. Jesus describes these individuals working together as prominent members of the world government in the coming Kingdom of God (Matthew 8:11). Jesus laid the foundations of His earthly ministry by calling and training a

team of twelve disciples (Luke 6:13–16), whom He sent out to preach the gospel and heal the sick (Luke 9:1–6). Jesus told them that if they faithfully followed His instructions, and worked together to accomplish His mission, they would “sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” in the Kingdom of God (Matthew 19:28). To carry out this mission required—and still requires—coordination and teamwork.

The apostles described specific qualities that Church leaders should develop in order to prepare for positions in the government of God. They should be temperate (acting in moderation), hospitable, gentle (gracious and considerate of others) and not quarrelsome (1 Timothy 3:1–13). These qualities help people become effective team players. Paul indicated that the ability to foster smooth and harmonious family relationships is a vital prerequisite for a Church leader. The family is like a team—it has biblically defined roles that point the way to happy, productive and fulfilling relationships where all the members know—and strive to fulfill—their God-given roles (Ephesians 5:22–33). God designed these roles to help us prepare for our future roles in the Kingdom of God. As we learn to function effectively within our roles in the family, or on our jobs (Ephesians 6:1–6) or in the Church (Ephesians 4:11–16), we will develop skills and qualities to serve effectively as members of the team that God is preparing, which will rule with Jesus Christ in the coming Kingdom of God. Regrettably, many today prefer to act independently and are unwilling or unable to work in harmony with the team that God is preparing. Individuals who make such decisions will experience both immediate and long-term consequences, because they will not learn vital lessons and skills that will help them become effective members of God's final team.

The Bible uses several different analogies to describe the family God is preparing. They are likened to a body (1 Corinthians 12), a spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5), a spiritual temple (Ephesians 2:19–22) and soldiers in an army (2

Timothy 2:3). Paul also draws analogies to athletics (1 Corinthians 9:24–27); Christ's disciples were called to learn to work together as a *team* to accomplish a mission and to prepare to rule with Him in the Kingdom of God. We, too, need to see how learning to play our role on the team is vital to the success of the team and can prepare us

(Isaiah 2:3; Zechariah 14:16–19) can be deceived into believing that God's laws are mere legalism and no longer apply today.

Members of God's team must understand that His game plan involves a New Covenant to “put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts” (Jeremiah

Effective team players know and follow the game plan. Christians who hope to be on God's final team understand the importance of following God's game plan; they do not waste time trying to devise their own game plan! How clearly do you understand God's game plan?

for future roles in God's government. To become effective team players we need to keep our eyes on this big picture, and must remember, “Where there is no vision [when we lose sight of the big picture], the people perish” (Proverbs 29:18, KJV). How clearly do you see this big picture?

The Game Plan

An athletic team develops a game plan in order to win games. A company develops a business plan to guide its future development. The Bible reveals that *God also has a “game plan” that He is following*. The steps in God's plan of salvation for mankind are pictured in the annual Holy Days (see Leviticus 23). Jesus Christ outlined a “game plan” for the team of disciples He called and trained. Their mission was to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God (Matthew 10:6–18)—first to the house of Israel and then to the world (Mark 16:15)—to warn the world of dramatic events that would precede the return of Christ (Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21), to feed the flock that God calls (John 21:15–17) and to prepare a people to rule with Christ in His Kingdom (Luke 1:17). God's game plan involves preaching the gospel as a witness—not converting the world at this time (compare Matthew 13:10–16 and 24:14). Jesus foretold that the warning message would be like “the voice of one crying in the wilderness” (Isaiah 40:3)—and that it would be ignored by many—yet the world will come to realize that they have been warned by men whom God has sent (Ezekiel 2:1–8; 3:1–9). When Christ returns, He will set up a world-ruling government that will begin the task of converting all peoples of the earth (Isaiah 2:2–4; 11:9).

This is the “game plan” God has revealed in Scripture. If team members forget this game plan, they can go off the track and become caught up in mistaken efforts, such as trying to “convert the world” today. Individuals who forget that God's game plan involves *teaching* the world about the laws of God and the meaning of the Holy Days

31:31–33) so “they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments” (Ezekiel 11:14–20). With this understanding, they will know why Jesus admonished His disciples to *learn* to live “by every word of God” (Luke 4:4)—a necessary step for those who will *teach* God's laws in the coming Kingdom of God (Isaiah 30:20–21). Effective team players know and follow the game plan. Christians who hope to be on God's final team understand the importance of following God's game plan; they do not waste time trying to devise their own game plan! How clearly do you understand God's game plan?

God Calls the Plays!

In sports, the team captain usually calls the plays a team will execute. In business, the Chief Executive Officer makes strategic decisions that direct the activities of company personnel. In an army, the general and his staff determine the actions of their troops. The Bible clearly reveals that God calls the important plays in history and in our lives—yet we, too, have decisions to make. The Old Testament reveals that God gave instructions directly to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel and the prophets. In the New Testament, God used the Holy Spirit to guide the growth of the early Church (Acts 10; 13:1–3). The apostles asked for God's guidance, and sought to follow it as they labored together to fulfill their mission of taking the gospel to the world (Acts 4:23–33). They trusted God as the “team captain.” They had faith that He would guide them in their decisions and would not abandon them (Hebrews 13:5).

The Bible reveals that God calls us (John 6:44, 65), grants us an understanding of His plan (Matthew 13:10–16) and places us in the body as it pleases Him (1 Corinthians 12:12–18). However, we must decide how to act on the understanding we are given, and whether to go through the doors that God opens to us. Scripture also reveals that God uses human instruments to do His work

on this earth (Romans 10:14–15), and to make decisions that can often affect our lives in very personal ways. So, it is important to prove carefully—based on Scripture, track records and fruits—where God is working and who God’s representatives are, because we must decide whether or not to follow the plays that God’s leaders call! Effective team members know who is the captain of the team. They respond readily to directions coming from leaders whom God chooses—and their responsiveness improves the team’s performance. Individuals who prefer to call their own plays, act independently and do their own thing *undermine the effectiveness of the team!* The Bible refers to such individuals as “goats” (Matthew 25:31–34), and explains that God will not use such independent mavericks to do His work today—or to staff His government in His Kingdom. God is preparing a team made up of team members who have learned to follow the plays that He calls. Are you learning this vital lesson?

Adapting and Adjusting

Members of successful teams learn how to *adapt* and *adjust* to changing situations. Athletic teams that fail to adjust their game plan in response to an opponent’s moves will lose games. Companies that do not anticipate and adjust to changes in the marketplace will lose market share and will go out of business. Christians must also be able to adapt and adjust when circumstances change. John the Baptist displayed these qualities when Jesus Christ began His ministry. Although John was an outstanding servant of God, he realized that his work was finished, and he commented, “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30). The Apostle Paul also developed this important quality. He wrote, “I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound” (Philippians 4:11–12). Servants of God must be versatile.

In order to be able to adapt and adjust—especially under difficult circumstances—we must develop real faith in God. We must become fully convinced that “all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28). We must remember that God “will also make the way of escape” when we encounter difficult trials (1 Corinthians 10:13). Effective team players learn to be *resourceful* and *alert* for different ways to deal with issues and challenges, in order to help the team succeed. In athletics and in business, older players often become highly effective coaches, transmitting lessons they have learned over the years, which helps younger people become more effective team members.

The whole Bible is full of examples and instructions that can help us adapt and adjust to become more profitable servants. The four Gospels, the Apostle Paul’s 14 epistles and the book of Proverbs all contain valuable lessons that can help us become more effective team players. When you read these books, ask yourself: How adaptable am I when circumstances change? What adjustments do I need to make? Am I truly confident that God will guide my path?

Working Together Smoothly

Members of successful teams must be able to function together smoothly in order to accomplish their mission. Team members who argue, disagree and compete with each other will disrupt and hinder a team’s efforts to succeed. This is true in sports, in business and in marriages, as well as in the family and the Church. This is why the Bible so strongly emphasizes that Christians must learn to work together smoothly. The Scriptures reveal that members of the team that God is assembling must not be divided into factions, but rather should “all speak the same thing” and “be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Corinthians 1:10). This does not mean that Christians must become mindless robots, but it does require that we be led by the *same spirit*. Part of the work of the ministry is to promote the “unity of the faith” and to “knit together” the whole body of believers (Ephesians 4:12–16). These are essential qualities for any successful team.

Effective team members who are able to work well with their teammates know the importance of frequent, pleasant and positive communication (Malachi 3:16). They are respectful and considerate in their dealings with other team members (Philippians 2:3). They do not dwell on the negative; they are optimistic and able to inspire others (Philippians 4:8). They know that pride generates strife between team members (Proverbs 13:10). They understand that personal humility helps to avoid rivalry and jealousy (1 Peter 5:5), and they know how to be peacemakers, pouring oil on troubled waters to reduce friction among teammates (Matthew 5:9). Outstanding team players refuse to criticize, pick at or complain about their fellow team members (Matthew 7:1–2). They learn to overlook offenses (Proverbs 17:9) in order to avoid disruptions on the team. Christian team players are able to forgive and forget offenses; they understand that if they do not forgive others, they will not be on God’s final team (Matthew 6:14–15). Christian team members follow Paul’s admonition that “as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all” (Romans 12:18). Can you work with

other members of your team smoothly and without friction? Are there people you need to forgive, so that your family or your congregation can function more harmoniously?

Growing, Overcoming and Enduring

Effective team players never rest on their laurels. They are constantly seeking to develop and refine their skills in order to contribute to the success of the team. They are keen to identify and eliminate their weaknesses so they can serve the team more effectively, and they never quit! The Bible reveals that these qualities are also important for Christians who hope to be

members of the Church—part of the body of Christ (Colossians 1:18)—which makes us *members of a team of ambassadors*. So it is not surprising that we find many scriptural references about how God wants His ambassadors to function. God intended that the ancient nation of Israel should represent His way of life to surrounding nations (Deuteronomy 4:1–8). Jesus taught that His disciples should be “lights” to the world (Matthew 5:13–16). Jesus spoke of the importance of dressing in appropriate attire (Matthew 22:11–14; see also Deuteronomy 22:5). Paul addressed the issue of appropriate grooming and appearance (1 Corinthians 11:2–15), and emphasized repeatedly that appropriate Christian conduct reflects on the reputation of His team

While many professing Christians revel in a spirit of independence, worshiping God in their own way and deciding doctrinal issues for themselves, the Scriptures speak of being of one mind, being united in doctrine and working together smoothly as a team to achieve the mission God has outlined for His people and His Church.


instruments in God’s hands now and to rule with Christ in His Kingdom. Jesus emphasized that members of His team should be servant leaders (Matthew 20:25–28). This requires motivation, preparation and the ability to notice needs and look for ways to help fill those needs.

Peter encouraged his audience to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18). This requires personal sacrifice and effort. John stressed that Christians must be “overcomers”—not just people with good intentions (see Revelation 2; 3). People who overcome problems are *open to correction* that can help them become more productive team members. The Scriptures clearly state that those who are chosen to be on God’s final team must “endure to the end” (Matthew 24:13) and finish the race (1 Corinthians 9:24–27; 2 Timothy 4:7). Effective team members do not give in to doubt, discouragement and negative thinking. They do not quit the team; they endure to the end! Are *you* developing these qualities?

A Team of Ambassadors

Prominent athletes and successful businesspeople often serve as unofficial ambassadors for their countries. The Bible refers to Christians as “*ambassadors for Christ*” (2 Corinthians 5:20; Ephesians 6:20), and as representatives of a coming kingdom that is not of this world (Philippians 3:20). As Christians, we have been called as individuals to come out from this world and become

(1 Timothy 3:15; 1 Peter 1:13–19). Ambassadors for Christ must know God’s word and be skilled in the application of biblical principles. They must be able to function as peacemakers in their families, on their job and in the Church (Matthew 5:9). In other words, *our example is important* if we are to be effective members of the team God is preparing, that will rule with Jesus Christ in the coming Kingdom of God. What kind of an ambassador for Christ are *you*? Do you speak, dress and deal with people in a manner befitting a representative of the coming government of God?

One of the biggest challenges that Christians face, in our modern do-your-own-thing age, is to function effectively as members of a team that God is using to prepare the way for His coming kingdom. While many professing Christians revel in a spirit of independence, worshiping God in their own way and making doctrinal innovations for themselves, the Scriptures speak of being of one mind, being united in doctrine and working together smoothly as a team to achieve the mission God has outlined for His people and His Church. The prophet Malachi sums up this approach by stating, “Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another... a book of remembrance was written... 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’” (Malachi 3:16–18). The Bible reveals that the ability to function as a team is extremely important to God, and it plays a vital role in His plan. This is why we must strive to become effective team players. 

Joy: A Fruit of the Spirit

By Dibar K. Apartian

Can you be truly happy and joyful in a world of confusion, sadness and corruption?

Yes, you can and you should, if you are a true Christian. Joy is an attribute of God. It is of God. It is a “fruit of the spirit”—the second fruit after love—followed by “peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.” (Galatians 5:22–23).

If you are only joyful when things go right—when you are in good health, successful and prosperous—then you are only a part-time Christian, and no part-time Christian will ever enter the Kingdom of God!

Christ suffered more than any other being on the face of the earth. He was misunderstood, mistreated, persecuted and crucified. Yet, He was a *man of joy*! He knew why He was born. He was aware of His mission. His eyes were constantly on the goal, beyond the troubles and sufferings of the present.

Notice the instructions He gave His disciples during one of His last meetings with them, just before His crucifixion: “Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you. And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full” (John 16:22–24).

Joy is a by-product of faith. If you trust God—if you know that all things work together for your good because you love Him and are

called according to His purpose—then you cannot help but be joyful, truly happy and confident in all circumstances.

Do you realize that love itself cannot be full unless working hand in hand with joy? True love is giving and Christ said it is much “more blessed [a greater cause for joy] to give than to receive.” When you seriously examine these matters, you will understand why the Apostle James tells you to “count it all joy... when you meet various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness [patience]. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing” (James 1:2–4, *Revised Standard Version*).

Was Paul a Man of Joy?

Even though the Apostle Paul was not one of the original twelve apostles, he was nevertheless directly taught by Jesus Christ. He labored as hard as any of them. He suffered even more. Speaking of this, he writes: “From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness” (2 Corinthians 11:24–27).

How would you have reacted if you were in Paul’s place? Would you

have been depressed and discouraged? Would you have lost faith in God? Paul did not. Throughout his epistles, he reminds us that we should always be happy, courageous and joyful. He tells us to look forward to that which is ahead. He commands us to have a positive attitude, to see the good in people, to count our blessings, to have implicit faith in God. He even tells us how to achieve this: “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.” (Philippians 4:8).

For centuries, psychologists and philosophers have tried to tell us how to be happy, how to succeed and how to have peace of mind. Hundreds of books have been written on the subject. But the Apostle Paul, under God’s inspiration, sums up in a few words what others have not been able to convey in endless volumes.

What allowed him to maintain this positive attitude despite trials, persecutions and sufferings? What made him able to say, “We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed” (2 Corinthians 4:8–9)?

And how could Paul describe himself as “sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things” (2 Corinthians 6:10)?

Could Paul, on his own, have overcome all his problems and diffi-

culties? You know the answer. God's Spirit worked through Paul. It gave him all the help he needed to remain on the right track and to be joyful.

God is a God of joy. When you receive His Spirit, you also receive His nature of joy. The Spirit of God, which filled Paul with courage, patience and faith, will also help you—as long as you do your part.

The question is: Are you willing to *submit* to God as Paul did? Is your life thoroughly given to Him? Do you live to serve and to encourage others? Do you allow “the fruit of the Spirit” of God to shine constantly in your life, in all of your activities, so that others might see it and glorify God?

If so, then Paul's exhortation of joy will have an echo in your heart: “Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4).

It was God's Spirit in Paul that made him able to rejoice always, to pray without ceasing and to give thanks in everything. The same Spirit of God in you will help you act in like manner, if your mind is primarily on your calling and not on yourself.

The Kingdom of Joy

The book of Psalms is an anthology of praises to God—songs of comfort, thanksgiving and joy. It unveils God's magnificent plan for mankind, His love and deep concern for us.

How often do you read the Psalms with these truths in mind? Time and again, David not only praises the Lord, but he also expresses his joy in keeping God's commandments; he rejoices in the goodness, mercy and justice of the Lord. That is what the Psalms are about. No wonder David was a man after God's own heart!

Have you ever used this remedy in time of need? You should! When praises are continually on your lips

and in your heart, you cannot be sorrowful! It is not possible.

Isaiah wrote: “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, and her people a joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people; the voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, nor the voice of crying” (Isaiah 65:17–19).

Do you see how many times God speaks of joy and of rejoicing in these few verses as He describes tomorrow's world—a world totally different from ours, where all people will have a converted mind and attitude?

You have probably read often the parable of talents Christ gave in Matthew 25. You know that the man who traveled “into a far country” is Christ Himself. It is He, Christ, who gave His servants—each according to his ability—whatever talents they needed in order to use them and to bring forth fruit.

But have you ever noticed the way Christ defined the Kingdom of God? In the parable, the two servants who had multiplied what they had been given were told: “Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord” (Matthew 25:21).

Read it again! Christ said: “Enter into the *joy* of your lord.” To enter the Kingdom of God is to *enter into His joy*! Once you grasp the depth of this statement, you cannot help but literally leap with joy! You will feel like the “man lame from his mother's womb” who received healing instead of the alms he asked of Peter and John. “So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—walking, leaping, and praising God” (Acts 3:2–8).

Before God opened our minds, we too were lame and blind and deaf, spiritually speaking. He granted us a spiritual awakening—the healing of our minds. In His mercy and compassion, God gave us infinitely more than what we asked for.

Is this enough reason for us to rejoice? God called us out of this world and forgave our sins. He begot us with His spirit, which allows us to bear fruits, “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” If we live and work with them, then we too may hear Him say, “Well done, good and faithful servant... Enter into the joy of your lord.”

A Message of Good News

The Gospel of Christ is a message of *good news*—happy, thrilling and rejoicing news. Why do we sometimes forget this? Why do we overlook His promises? Of all the people on the face of the earth, we in God's Church understand that we have the opportunity to become His children, literally speaking. Surely this is a good enough reason to make us overlook our problems, set our eye on the sublime goal and bounce with joy.

Paul wrote: “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18). He assures us that there is no condemnation in us if we are in Christ (v. 1). Read carefully the whole chapter. It contains the most encouraging promises you have ever dreamed of hearing!

As a member of God's Church, you have received “the spirit of sonship.” You are an heir of God—a joint-heir with Christ!

This should truly fill your mind with joy. Imagine! The whole cre-

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Feast of Tabernacles 2005

International Site Reports

Around the world, more than 6,700 Living Church of God brethren gathered to observe the 2005 Feast of Tabernacles and Last Great Day. The January-February 2006 *Living Church News* will include reports from sites across the United States and Canada. In this issue, we present reports from other Festival sites across the globe.

Llandudno, N. Wales, United Kingdom

Beautiful sunny skies welcomed 90 brethren from about a dozen different countries to the pleasant seaside Victorian town of Llandudno. Sermons focused on various aspects of the coming Kingdom of God—including preparing to lead, becoming peacemakers and the need to develop wisdom. Misty mornings and a bit of rain did not dampen the warm spiritual fellowship and inspiring special music. Buffet lunches between services on the Holy Days, a folk dance, a medieval banquet of roast lamb, glasses of mead, a harpist and a Welsh choir provided a real taste of Welsh culture. A trip to Carnarvon Castle (the site of Prince Charles' investiture as Prince of Wales) and a ride through the hills on a restored narrow gauge steam train added pleasant dimensions to the Festival activities.

—Douglas Winnail

Albé, France

In the beautiful Alsatian region of France, 170 joyful brethren celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles. Strong spiritual meat and drink were provided by Evangelists Dibar Apartian and Douglas Winnail, and brethren also enjoyed the delicious Alsatian provincial cuisine and wines. Alsace is near the German border, and the region has a distinctive culture that has developed from an ancient history. The brethren enjoyed scenic tours of the nearby historic cities of Strasbourg and Colmar. The feast site is just outside the small village of Albé, nestled in the low mountains of the Alsatian wine-growing region. The brethren especially enjoyed touring the local area, which

is characterized by rolling vineyards of riesling and gewurtztraminer vines, golden-yellow in their autumn colors. Warm days and cool evenings added to the enjoyment of the local landscape.

—Dexter Wakefield

Homa Bay, Kenya

The Feast of Tabernacles was held for the second successive year in Homa Bay on the shores of Lake Victoria in western Kenya. Ninety people attended, including many children. The weather here on the Equator was warm and dry by day, with showers at night. Sermons focused on the coming Kingdom of God. Activities included a trip to a game park and games for the children. A number took advantage of the opportunity to discuss baptism and to ask questions about biblical subjects and personal concerns. Mr. Henry Cooper (an elder from Ireland) and his wife Rosemary were able to spend the entire Feast in Kenya, then traveled on afterward to visit a congregation in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.

—Henry Cooper

Glentana, South Africa

In South Africa, about 120 brethren again kept the Feast of Tabernacles in Glentana, a small, pretty village in a tranquil setting of beautiful green hills, winding country roads, idyllic beaches and a whale-rich, blue ocean.

The atmosphere among God's people could only be described as "of one family." A wonderful family day barbecue included an "Olympics" with adults and children running the egg-and-spoon race, sack race and a treasure hunt—the lesson being that taking part makes you a winner. The senior citizens enjoyed a special luncheon and a "sing-along" evening brought back many memories. Our overseas visi-

tors even sang along in Afrikaans!

Somehow, each sermon and sermonette built upon the other. All were outstanding, emphasizing the family relationship, spiritual growth, hospitality and the mean-



France

ing of the Feast. Brethren had the privilege of listening to fine “live” sermons by Messrs. Hull, Bonjour, Oswald and Bouwer, as well as DVD sermons by Mr. Meredith and the late Mr. John Ogwyn. Early in the feast, Messrs. Hull, Bonjour and Oswald ordained Mr. Chris Lomas as an elder in God’s Church. Also, two new members were baptized into the Body of Christ. The song services reflected the joyful and exuberant spirit of the brethren. The blessing of the little children was asked upon three new



South Africa

arrivals from the the past year. Being able to share in the “Behind the Work” film, brought a smile to many faces, and made everyone appreciative of all the work being done at Headquarters.

Some fellowship-inducing weather contributed to the family feeling, and even the brethren and ministers visiting from Charlotte, Missouri, Florida and New Zealand were “swallowed up” in the hospitality and friendliness that soon turned friends into family. Anyone attending could feel the effect of servant leadership in action at the Feast of Tabernacles 2005!

—Christo Botha

Ballina, Australia

The town of Ballina, situated on the north coast of New South Wales, was once again an ideal site for God’s people to assemble before Him at this year’s Feast of Tabernacles. God blessed this Feast with an interesting variety of weather that was rather diverse in character, commencing with some rain and wind, breaking to beautiful sunshine and then some light clouds interspersed with blue skies. This combination of weather was most conducive to warm fellowship amongst the 200 brethren who attended.

This was the fourth time that Ballina has hosted the Feast, and it was pleasing to note the increase in attendance over our first Feast in Ballina in 1999 which had 78 attendees.

During the Feast we gathered together and took photos of the brethren who had come into the Church as a

result of the preaching done through the Global Church of God and now the Living Church of God. It was wonderful to see the fruit of the Work of approximately 80 individuals, standing together, as a testimony to the fact that the work of the living Jesus Christ continues on. Approximately 40 percent of those attending in 2005 were new to the Truth! It brought tears of joy to our eyes!

A variety of messages were given by God’s ministers, Evangelist Bruce Tyler, Pastor Rod King (fresh from the Philippines) and local elders Ken MacLeod and Dayrell Tanner. God provided a diet of nourishing spiritual “meat” for those attending, emphasizing millennial themes, focusing us on our Heavenly Father and His plan for all mankind, our personal roles in that plan, and practical instruction for all of God’s children, young and old alike.

On both of the Holy Days we were all able to enjoy a banquet luncheon together in Spinnaker’s Restaurant, adjacent to the auditorium. With the Richmond River as a backdrop, much happy feasting and fellowship was enjoyed by everyone.

Our singles dinner at the Australian Hotel on Tuesday night was an outstanding relaxing success, and provided a springboard for continuing fellowship among the singles throughout the Feast.

The family day at Byron Bay, Australia’s most easterly point, was dampened by rain that caused the flying trapeze school to be cancelled, but the noisy tables enjoying the special afternoon tea attested to the great fellowship that took place despite the inclement weather. Our seniors and “senior-seniors” enjoyed special luncheons with the ministry and some willing helpers.



Australia

The highlight activity for most was the Talent and Fun Show, which was hosted by Mr. Rod King, with performances from our youngest children right up to some “ancient folks” from Adelaide. It was a treat to be entertained by brethren from all over, and we appreciated their individual talents and courage in serving us in this way.

The special music was wonderful, full of variety, instrumental solos, vocal duet and quartet, children’s choir, and the full Festival choir under the direction of Mr. Mal Jennings.

The harmony, unity, love, and pleasant attitudes of all who were present were outstanding—so much so that the staff at the venue where we met expressed their pleasure at

our group's behavior, stating that they love having us there since we are such nice people with beautiful well-behaved children. They said they wished all other groups were as we were. We might add that they, too, are people we love to deal with—nothing was too much trouble for them.

Yes, our Father and Jesus Christ were surely glorified at this Feast, and all praise goes to Them for pouring out their Spirit on Ballina and providing us with an outstanding, “beautiful” Feast.

—Dayrell Tanner

Vanuatu

Forty brethren joyfully observed God's Feast of Tabernacles in the South Pacific island nation of Vanuatu. The festival site was near Orap village on the verdant island of Malekula.

Most of the members actually live in Orap, and they had prepared to observe the Feast communally in the true spirit as pilgrims in this present age. Rather than remain in their usual homes, they did live for eight days in temporary dwellings. On land belonging to deacon Mr. Jerry Sam, much work had been done. A large house, made of materials from the local jungle, was built to provide housing for women and children. Tents were erected for the men. A large area was roofed with coconut fronds so that all meals could be eaten together in the shade, protected from the tropical sun.

However, the most extensive preparation was to build a new “tabernacle” in which to hold services during the Feast and on regular weekly Sabbaths. Members had worked with dedication each Tuesday for several months toward the construction of this fine building. It is almost finished, and served us very well during the Feast.

Local members were joined by others who traveled from the southern islands of Tanna and Efate. For the first few days of the Feast, New Zealand elder Mr. Kinnear Penman and his wife Caroline were able to enjoy the Christian hospitality offered by our Vanuatu brethren.

Mr. Penman spoke on subjects such as the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles and the purpose of hymn singing in our services. He also conducted a biblical question-and-answer session. Questions included the issue of whether former cannibals can one day be saved. For the remainder of the Feast,

members were served by sermons on DVD provided by headquarters.

In future years, our brethren would welcome the company of small numbers of overseas Feastgoers and can guarantee a truly joyful and memorable Feast experience.

—Kinnear Penman

Montego Bay, Jamaica

Under cloudy tropical skies at Montego Bay, at the Holiday Inn Sun Spree Resort on Jamaica's north coast, 142 brethren from North America and Canada joined 94 Jamaican brethren for the Feast of Tabernacles 2005. Average attendance at services for the eight days was 208. Words such as “wonderful,” “fantastic,” “awesome,” “a piece of the Millennium” and “excellent” were how some of the brethren described this year's Feast.

Services were held at the Holiday Inn, where just under 160 of the brethren stayed. The rest stayed at other facilities in close proximity to the Feast site. The sermons and sermonettes went hand-in-glove in painting a picture of God's Kingdom and our part in it. Another highlight was the love and unity displayed by the brethren, their willingness to serve, the generosity, warmth, hospitality and camaraderie shown, which gave a glimpse of what the world will be like when God's kingdom is established.

The activities included a family affair dubbed “the Grand Family Social” where the local and overseas brethren displayed their talents in singing and poetry, an evening of biblical presentations recounting themes from the Bible in skits, poetry and songs, a family dance held in the conference room at the Holiday Inn and a seniors luncheon held at the

Executive Inn. The messages were mostly “live,” except for Mr. Meredith's two DVD sermons, the “Behind the Work” DVD and DVD messages by Messrs. King and Fannin. The messages were inspiring and enriching, leading to comments such as “we got a glimpse of our change which is to come” and “so much spiritual food to take home and masticate.”

—Lascelles Fraser



Tobago

Tobago

The Feast of Tabernacles was held in Tobago at the Blue Haven Hotel. For the first half of the Feast, Tobago's

Prime Minister had requested the use of the hotel's air-conditioned meeting hall, so the brethren met in a spacious non-air-conditioned hall near the swimming pool. For the second half, services were held in the smaller air-conditioned hall. Our high attendance was 88, including two couples from the United States. On Wednesday, two brethren were baptized into God's Church. Activities included a children's party, a trip to Bucco Reef, a cultural show with dinner and dancing, and a family day held outdoors with games, swimming and good food.

—Fitzroy Greeman

Lake Taupo, New Zealand

Fifty-five warm, kind, smiling, happy brethren observed God's Feast of Tabernacles at Lake Taupo, New Zealand. Services were held in a lovely hall overlooking beautiful Lake Taupo, and provided a glimpse of the everlasting and unending beauty which is New Zealand. Messages ranged from admonitions to rejoice—at the Feast and always—to planning for spiritual maintenance. A highlight of the Feast for everyone was the fellowshiping. Feastgoers participated in several excursions as a group, visiting Ariatia Falls, Huka Falls, Crater of the Moon (which highlighted the geothermic activity in New Zealand), and Honey Hive. While providing ample time for fellowship, the caravan trip on the second day of the Feast put everyone in touch with God's splendid creation—of which there is much to enjoy in New Zealand—with sheep, cows, horses, and deer grazing in abundance on picturesque, gently sloping lush green hillsides interspersed by equally lovely green forests. Near the end of the Feast, 14 Feastgoers climbed Tarauntua Mountain, the tallest mountain on the north island of New Zealand. Other highly enjoyable activities included ten-pin bowling, and indoor rock climbing for the singles. The "Family Fun Night" was an assortment of enjoyable games played indoors with a local and international flavor: lawn bowling, a general knowledge test, Play-Dough Pictionary, and identifying several members from their baby-photos. Everyone helped with giving and serving to make this an outstanding Feast. In addition to New Zealand, Feastgoers here came from Australia, Holland and the United States. Several new members were in attendance as well, which



New Zealand

added to the rejoicing of those attending the Feast, to see that God continues to call new people to His wonderful way of life pictured by His Feasts.

—Donald Roach

Maranding, Philippines

An overseas minister had not visited Maranding for the Feast since 1999. I asked our members in Australia, and also those in the Philippines, to pray for God's protection for me on my journey. Mr. Freddie Benitez, our minister in central Mindanao, has a four-wheel-drive van in which I traveled. He had the windows tinted so that it was difficult

to see a white-faced Australian in the passenger seat. We did what we could, but relied on God to do what we could not.

In Maranding, a large "tabernacle" has been built. A banner behind the stage read, "Living Church of God, 2005 Feast of Tabernacles." Here, so far from Charlotte, God's people watched Mr. Meredith give his opening night message. It was shown on an old television that gave him one green hand

and one purple hand, because the color mechanism no longer worked properly. On the next day, I authorized the purchase of a new television.

I spoke to the brethren on the first day, with Mr. Benitez translating into Visayan as only about a dozen Feastgoers could understand or speak English. We then watched a DVD of Mr. Bryce, and I realized how difficult it is for them to understand the messages in English. Despite all this, our members are enthusiastic and loyal to God and His truth.

I left the next day to travel back to Australia for the last half of the Feast. It always takes me some time to readjust to the wealth and plenty in Australia. We lack something that the Filipinos have—the happiness that a simpler life brings.

—Rod King

Tacloban, Philippines

The Feast in Tacloban was once again kept at Cawacsi Training Center in Barangay Taguictic, Tacloban City. The opening night service had 43 brethren in attendance. A vanload of brethren from Manila endured a grueling 24-hour long-distance land

trip just to keep the Feast at this rather remote Feast site. For them, the 2005 Feast of Tabernacles was a double celebration, as it was a kind of family reunion for them as well, and at the same time an opportunity to renew and strengthen their bond with their brethren from Samar, Leyte and Biliran.

Though the Tacloban Feast site was small, it was graced by visitors from Australia, Switzerland and England. The guest from Switzerland was actually a Filipina with a German husband; their niece and nephew from Maranding, Mindanao, also accompanied them. The daughter and son-in-law of Quezon City deacon Mr. Simeon Gonzales came all the way from London, England, with their two children, during the middle of the Feast. Attendance on the Last Great Day reached 63!

Site Coordinator Mr. Felipe Casing gave a live sermon on “A Time of Rededication.” Mr. Benito Parbo assisted Mr. Casing by taking over the site administration when Mr. Casing left on the Sabbath to serve at the Davao, Philippines, site. Mr. Dennis Tan also served as assistant site coordinator.

A unique feature of the Feast here was an offertory sermonette given in Cebuano at Mr. Parbo’s request, with simultaneous translation in English for the sake of overseas guests and Tagalog-speaking brethren. Mr. Parbo also gave two full-length sermons, including a message about “Humility” on the Last Great Day. Simultaneous translation was provided here for the first time.

Festival highlights included a seniors’ activity at the Sunburst Restaurant in downtown Tacloban, attended by about seven bona-

fide seniors and a similar number of non-senior guests, including our Australian visitor who attended per the invitation of the site coordinator. The guests were each asked to tell the story of their conversion. Each story was unique and interesting, revealing how God calls people from all walks of life and various circumstances.

The brethren shared lunch together on Thursday, enjoying a relaxing sea breeze at a beach resort near the Feast site. Some played badminton, others enjoyed fellowshiping with one another, and all enjoyed the meal of sizzling grilled fish right on the beach.

Sunday evening, the “Family Night” activity was a great success, as around 40 brethren began with a Bible quiz, followed by games such as “Trip to Jerusalem,”

“Simon Says” and “Catch the Dragon’s Tail.” Later, as more people arrived, the dance began, which included a special presentation featuring Kuratsa (a local dance in Leyte and Samar). A swing dance cha-cha number, a tango and a waltz were among other dances that followed. There were vocal solos, duets and even group sing-alongs. Brethren sang “If We Hold On Together” while holding hands together, forming a circle.

In the evening following the Last Great Day, a farewell party was held at poolside in the San Gerardo Heights subdivision. Part of the activity had overseas guests saying something about their Feast experience at Tacloban. After jokes, a group sing-along and some dancing, brethren enjoyed wholesome conversation while some enjoyed a dip in the pool—a fitting conclusion, lasting well into the night, after an inspiring day of worship.

—Dennis Tan

Barbados

The Feast in Barbados was kept at the beautiful Barbados Beach Club Resort, located on the southern end of the island approximately five miles from Bridgetown. About 20 families and singles stayed on the premises. While most of the meals were served buffet style in the

main dining area, we also had the opportunity to eat at the Italian and seafood restaurants on the premises several times during the Feast. Average attendance at the Feast was 103, with a high of 128.

Feastgoers enjoyed several truly outstanding activities this year. One highlight was the catamaran trip on Sunday after-

noon. Sixty-five brethren boarded the vessel and sailed to the habitat of the famed hawksbill turtle. After witnessing a spectacular sunset on the Atlantic Ocean, all those who wanted to swim with the turtles were given masks and snorkels. Some took pictures with underwater cameras, while a few were even able to touch the turtles. We had a delicious Bajan dinner on board the craft before heading back to port. The display of stars and almost-full moon overhead were fabulous reminders of God’s majesty and wonderful promises to His faithful servants.

Another highlight was the submarine ride on board the Atlantis III. Forty-eight brethren were able to submerge to a depth of about 150 feet and view a sunken ship and the beautiful coral reef surrounding the island.



Argentina

Family Day was held at King George V Park, where we enjoyed a taste of Bajan cuisine and a friendly game of cricket. Some played “road tennis” and everyone enjoyed the wonderful fellowship.

Other activities included a tour of an underground cave, parasailing, kayaking, surfing, windsurfing, sky-diving, scuba diving and dining at the many very fine restaurants located on the island.

Visitors from overseas were treated to a talent-variety show. Our Bajan hosts put a lot of time and preparation into it, and we were all delighted by the display of talent!

A special highlight: Six brethren were baptized into God’s Church during the Feast!

Throughout the Feast, we appreciated the love and warmth that exuded from God’s people. Fellowship was extraordinary—there were no cliques; nobody was left out! Our Barbados brethren went above and beyond in their warmth and hospitality, and their overseas guests responded in like manner. Each day the love and affection grew, until it reached its peak on the Last Great Day. Many are already talking about coming back to Barbados next year for the Feast!

—Paul Shumway



Guyana

tesy and kindness, we have learned, goes a long way in creating a favorable impression of God’s people. You could also see that the staff appreciated our thoughtfulness and reciprocated by going out of their way to assist us whenever the need arose.

At Wednesday’s “Family Day” activity, the children enjoyed themselves thoroughly. Indrani and Gnanie tried to sit on balloons and ended up on the floor, but neither was hurt, only slightly shaken up. Thursday’s events culminated with the Youth Day Family Dance, organized and presented by the youth of the Church. On Friday, we listened to Mr. Svalbe speak on “The Fear of God”—we learned that “fear” in its proper biblical

context is great reverence, very deep respect and awe of the divine majesty—not the rampant fear that rules the present world with its terror and horror. On Friday evening, we had an enlightening Bible Study, followed by Mr. Svalbe’s presentation of “Our Awesome Universe” on his laptop computer. That presentation, with appropriate scripture quotations, was, to say the least, “mind-blowing”—because it showed us the magnificence and immensity of our great God’s indescribable creation, all waiting for the coming of the sons of God after the firstfruits have been raised to glory. Saturday evening, we had an indoor campfire sing-along. Everybody participated, belting out golden oldies and popular favorites in a fantastic evening’s entertainment.

On Sunday evening we enjoyed a fabulous talent show put on by members of the congregation. Not a dull moment—and some acts had us laughing our sides out because they were so funny. After an early service on Monday, all went to see the Royal Botanic Gardens at Peradeniya, which was established in 1821 at the site of a former royal palace of the kings of Kandy. After an hour-long visit to the Gardens, we all took off to view the Victoria Reservoir and Dam many miles away. The resort very kindly provided everyone with a very good picnic lunch, and after looking over the reservoir, all returned before the Last Great Day began, tired but happy.

The level of cooperation was exceptionally high, demonstrating the unity and humility of the brethren at all times where they put others before self. We thank and praise God for making all this possible.

—J.B. Müller

Sri Lanka

As our luxury coach carrying 47 brethren arrived at the Feast site in Kandy, we gazed at a series of wooded ridges, all bathed in an amazing variety of pastel blues. Standing defiantly in the near distance was the imposing bulk of Alagalla and beyond, to the left, Bible Rock, and a host of other nameless hilltops and peaks. We were served with ice-cold towels to refresh ourselves, followed with a welcome drink—a cocktail of fresh tropical fruits—and we thanked God for His kindheartedness to us, His called-out ones, now at the place where He had placed His name.

At the opening night service, Mr. Svalbe talked about our responsibility as teachers in the world to come. The next morning we heard a recorded sermon by the late Mr. John Ogwyn; that afternoon we heard again from Mr. Svalbe, who asked us “Why are we here?”

All restaurant, room and reception desk services provided by the hotel staff were of a consistently high standard, and we made it a point to be courteous and thank the staff at every opportunity that we had. Genuine cour-

Feast 2006: _____

Time to Start Preparing!

By Don Davis

Each year, for many of us, the Feast of Tabernacles seems to be better than all those that have gone before. “That was the best Feast ever!” is an exclamation we hear again and again.


However, something seems to go wrong once in a while to prevent our Feast from being perfect. Perhaps we forgot to pack a shaving kit, a special suit or dress, or the shoes that match the new skirt. Maybe the car broke down, we missed a flight, or an airline lost our luggage. Occasionally our accommodations may not have met our expectations. Worse yet, we may not have had enough money set aside to really enjoy the Feast as we could have. If we had properly saved ahead for this great time that celebrates the establishment of Christ’s rule over the earth for a thousand years, everything would have gone so much better. “A feast is made for laughter, and wine makes merry; but money answers everything” (Ecclesiastes 10:19).

God has provided us with a savings plan to ensure that we have the best Feast possible each year. Sadly, some brethren who faithfully pay their first tithe do not set aside a full second tithe for their households to use at God’s Festivals. As a result, they deprive themselves of the

resources they need to have a truly bountiful Feast. Still, God **commands**: “You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year. And you shall eat before the LORD your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and your new wine and your oil, of the firstborn of your herds and your flocks, that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always” (Deuteronomy 14:22–23).

“But after paying my first tithe, and paying all my bills, I just can’t afford to save the second tithe,” some will say. Really? Perhaps you just **think** that you cannot afford to put away a full second tithe. Try this: before you pay any of your bills, pay God His 10 percent, then put a second 10 percent in the bank, perhaps through payroll direct deposit so that the tithe will be deposited automatically each paycheck. This way, you will not feel any pressure or temptation to put other obligations ahead of God’s commandment. You may be surprised to discover how far your remaining money will go, once you decide to obey God by faithfully saving your Festival tithe. “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (Matthew 6:33).

Some who fail to plan for the Feast may be tempted to use a credit card to cover their Festival expenses. This not only delays the consequences of failing to plan, it makes matters worse, as the credit card charges must be paid *with interest*. Some find that by the time the next Feast arrives, they still have not paid off their debts from the last Feast! If you are caught in this seemingly endless financial trap, **now** is the time to “tighten your belt,” trust God and begin saving your second tithe as He has instructed. For some this may be difficult, but the rewards far exceed any temporary discomforts. If you are in debt, you might want to treat the upcoming months as though you were in a third tithe year, and commit to getting by on a little less while you are paying down your debts. Once God sees that you are serious about saving your tithes as He tells us in His word, you will be able to pay your second tithe **and** pay your credit card debts!

God has promised to bless us bountifully when we obey Him. If you start saving your second tithe now, as you begin to prepare for the 2006 Feast of Tabernacles, this will ensure a happier and more peaceful Festival season for you and your family. 

Trials:

A Lesson from the Desert

By Rod McNair

Have you ever felt bruised and mauled by the trials you face? Do you ever feel you are bouncing along in life, like a pinball, being poked and jabbed by obstacle after obstacle? Do you ever just want *time out*, to catch your breath, and nurse your wounds, emotionally, spiritually and mentally?

These experiences are not without meaning! God uses trials to prepare and condition our hearts, so that we finally cry out and surrender totally to him. Until our “stony hearts” of pride and vanity are turned into “hearts of flesh” in submission to God, we are forever stunted from growing spiritually.

In nature, there exists an amazing physical parallel. The ironwood, smoke and blue palo verde trees live in one of the harshest regions on earth—the desert of the American southwest. The soaring temperatures and parched ground there make it a killing field for most plants and trees.

And yet, the ironwood, smoke and blue palo verde trees thrive. How do they do it? The seeds of these trees have a tough outer coating that must be removed before the seed inside can germinate. In fact, the seed *will never grow* if it is planted before the tough outer coating is removed.

But how is the coating removed? It must be broken, bashed, beaten, abraded, scraped, cracked, dissolved and destroyed. At first, the seeds lie dormant, scattered beneath the parent tree until winds or desert storms carry them away. As they are washed away, the torrent bashes them against rocks and other debris, scraping them against sand in the swirling gullies.

The seeds are deposited downstream as waters subside beneath the surface. Through the rigors of wind, rain and floods, the elements have prepared the seeds to germinate and grow, and supplied adequate water by depositing the seeds in the path of future seasonal rains.


Sometimes we may feel like those seeds—bounced, bruised, banged and broken. But often God is simply preparing our hearts to respond to His call—

ing—to see the sin that destroys us. David, a man after God’s own heart, wrote: “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart—these O God, You will not despise” (Psalm 51:17).

Unless we go through the abrasions and contusions of spiritual trials, we will not bear fruit. “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed” (Hebrews 12:11–13, KJV).

Eventually, every person who has ever lived will have to choose between submitting to God, or being ground down by God. Jesus said: “Whomsoever shall fall upon that Stone [Christ] shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder” (Luke 20:18, KJV).

You and I can have real joy in the midst of trials. Not a silly, superficial pretense of happiness, but deep, heartfelt joy about the process God uses to help us overcome our vanity, stubbornness and pride. “The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles. The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all. He guards all his bones; not one of them is broken” (Psalm 34:17–20).

We are being prepared, molded, shaped—and, yes, sometimes even broken and bruised—for the purpose of bringing forth tremendous, incredible spiritual growth in the future! The tough, hardy seeds of the ironwood, smoke and blue palo verde trees need to be broken, bruised and roughed up before growth can occur. Our *carnal nature* is much the same—it must be softened and dissolved—even broken! But the growth that results is the “peaceable fruit of righteousness” that will last forever! 

Joy: A Fruit of the Spirit*(continued from page 11)*

ation is waiting eagerly for you to become a spiritual son of God! Can you be joyful when you realize that Christ hears you when you pray to God (Romans 8:26–27)?

Do you have the right to complain when you know that all things work together for your good? God tells you that nothing can separate you from His love for you. Nothing—*absolutely nothing!* Neither distress nor persecution, nor

famine, nor poverty can have power over you. “Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us” (v. 37).

Why, then, do you sometimes let depression or discouragement pull you down? Whatever your problems, difficulties or trials, they are only temporary. What really counts is what is ahead—and what is ahead surpasses by far all of your expectations!

As Christians, we are bearers of a special passport with which to enter God’s Kingdom. It reads: “the bearer of this passport is a begotten child of

God. He expresses love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance.”

In all circumstances, whether favorable or not, we must show this passport and prove that we truly are its legitimate bearers—that we do have these fruits.

We are spiritual members of God’s Family in the making. We have His nature, His Spirit and His joy—here and now.

That is why we do not have the right *not* to be happy! We must radiate joy! LCN

An Excellent Feast!*(continued from page 2)*

From my own experience as a minister of Jesus Christ for 53 years, I can tell you that those who “slack off” in actually *studying* their Bibles are affected profoundly! Please ask God to *help* you, *motivate* you and *guide* you as you study His inspired word. Remember, you are reading what is, in effect, the “mind of God”—the *revelation* from your Creator that tells you *why* you are here, *what life* is all about and what is the *way* to eternal life. Remember the terminology Jesus used in John 6:57 about “feeding” on Christ: “As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who *feeds* on Me will live because of Me.”

Later, Jesus said, “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. *The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life*” (v. 63).

Brethren, we do **not** need another “falling away” from the Truth, as so many of our friends and loved ones experienced in our former association! Genuinely **studying** the Bible is the best possible antidote against this type of tragedy. As so many religious polls have clearly shown, *lack of Bible understanding* is the key factor that allows so many Protestants and others to be confused and to *believe almost “anything!”*

So, what about you?

Part of the magnificent legacy left by God’s servant and our dear brother, Mr. John Ogwyn, is the **extremely helpful Bible Study Course**. This course is **not** complicated or difficult to understand. But it does lead you through key issues in the Bible in an organized way, with specific information given that you might have *great difficulty* figuring out on your own. I strongly encourage **all** of you who have not done so to sign up for this course!

And, in any case, I **urge** you in Jesus’ name to begin truly **studying** the Bible *on your own* in a way you may never have done before! Discipline yourself to *set aside* the **time** to genuinely drink in of the Bible and “feed” on Jesus Christ and on the mind of God! This is **far more** important than chatting with your friends about trivial matters, watching television or pursuing many other activities that often take up our time. *If* you are filled with the words and thoughts of the Bible, you will probably **never** fall away—especially as long as you *keep praying* to God on your knees for understanding, for humility and for His love and guidance.

As the end of this age approaches, I hope *all* of us can draw closer to God than ever before. Let us use the sermons and the inspiration we have received through this recent Feast to *drive us to our knees*, cause us to “cry out” in really *urgent* prayer to God, and teach us to “feed” on Christ in a way we have not done in the past! Then, we will truly become a “people of God”—a Church He can *use* and **empower** beyond anything any of us have experienced in modern times.

This is not idealistic. This **needs** to happen if we are to complete the Work as we should, if we are to be faithful during the terrible trials and tests that all of us will be facing in the years ahead, and if we are to powerfully *complete* the Work that Christ wants His Church to accomplish just before His Second Coming!

With Christian love,



Labor Day Campout in Ontario!

This past Labor Day weekend, September 2–5, 68 brethren from all across Ontario, Canada, came out for four fun-filled days of camping together, in the pristine Presqu'île Provincial Park, on the shores of beautiful Lake Ontario, one hour west of Kingston Ontario. It was truly a millennial setting. A few brave brethren even came from Ohio and New Jersey! The star-filled sky was absolutely brilliant, and the fire was roaring. Lake Ontario was quite refreshing, and also offered spectacular sunsets.

After a relaxing Sabbath morning, the afternoon service was given by Mr. Michael Elertson. Afterward, a fireside Bible study was held. The evening concluded with a sing-along. Sunday was filled with activities for all ages, including an “Olympic Games”—at least, our version of an Olympic Games. A highlight was the infamous egg-drop contest. Participants were allowed to use anything in camp, but the egg package had to

fit in an area of one foot by one foot. Quite literally, things became a little messy! Sunday afternoon, most of the campers turned out for swimming, beach volleyball and Ultimate Frisbee. Sunday night activities ended with a fireside game of Trivial Pursuit conducted by Brian and Jennifer Frank. Our memories were certainly tested in such areas as history, Bible and geography.

The campout concluded on Monday afternoon, and something unprecedented for a Labor Day took place—we were actually able to break down camp in dry weather! What a blessing! Fun, food (lots of hot dogs), fellowship and relaxation were had by all the campers. A special “thank you” goes to Brian and Jennifer Frank for all of their hard work and planning. We certainly look forward to another campout next year!

—Michael Elertson

Anniversary

Steven and Anne Elian, Living Church of God members in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on September 1. A surprise anniversary party was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Holowach.

Weddings

Benjamin Kreyer and *Lisa Wilson* were united in marriage on September 4 in Winterset, Iowa. The wedding ceremony was performed by Mr. Sheldon Monson, and was witnessed by family, brethren and friends. The Kreyers reside in New Richmond, Wisconsin, and attend the Living Church of God congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Daral Millich and *Heather Burson* were united in marriage on July 1, in a ceremony held just before sunset,

overlooking the Missouri River at the Arrow Rock State Park in Arrow Rock, Missouri. Messrs. Rand Millich and David Burson performed the ceremony. A reception was held the following evening at the home of Kansas City congregation member Patricia Scarborough. The Milliches now reside in Columbia, Missouri.

Marshall Staples and *Opal Arnold*—ages 88 and 69 respectively—were married on September 11, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Errol Wade in Princeton, Minnesota. The ceremony was private, with a reception following. Mr. and Mrs. Staples attend the Living Church of God congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Upcoming *Tomorrow's World* Telecasts

WGN: Sunday, 6:00 AM ET

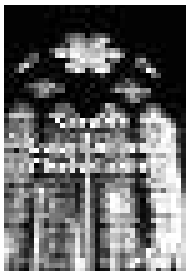
Inspiration: Friday, 10:00 PM PT

VISION (Canada): Sunday, 5:30 PM ET; Monday-Friday, 3:00 AM ET

November 6	The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse
November 13	Who Is the Beast?
November 20	The Day of the Lord in Prophecy
November 27	Why Are You Alive?
December 4	What Is Ahead for You Personally?
December 11	How to Get Answers When You Pray
December 18	The Future of Jerusalem
December 25	Origins of Christmas

For additional stations and times, check the Television and Radio Log on page 31 of your *Tomorrow's World* magazine.

NEW BOOKLET!



Mr.
Meredith's
newest
booklet,
*Satan's
Counterfeit*

Christianity, was mailed in early November to all Living Church of God households, enclosed in the same envelope as the "semi-annual letter" that he is sending to all *Tomorrow's World* subscribers.

Births

Brant Matthew Joffrion was born on October 27, to Matthew and Krista Joffrion of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He was 20 inches long and weighed 6 pounds, 13 ounces at birth. He is the first grandchild for Mark and Betty Elder, and the third for Ray and Katherine Joffrion.

David Gregory Markopoulos was born on June 29, weighing 7 pounds, 14 ounces. He was 20.5 inches long. He is the first child born to Tim and Merrilee Markopoulos of the Chicago, Illinois, congregation; he was born nine months after Mrs. Markopoulos was anointed to conceive at the 2004 Feast of Tabernacles! David is healthy, strong and beautiful!

Meagan Rose Monson was born on October 22, to Daryl and Vicki Monson of the La Crescenta, California, congregation. She was 20 inches long and weighed 7 pounds at birth. Born during the Feast of Tabernacles at Lake Tahoe, Meagan was delivered by family friend Debbie Young of the San Diego, California, congregation.

Amy Claire Ogywn was born on October 17, to Charles and Catherine Ogywn of Cabot, Arkansas. She was 20.5 inches long and weighed 6 pounds, 4 ounces. Amy was born while the Ogywns were at the Lake of the Ozarks Feast site; the doctor who delivered her mentioned that Amy was the fourth "Feast baby" he had delivered for Church members over the years!

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@cogl.org).

Ordinations

Messrs. Jose Arendain and Johnny Bolences were ordained as elders on the Day of Atonement, October 13, by Pastors Rod King and Felipe Casing. Mr. Arendain serves Living Church of God congregations in Compostela, Monkayo and Nabunturan, in the Comval Province, Philippines. Mr. Bolences serves the North and South Cotabato Province congregations of Polomolok, Kidapawan OBS and Makilala.

Mr. Dennis Shipley was ordained as a deacon on the Feast of Trumpets, October 4, by Messrs. Charles Ogwyn and Vernon Damron. Mr. Shipley and his wife Heather serve the Living Church of God congregation in Russellville, Arkansas.

Mr. James Sweat was ordained as an elder on the Feast of Trumpets, October 4, by Messrs. Bob League and John Duckett. Mr. Sweat and his wife Connie serve the Living Church of God congregation in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Mr. Phillip Watkins was ordained as a deacon on the Feast of Trumpets, October 4, by Messrs. Charles Ogwyn and Barry Howdeshell. Mr. Watkins and his wife Audrey serve the Living Church of God congregation in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Dr. Douglas S. Winnail was ordained as an evangelist on the Sabbath of October 8, by Messrs. Roderick C. Meredith, Richard F. Ames and Dibar K. Apartian. Dr. Winnail serves as Director of Church Administration for the Living Church of God in Charlotte, North Carolina.

In Loving Memory

Jerry Hardman, age 76, a deacon serving the Living Church of God congregation in Portland, Oregon, died on September 20. A member of God's Church since 1965, he and his future wife Clara were baptized in 1965 at the same time and place, though they did not yet know each other. They were married on September 28, 1967. In addition to his wife Clara, he is survived by two sisters and two nieces.

Bennie Lee Jones, Sr., a Church member in Walterboro, South Carolina, died on September 9. He was 75 years old. Mr. Jones is remembered for his dedication and example of service. He is survived by his wife Barbara, and by sons Bennie, Jr., and Carlos. His funeral was conducted by Mr. Lehman Lyons, Sr., assisted by Mr. Frank Frye.

Wallace Alan Lagle, age 55, of Indianapolis, Indiana, died on September 5 after a two-year struggle with cancer. He was baptized in 1976. Three of his favorite things were music, fishing, and talking about God's

word. An accomplished musician, he served as one of his congregation's pianists. Funeral services were conducted on September 8 by Mr. George Dellinger, elder in Indianapolis. He is survived by his wife Dorothy (Dottie), two sons, and many nieces and nephews.

Clinton Meadows of Dover, Arkansas a long-time member of God's Church, died on April 28. He is survived by his wife Lily, two sons, five grandchildren, four great grandchildren, two brothers and three sisters. Mr. Charles Ogwyn, pastor of the Russellville congregation, conducted the funeral service.

Mary McEnney (Wittlinger), a Living Church of God member in Baltimore, Maryland, died peacefully on October 30. She was 100 years old. In good health all of her life, she attended Sabbath services until just before the Feast, and touched everyone she met with her wit and wisdom. Mr. Ken Frank conducted her memorial service on November 2.

Commentary

The Need for Common Sense

By Martin Fannin

Would you build your own house in a flood zone on ground below sea level? Most would not do this. If they did, we would say they lacked common sense. What about a whole city? Does it make sense to build and maintain a metropolitan area on land below sea level?

Obviously, under optimum conditions it can be done—look at the example of the Netherlands, where nearly half of the country's surface lies below sea level. Mankind is capable of amazing feats when massive funding is available. Even then, however, there is no guarantee that natural forces will not overwhelm man-made systems.

Similarly, we may ask, is it wise to concentrate supplies of vital products in one area, especially if that area is prone to major weather disasters? How much safer would our supplies be if vital functions like oil refining were far more geographically diversified than they are in the United States? We are familiar with the saying, "Don't put all your eggs in one basket." The idea is that if you drop that one basket, you may lose everything. As a nation, is the U.S. guilty of putting all—or at least most—of its eggs in one basket, especially where key energy supplies are concerned? Sadly, the answer is, "yes." You need not be a rocket scientist to predict the many potential problems that can arise from our risky concentration of supplies and resources. Some might argue that it is cost-effective to risk putting most of our energy "eggs" in one basket. But when that basket does fall, are we prepared for the

ultimate cost?

This example of our energy policy is just one example of our nation's shortsightedness. Why, as a nation, do we fail to use common sense so much of the time? We fail because greed, selfishness and other negative aspects of human nature get in our way.

You could define common sense as, "Doing what is best for all concerned, all the time." Are we as a nation, or individually, doing this now? Certainly not! Will we ever? Thankfully, the answer is "yes!" The sure word of God proclaims that the day is coming when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9). When this occurs, the present human tendencies of greed and self-interest will be changed. Then, the godly principle of loving your neighbor as yourself will become the norm.

The Bible is the foundation of all true knowledge, understanding and wisdom. This is illustrated by Psalm 111:10, which states: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments." We are equipped with true common sense when we have a proper reverence and respect for God and His written word.

Today, true common sense is not common at all. It is a rare commodity, because all too often it has been sacrificed on the altar of nonsense. Thankfully, in tomorrow's world this will change, and the whole nation—and all of humanity—will reap the blessings.

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